

Evaluation Report



"I would like to thank both Encounters and the Dartington Trust for great courage in commissioning and enacting this work. I have never witnessed organisational change addressed in this way and find it incredibly powerful and optimistic for the future of this much-loved place".
Shop visitors book comment



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Project Framework

The Arts at Dartington commissioned participatory arts practice Encounters to deliver a crosscutting creative engagement project during Feb – Apr 2011. The brief was to use a range of different creative tools and processes to allow the Dartington community to celebrate and acknowledge the past, give voice to present experiences and concerns, and look to the future. As part of the project we re-opened the Gallery 'shop' as a place for exchange and creative dialogue. Our aspiration was that the project would signal a shift towards more open and collaborative working and programme delivery: and invite people internally and externally to see how they might take a stake in future programmes at Dartington.

Following Dartington College of Arts' relocation to Falmouth, and other changes on the Dartington Estate, there was a recognition of the need to engage the wider community in this period of transition and beyond. We recognised that during building refurbishment works there would be a period of 'dark-time' during which, on the surface at least, very little would be happening. This was a vital stage in which to begin to plant the seeds of future increased involvement and engagement by the wider community.



There were four main planned strands to the delivery of the project: -

1. The Gallery 'shop' with established opening days / times for people to drop in - became an exchange and meeting place for the collection and sharing of memories, stories, experiences, and ideas about Dartington past, present, future. This space used to be the Estate Grocery Shop and for the three months of the project it re-opened as a place for dialogue and exchange, a place where the wide Dartington community of staff, volunteers, local residents and visitors could visit and co-create a living installation.
2. A mobile version of the 'shop' - which went out to different groups of people and places in Dartington and Totnes including local schools and community groups. In a similar way to the Gallery 'shop', people were invited, through creative means, to contribute their memories, stories, ideas about Dartington past, present, future. These were added to the collections in the Gallery space.
3. Facilitated Dialogue sessions – designed to be a series of participatory processes to bring members of the community together with Dartington Staff to encourage reflection, dialogue and consensus building at this moment of change. In discussion with members of the Senior Management team a decision was made to not deliver this strand of the project.
4. A celebratory event open to all the community. This took the form of a series of hour-long performances (including verbatim material), to mark the culmination of the project.

“Warm, touching, a celebration of all the best here, a grieving and acceptance of transition. Thank you.”
Visitors book

Executive Summary

Key Achievements

The pre-launch party for volunteers was a successful event with over 50 people attending and this encouraged volunteers to continue to engage with the project and visit the shop regularly, bringing in stories, memories and other items.



The Shop opened for 20 days between February and April 2011 from 11am – 5pm on Tuesdays and 11am – 7pm on Wednesdays.

Approx 600 people visited the Gallery shop.

Invitations to join in:

- 285 stories were added to the map
- 123 recipe cards were completed
- 203 micro world collages were created
- 74 bottles of tears were left with messages

Inputs to future plans:

- 10 Land Review inputs
- 3 Space inputs

The shop was visited by artists groups from Torquay, Moretonhampstead, Cornwall, Exeter & London.

Staff groups from Arts, Schumacher and Communications visited the Shop.

6 people participated in the staff action group.

Weekly radio show on Soundart Radio extended the reach and awareness of the project and shared verbatim material with listeners.

A 12 week time lapse of all shop activity was captured.

The mobile shop was visited by approx 150 members of communities at the following locations:

- Dartington Primary School
- The Shops at Dartington
- Totnes Market
- Grove Primary School
- KEVICC
- Outside Co-operative Supermarket
- Outside Totnes Pavillions

5 x 1 hour long multimedia performances were given in the Gallery

5 professional artists performed in the performances

Approx. 125 people attended the performances on 13th April 2011

Programme Review

1. The Gallery shop

Hundreds of people from many different routes dropped into the space and actively took part in co – authoring a series of living artworks of memories, stories, experiences, and ideas about Dartington past, present, future. Activities engaged people of all ages and the response was overwhelmingly positive.



The transformation of the space from a conventional Gallery to an interactive space furnished with items from the Collection and Archive was greatly appreciated by visitors. Allowing these items to actually be used by visitors created a rich connection with the themes of past, present, future; and visitors were pleased to be able to see and learn about the items. Discussing ways to strengthen a sense of belonging at Dartington whilst sitting around the Elmhursts 1930's dining table was a symbolic act of inclusion in the process of change.

Staff engagement was disappointingly low – feedback was consistent that staff at all levels did not feel they could prioritise or make time in their working day to participate. A lot of work was done to try to engage staff in the project, including regular communications and invitations, encouraging staff groups to bring meetings to the shop, endorsement from senior management for staff to participate, and a staff action group. The staff action group did not fully establish itself due to scheduling difficulties and lack of availability. Some members of staff were very engaged with the project - particularly part-time members of staff in their free time. The reason for low staff engagement remains unclear. Potential causes could be: a failing of the project structure, perceived lack of permission from managers to really engage in an honest and personal way, or a real lack of staff's time.



In a volatile atmosphere of flux and change, the project faced initial suspicion from some Staff and some members of the wider community about its intention. The role of Encounters as 'listeners / facilitators' was crucial. They had to tread a fine line – resisting being put in the position of defending or attacking actions of the Trust. Focusing participation in various Invitations to join in as a vessel to hold all perspectives was the focus of the facilitation.

“Nice space to be in. I have made and cried and snipped and played and had a cup of tea with my friend. Thank you. I feel whole”.

Shop visitors book comment



Confidence in the project grew from the community as it became clear that the shop was a democratic space where voices could be heard within an overall set of frames set by Encounters. The shop came to be perceived as a neutral space and many people returned several times throughout the project bringing family and friends.

Low staff attendance and engagement seemed to indicate that staff and management did not build the same sense of confidence in the project. The project invited a personal response and perhaps staff were unsure about whether to engage professionally or personally, or perhaps there was a growing defensiveness in those staff that did come in response to some of the more critical responses being left by the public. A further enquiry could be useful to guide future initiatives that might seek to engage staff. Also, despite initial input, there was a lack of clear and ongoing procedures for Senior Management to shape and fine tune this project possibly resulting in a lack of buy in, ownership and investment in the outcomes of the project. Another contributing factor to lack of staff involvement could have been that all members of the staff action group failed to meet regularly and input to the project. Feedback loops from the staff action group back to staff teams, designed to build awareness and input to the project, did not fully occur.

2. Mobile 'shop'

The mobile shop was an important way of meeting the community in the midst of the daily comings and goings of life. It gave many opportunities to have a dialogue with people who were either indifferent or disenfranchised with Dartington. People were surprised and appreciative of the effort made to engage with them in this context.

“Great to see community engagement on the street. And so inviting”.

Shop visitors book comment



Many of these people went on to then visit the shop, attend the performance and express an interest in maintaining involvement.

Hosts such as local schools, the leisure centre, Mansion House, Totnes market, were supportive and welcoming of the mobile shop and positive about being asked to engage with a project from Dartington.

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

3. Facilitated Dialogue sessions

As well as the drop-in shop in the Gallery, the intention of the overall programme was also to include a series of deeper facilitated dialogue and exchange events similar to the Open Space Land Review process. These were designed to bring different groups of people together to share a vision, plan for the future, pilot different methods of community involvement and engagement, and explore processes for resolving conflict.

Three dialogue sessions were planned using a range of different interactive methods:

Shoots and roots designed to bring project staff together from across Trust departments / strands with a focus on those staff who are developing new initiatives

Meet your neighbours designed to bring together key stakeholders involved in working, living and learning on site

Space partners designed to bring together the Arts team and other potential partners / collaborators.

A decision was made not deliver this strand of the project. At a time of great physical transition and change on the Estate with systems already stretched, the capacity to support and promote these events from within the Dartington infrastructure was not easily available. Also a lack of structure for the necessary dialogue and ongoing consultation between Encounters, Senior Management and staff teams about these events was not in place - so the events were in danger of being in a vacuum.

These events would have been more focused on looking to the future while the shop had a leaning to past and present.



4. A celebratory event open to all the community, in the form of a series of hour-long performances

The performances were an important way of marking the end of the project and presenting back. Verbatim material left by visitors in the shop was presented back by five performers, through spoken word, gesture and including live music. Many people commented on the power of the verbatim material. Elements of the performance also shared some of the reflections outlined above, drawn from conversations and the material itself.

“I enjoyed it, it’s powerful. I love the fact it brings feelings into decision-making, feels compassionate, inclusive and empathic – this is a world I’d love to create.”
Shop visitors book comment



Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

The overriding aim in the performance was to bring to life the installation, the snapshot of Dartington at this moment in time and to reflect the feedback including the less clear cut, more emotionally-felt subtext. The performance used the whole space taking place in amongst the audience. The final stages of the performance involved the audience in a small ritual of bringing the seeds of change planted by people during the shop (see Invitations to Join In) from the back of the room into the sunlight, ending the performance with a collective act of collaboration and hope for the future.

“At the risk of sounding like an old hippy – what a profoundly healing performance. Its amazing how hearing such heartfelt stories reflected back can feel like, almost therapy! And it seems to open the door to the next phase in Dartington’s development. Thank you”
Shop visitors book comment

Reflections

Below is a collection of themed reflections coming out of the shop project. They are reflections and conclusions drawn from verbatim material generated by shop visitors (see Shop Documentation) and hundreds of conversations that took place between participants and the Encounters Team facilitating the process.

Fog

There is a sense of confusion about the changes at Dartington. People not understanding what the Trust does (as distinct from the College) and a fear that ‘art and experimentation’ has gone from Dartington. The departure of the College has left a void.

There is a strong perception of Dartington as a ‘closed shop’ with a lack of transparency in terms of routes ‘in’ that adds to the feeling of fog. It’s not clear for people, including staff, how things happen, who to talk to, how decisions get made on micro and macro levels, and what, if any, the processes are for ongoing dialogue and engagement.

There are some moments of clarity or a clearing of this ‘fog’ brought about through individual and trusted relationships between members of staff and certain members of the wider community or through consultation processes that are perceived to be genuinely enquiring eg Open Space Land Review, but there is still a lack of clarity in the overall purpose and direction of Dartington.



“I see no connection now with the people who are running Dartington and its history. Maybe that’s a wrong perception it feels like that though... find a balance between paying the bills and open, easy exploration – let people in and bring ideas.”

Recipe Card response

“Since the closure of the college, people are ‘suspicious’ about plans for Dartington. Belief that it will become more and more gentrified and elitist. There is the sense of it being something of a network for the privileged....People being ignored....emails never answered. Include everyone, dumb things down a bit to let people in on what’s happening. Emphasis on sustainable business by local people, also studios. Farm the land and supply produce. Welcome people to walk on and hold events on land without asking excessive money. The intention of Dartington was to bring the arts to the ordinary local people and not just the privileged.”

Recipe card response

Trust

A multi-layered and diverse local community seem to feel largely dislocated from the Trust at present with a widespread feeling, expressed in verbatim material and in conversations, of being ignored, excluded and undervalued by Dartington Trust. Many of these people have strong personal connections with Dartington either through engagement and enjoyment of the land, links with the college of Arts, Park School, or Schumacher or through being business tenants at Foxhole or clients of these tenants as well as audiences, volunteers and residents on site. This dislocation was often expressed as anger, frustration, grief, but mostly a lack of trust with a perceived gap between words and deeds.

Staff and managers of The Dartington Trust are trying to steer a process of change and transformation rooted in their own interpretation of the founding values of Dartington. Following the relocation of the College and move of Foxhole tenants, there seems to be a low level mistrust of the intentions and needs of the local community at present. There seems to be an undercurrent of viewing the local community as being somewhat unreasonable, difficult, demanding, and lacking in independence or self-sufficiency.

Understanding these undercurrents or blanket projections of 'the other' from both 'sides' seems lacking, and a 'Them and Us' culture is affecting many aspects of life and interaction at Dartington.



“Business and Trust need to mesh so business follows the ethical principles of the Trust eg promotion of locality as averse to globalization. People are withdrawing saying they don't want to have anything to do with Dartington. There is no responsibility for the past, people or history.”

Recipe card response

“Dartington is a place of change. It must not lose sight of what community means.”

Visitors book response

“Communicate between departments and tenants and with the whole organization, It's so hard to work with you at present.”

Recipe card response

“Make an approach that reaches people where they are at rather than do it to them. Reply to emails, belonging feels like its being eroded here, very local groups of artists and others are being ignored.”

Recipe card response

Attachment

There is a deep and profound love of the land and the place. Key moments in peoples lives have been lived and experienced at Dartington, ties to the past are deep and emotionally charged.

The values and ethos of the Elmhirst's are perceived as: creativity, experimentation, education, local patronage and care, inclusion, and innovation. These values are held dear by many people who feel deeply proud to have been touched by this history. Many people's long and often multi-layered association with Dartington has shaped them as people, so their own identity, purpose and meaning is tied up with that of Dartington. Many people see themselves as protectors of this history and these values and several now see themselves in opposition to those currently in stewardship of the Trust (perceiving the Trust to be moving away from these deep rooted values and ways of doing things).

This love and connection to the place and its history feeds a sense of ownership and a sense of entitlement to be involved in shaping the future of Dartington. This sense of entitlement combined with a feeling of exclusion and a sense that past values are under threat is leading to intense scrutiny of every action taken by Dartington as an organisation, and often a knee-jerk rejection or suspicion of all changes and new initiatives proposed.

Through conversation it appears that Dartington's workforce seem to feel a strong responsibility to shape the future so that Dartington can continue to operate and evolve and the attachment that the local community have to Dartington of the past appears to be seen as a obstacle rather than an asset to be worked with.

"Because of Dartington's history, people expect to be treated in a certain way."
Recipe card response

"Recently to come here, is like entering a vacuum, a silence, nothing there – gradually the old values of inclusion + honesty are being replaced. Instead is a hard veneer of packaging and false gloss, which belies its real rottenness. It is an exclusivity posing as being inclusive"
Stories map response

"Until there has been a chance for the community to be heard in their upset over change at Dartington it will be hard to move on and community to be real."
Recipe card response



Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Seeds

People expressed seeds of optimism, at being invited to participate in a creative and engaging way with the process of change at Dartington. People contributed ideas and offered constructive solutions for a way forwards between Dartington as an organisation and its wider community.

“Well done. You touched all points of the compass and brought us back home – could this be the kernel of a new beginning”.
Shop visitors book comment

The wider community welcomed the opportunity to simply be heard and valued, to be invited in to a democratic space and to express their feelings in a constructive way. They felt more positive as a result of this and were surprised and encouraged that the Trust had commissioned the Shop project as a way of opening a dialogue and that the snapshot created would be reviewed by Dartington Management.

As plans for Dartington were digested by visitors (especially in terms of Space and the Land Review about which there was a larger amount of information in the Shop) a feeling of optimism came through. Many people had not encountered these plans before and the potential and potency of Dartington was re-ignited in many visitors. The Land Review process with clear channels for initial community involvement was particularly appreciated.

The mobile shop revealed a sense of great distance between the local community and Dartington, sometimes the response was one of surprise from people that anything was still active on the Estate. The conversations that ensued sparked a renewed interest in participating in creative activity and future plans.

“Thank you. I didn’t realise that there was any scope for development of community ideas within the Estate! I’m stimulated to formulate some ideas”.
Visitors book comments

“A very warm and frank experience. Great idea – very engaging, makes you think along new lines! Brilliant – really important work.. needs to be ongoing.”.
Visitors book comments

“Refreshing, I loved this stillness and space with quietness to feel part of a future emerging. Important to have dialogues, ideas, open channels of communication. Inspiring – hopeful and much needed”.
Visitors book comments



Transformation

It became clear that when people who brought a love of place to a neutral space where their concerns were heard, and where they felt they had opportunities to input ideas and suggestions for change and growth at Dartington, they became active participants and potential key stakeholders in future plans and a powerful and energised resource. Many ideas were offered for future directions, building involvement and strengthening a sense of belonging.

Examples (see Shop Documentation – Recipes for building a sense of belonging to Dartington) :

“Enable people to use the facility at a reasonable cost. Run courses that are affordable for those living simple, ecological lives. Accessibility”.
Recipe card

“Take a rich history, add: the love people have for this place, add: a management who care about longevity – combine with group process, Non-Violent Communication and the Work that Reconnects. Have skilled facilitators mix this together. And out comes the future”.
Recipe card

“Community is born of people sharing time + place – meeting their need through work / livelihood. If Dartington can once more provide meaningful employment for the local people, then community will come”.
Recipe card

“Accessible / affordable accommodation to make it possible for more people to operate low-cost, land-based businesses. Sustainable and reliable”.
Recipe card

“Great to participate and contribute in an ever evolving story”.
Recipe card

Friends and allies

The strength of feeling that people have about Dartington is a powerful resource for the creation of a sustainable community of active participants. The project transformed many people’s attitudes from negative to positive, and left people wanting to actively engage in projects and activities. Many people who had not engaged with Dartington for several years, and who felt encouraged by their experience in the shop, went on to:

- contribute to the Land Review Process
- attend performances in the Artist in Residence programme
- present proposals for arts projects / residencies which could be delivered at Dartington
- join with activity and opportunities on offer from Sound Art Radio and the Tagore Festival
- join as participants in Encounters new project a Little Patch of Ground a growing and performance project taking place in Dartington.

This revealed a rich and multi-layered community of people who could be future audiences, participants, advocates and allies. The project was the beginning of an active dialogue with these people, and opportunities to continue and enrich this dialogue should be pursued. The importance of nurturing this local community at a time of funding cuts, financial pressures and falling audience numbers, is paramount.

"Sharing meals, working the land, space to roam, creative space... that is open to all... like this space".

Recipe card response

"Linking the messy creative town with neat, safe Dartington".

"Patience, nurture and the hands of the community".

"Greater honesty, dialogue, communication".

How can seeds of change grow? (blackboard question)



"Warm / welcoming / creative".

"Excellent idea".

"Warm and cosy, great initiative".

"Inspiring!! Great!"

"Very powerful!"

Visitors book comments



Equality

The shop was a democratic space in which people could choose how and in what ways to engage. There is a clear demand for this kind of space and participatory process at Dartington - people felt welcome and wanted to contribute and give of their time and thoughts.

Engagement and dialogue through participatory creative activities and processes allowed people to reflect alongside each other in a safe and contained way, to shift perspectives and to look towards the future. It built co-operation and a valuing of all perspectives, strengthening ties and links between people and places.

Suggested Next Steps

The senior management team alongside relevant members of staff undertake a review of Dartington initiatives, community involvement mechanisms and communication processes in response to verbatim feedback, reflections within this report and future usage suggestions outlined in the Invitations to Join in section of this report.

Verbatim and documentation material in the form of stories, photographs, collage blocks generated by visitors to the shop, to be reviewed and mined for further usage within Dartington mechanisms eg signage, interpretation, communication, publicity, exhibitions, archive.

Creative mechanisms for exploring and resolving diversity of opinion not undertaken during this programme to be piloted focusing on building relationships and partnerships for the future with an emphasis on :

- business tenants already based on the estate
- local arts, ecology, sustainability, and personal transformation professionals
- local Dartington residents.

Ongoing creative and participatory methods for broad community involvement in the evolution of Dartington are explored and used in core programmes.

A creative and open processes of dialogue and exchange between staff and management is established, in order to involve staff in expressing opinions, contributing ideas, and establishing feedback loops as well as enabling deeper cross-departmental working.

Regular, estate wide 'Neighbourhood' (staff, tenants, residents, students) events and activities that allow for reflection, dialogue and celebration are explored with the aim of building an inter- dependent community.

Programme Overview

Pre-delivery Diagnostic Stage

The project aimed to take a snapshot at this moment of transition and change at Dartington and to create a living art-work that would reflect this.

The activities delivered were devised in response to initial mapping and research in Dartington; and drawn from our experience and practice in working with communities at a time of change. Our mapping through formal and informal conversations with the wide Dartington community (staff, volunteers, tenants, residents, visitors), enabled us to offer a series of activities that focused on the past and present whilst seeking to lay foundations and prepare the ground for future engagement and dialogue between Dartington and the wider community of which it is part.

In response Encounters devised activities designed to allow a space for participatory reflection to specifically:

- celebrate and honour each person's individual experience of Dartington in the past;
- create a platform for people to express and explore their feelings and perspective of the present;
- explore some of the components needed for a Dartington of the future that people could feel confident in being a part of (both in terms of what it does and how it operates).

The whole programme focused on building self awareness, and human interaction as an essential tool for self and community change and transformation. The depth of response and repeat involvement by people to this approach was key to the programme's success in reaching approx 800 people in a few months.



Invitations to join in – Summary

Shop visitors were offered seven different participatory invitations to reflect on and express personal stories, feelings and aspirations about the past present and future of Dartington. Using shop protocol was at the heart of our approach. As soon as someone came into the shop they were greeted by a shop assistant, Encounters' Creative Directors Ruth Ben-Tovim or Ben Yeger. A person visiting was invited to walk around the shop and were introduced to the Invitations to Join In, which were displayed like shop produce, at different stations around the shop.

In this initial stage the shop visitor was acting as audience, a witness to other peoples' contributions laid out before them, a process of absorbing and making meaning from the images, words, traces of others. This was often a very moving stage for people who were inspired, taken aback, disarmed by the level and depth of contribution. The shift from audience to participant was a delicate move facilitated through the intuition and expertise of the shop facilitators gauging the appropriate way-in for each individual. An individual could choose the level and depth of their engagement and this often changed from an initial 'I'm just having a look' to a one or two hour involvement with that person coming back to the shop several times during the four months.

The shop opened at a time when there was a palpable 'Them and Us' culture, triggered by rapid change at Dartington on many levels. Shop facilitators sought to tread the line between being open and receptive to any material and feelings that people brought with them as well as being neutral and balanced.

Participants' engagement in The Invitations to Join In remained the central focus for shop assistants, with the personal material which people were bringing could be allowed to speak for itself alongside others' contributions.

Each Invitation offered participants an opportunity to contribute; both through activities which could be done alone or alongside another shop visitor. Invitations worked as both standalone activities and as part of a diverse range of opportunities to participate. This gave people a choice of contributing to just one, several, or all the activities. Five growing and evolving displays of Dartington past, present future were open for people to add to. Each Invitation demonstrating in practice the act and art of participation.

The key process that was taking place in the shop was the shift from audience to participant and within a context where many people felt cut off with recent changes in the history of Dartington.

"I stand here, I see that others before me have contributed, have written a story about this place we know and love, have planted a vegetable seed and revealed what they want to grow in their lives, have answered in a way that touches me, a universal question on a black board, have left a memory about the gardens, have told a story to a stranger about walking. I relate to much I see here and I see new points of view. As I witness others, I reflect on myself, I give value to what I already have, to my own experiences, I see there is room for me to add, to bring something of myself to these collections, to leave my own trace, to be part of building something that is meaningful, human, personal, relevant. I take a step, I join in, I reveal, I reflect and afterwards I understand a little more about who I am. I see myself and others and Dartington and our history and our future differently. The journey from audience to participant enables me to begin to see a new story about my role, what I and others living and working and investing in Dartington are capable of and can do together."

Imagined Journey of Engagement by a Visitor

The Invitations to Join in could be described as evolving artworks of everyday life. They not only enabled the powerful journey from audience/ participant to take place but they also created remote community engagement and connection. Hundreds of people who were never together in the same place at the same time, became connected and linked through the frame of Dartington - a process of humanizing the other, the stranger. The next pages summarise each Invitation to Join In and the Shop documentation section of this report details further the verbatim material gathered.

Invitation to join in – Stories board

‘Find a place on the map that has meaning for you , write a memory or story about that place on the paper, add your name and age, attach the story to the map using the pins and thread’



Collecting memories and stories about a place allows a shared authorship to evolve, people’s key moments in life, people’s experiences of the past can be shared and viewed alongside each other. A square of paper to leave a story of the past democratizes memory, valuing the one line memory of an eight year old climbing a tree at Park School as much as a seventy year old’s memories of Foundation Day. Shared memories and stories of a place build up as more people add to it, the perspective and layers of Dartington changing in front of people’s eyes, each person’s version of a shared place is given recognition and value. All stories are welcome, and giving value to painful and challenging memories as much as happier more joyful memories, grounds the collection in real life. This is an activity that has no judgement and welcomes all contribution. This collection of hundreds of human stories of Dartington reveals the joys and challenges of people’s lives. Many of the stories collected were reflected back in the ‘Dartington Stories’ performance, people’s written word brought to life through performance (see Dartington Stories section).



Future usage: The stories remain as a resource to use, for example; temporary or permanent public art work, for performance, for an alternative heritage style tour of Dartington, for promotional material or to trigger further dialogue and exchange.

“I was a pupil at Totnes High School for girls. During ‘A’ level music we were privileged to have Dartington String Quartet perform the set works. Every Christmas we were invited to the Hall for singing, performances and hand bell ringing. Happy days of listening to B Britten, P. Pears, Julian Bream + John Olda.”
Stories board. Marilyn Ellis. (Dartington Hall)

“I have read my poetry here, Dukes Room. Over many years listened to music and poetry, shared the gardens with people I love. This is one of the Places I come to refresh my soul. Long may it remain open to all and beautiful.”
Stories board. Jennie (Dartington Hall, Dukes Room)

“Seeing children & teenagers running around Great Hall courtyard in pyjamas, nighties & wellington boots. I was 14 & visiting (with my older brother in this 1st car - a triumph) my brother’s friend who was at the school. This vision of a freedom made me feel this was a possibility for me...I’ve carried it always.”
Stories board. Kitty Watkins, 52 (Dartington Hall, central courtyard)

“Many wonderful musical experiences in the Great Hall. My Son (now a professional musician aged 33!) aged 12 coming for a residential weekend – making music. Also bringing him to viola lessons (ages 17/18). Many lonely walks round the grounds en famille and with my 90 yr old mother.”
Stories board (The Great Hall)

‘Chalk your answers to the questions on the Blackboard’.



A question, which changed each week, was handwritten up on a room length blackboard. Sometimes there were two questions enabling a counterpoint eg What keeps you going, what holds you back? Questions were designed to allow people to honestly reflect on universal life questions and to share deep feelings and experiences. These questions were not usually specifically about Dartington but people could respond with a Dartington focused response if they wanted. Eg what would you change? We wanted to keep a constant sense of wide perspective to avoid a narrow, silo response. We wanted to offer an activity for people to look at and understand themselves in relation and alongside each other, and from this place to begin to explore future aspirations and ideas. The trace of other people’s handwriting left in chalk also offered a remote form of dialogue between people, not there in physical presence but clearly visible, a human trace of people there in the room considering questions alongside each other. Many people returned each week to answer the new question set and see the responses.



Future developments : Continue to use the blackboard to ask topical, personal, human questions and take the temperature of Dartington. It could be an ongoing activity taking place at Festivals, Conferences. Allowing for people to consider broader themes and personal connections. Questions should always be open and allow for ‘dark’ and ‘light’ response in this way keeping grounded and real for people.



Invitation to join in – I told a story about

‘Sit on the chairs with another person. Take it in turns to select one of the story themes that you would like the other person to tell you a personal story about. After you have each shared a story have your photograph taken and add it to the evolving display on the wall.’



An intimate activity between two people that offers a framework for personal interaction and exchange. This activity happened between shop visitor and shop facilitators, between strangers visiting the shop at the same time or between people who came together to visit the shop. Sharing a personal story on a theme (of Change, Love, Resilience, Earth, Loyalty, Leadership, Hurt, Home, Loss, Walking, Celebration, Trees, Play, Separation, Faith) enabled an authentic personal connection to take place between people and an opportunity to obliquely explore some of the themes we felt were relevant to the current context at Dartington that emerged from the diagnostic phase. The staff groups that visited the shop took part in this activity deepening their connection, stepping out of management structures and learning new things about each other. The story sharing activity also allowed people to be listened to without interruption or judgement; with all perspectives on a theme being welcomed without polarity, with the aim of increasing esteem and confidence. The evolving collection of photographs with people holding up a card announcing the stories shared, enabled an audience of fellow shop visitors to witness the exchange and imagine the stories told.



Future developments: Personal story sharing is a powerful tool in any community gathering or process. Offering a clear frame for this sharing creates safety and invites diverse groups of people to join in and share experiences without them being challenged. This activity connects with generations of people across the world who have used personal storytelling as a way of navigating and building community. With the rich history of Dartington, and the vast number of different points of engagement people have with the Estate, ongoing story sharing processes could be a unifying and levelling activity.

Invitation to join in – Recipe cards

‘Dartington Recipe Card: What’s the recipe for creating a sense of belonging at Dartington? Leave your name and age’



We commissioned the design of a double-sided recipe card that could be freestanding on the Elmhirst dining table at the centre of the shop. Using this graphically-led, metaphorical approach to explore the issue of belonging gave a constructive and positive slant to the responses and enabled a wide range of people to engage in this topic. The hundreds of recipes left showed that people feel a deep attachment to Dartington as a place as well as to its founders’ values and principles. The recipes also showed that a sense of belonging could be built through reducing confusion, improving clarity of communication, making policies and procedures less impersonal, and clarifying the routes for community and staff engagement.



The Invitation title designed was devised to be positive and forward-looking, in order to encourage people to voice solutions, ingredients, recipes rather than simply to criticize, attack or blame. Many valuable suggestions and ideas for improving communication, dialogue and for building inclusion and trust were offered.



Future developments: The process of community conversations and engagement in future plans will continue to build increased sense of belonging through clear, shared communications. Continuing to keep open channels for people to input is important, as is the sense that suggestions and listened to.

Invitation to join in - Tears

Take a journey around the lake of Tears. As you walk around the lake allow yourself to let in....

- What you feel grateful for, what brings you joy
- What you feel grief or sadness about.

Each stepping stone represents a different layer for you to reflect on in relation to these questions

- Self
- Family & Friends
- Community & Environment
- The Past & Ancestors
- The Web of Life



Use a small glass bottle to collect some tears from the lake and write about these on a sticker.

An in-depth, immersive activity for people willing to explore and experience shifts of perspective about their lives and the world around them. We encountered intense feelings of both grief and joy in relation to Dartington in the mapping stages of the project, echoing actually a tightrope that we all tread in navigating the joys and challenges of being alive at this moment in time. We wanted to offer a place within the Shop for people to name these feelings whether they be about Dartington specifically or about the wider world, friends, family, environment. We felt it appropriate to allow a place for strong emotions to be shared and an opportunity for people to choose for these to be about Dartington but not for them to be directed at Dartington as such. The Stepping Stone activity was also designed to breakdown a 'them and us' culture and recognise the interconnected and relational aspect of community.



Most of the Stepping Stone fragments written on bottles were in fact linked to very personal or worldwide experiences, once people were given an opportunity to encounter these emotions from a wide lens and a variety of perspectives. For visitors taking part in the Stepping Stones it was a deep and often transformative process, a series of encounters with self from a range of different perspectives and standpoints. The physical act of moving between the Stepping Stones, sent a signal to the imagination to expand self-identity layer by layer until the participant could experience themselves and their concerns and joys as a part of a wider web. This activity was designed to place Dartington in a wide perspective and to introduce an embodied way of understanding that there is no objective position as all positions and perspectives are affected by where you stand and how you choose to look.

Future developments: This activity revealed the depths that people are willing to go in exploring who they are and their relationship to each other, place and the wider world. It allowed an opportunity to reflect and see current emotions or concerns within a wider trajectory of experience and life. The embodied processes enabled people to see themselves from different perspectives and to experience the power of Interconnection, a position of understanding where everything is linked and realisation that 'what I do matters and that I make a difference'. Creative engagement work between the wider Dartington community that allows people to embody and step into the shoes of the other would be useful in dislodging fixed 'them and us' positions and allow for a shared sense of responsibility and moving forward.



Invitation to join in – Seeds

Choose a plant pot and fill it with soil. Choose a seed and plant it in the soil and as you plant and water the seeds think about something in your life you would like to grow, a hope for the future, a secret ambition, a change. On the other side write about how you personally could also help the seeds of change grow at Dartington. Write these hopes on a stick and add your name and age.



A highly popular and successful activity that engaged visitors of all ages in planting vegetable seeds, modelling change, growth and transformation as something that is possible, visible, and completely natural. The activity gave an opportunity for participants to begin to imagine a future: generally, and also specifically for Dartington and for their engagement in the Dartington community. This also served as a metaphor for the community's engagement in Dartington at this point in time at a period of change as sowing the seeds for future involvement. The seeds that were planted grew throughout the project and the seedlings were used symbolically in the performances and then planted in the Patch of Ground project.

Future developments: Food Growing and harvesting initiatives would clearly be popular in Dartington bringing people together, to share knowledge and develop skills.

Invitation to join in – Micro-worlds

Micro Worlds

Cut out fragments from the collection of photographs that catch your eye and stick them onto a piece of card to make your own mini world of Dartington. Choose a place on the wall and stick your micro world on it.



Hundreds of images of Dartington and the surrounding area were taken and printed for people to use to create their 'micro worlds' as a collage on a small canvas. The photographs taken were specifically focused on images of the edges or borders of Dartington Estate; Totnes and Dartington village. In the diagnostic and research stage the historical and seemingly current tension between Dartington 'up the hill' and its local community emerged and so the photographs focused on this border allowing people to visually consider this relationship and express their own thoughts about it through the creation of mini collages. As the display evolved a wall filled with micro worlds showing Dartington in relationship to its borders.

Further Developments

These images make a strong display and could be used in another form – for exhibition, in the Welcome centre, also to look at in order to learn from and observe the visual statements made. Using different methods to enable people to voice thoughts and issues allows for a range of voices to be heard and for people to 'debate' without words in a constructive and co – evolving way.

Other Activities in the shop

Information Area

Information about Dartington's three strands of work; Arts, Sustainability, Social Justice was on display for people to take away or read, together with brief details about future plans. Also on display in this area were the goals of the Shop project as agreed by the Dartington Senior Management Team and a series of questions asking 'What could you bring to Dartington? What would you like to do together with Dartington? What does Dartington need to do to make this happen?'



Information in this area was provided by the various departments within the Trust, using the shop as a space to share information with and involve the public in schemes and initiatives going on during the life of the shop.

As a result, visitors were given an opportunity to feed into the Land Review Process in which maps of the estate were left for people to write/ draw on answering three questions : - What could the Land be used for from 2014 onwards

- What ideas should go ahead?
- What could we do together to make it happen?

Several people fed into this activity in depth and for others it prompted conversation and dialogue about the future.

Information about the new Space complex was also available. This is a new initiative for the Arts as part of the drive to move from being predominantly a receiving house for work to becoming a creative centre, where increasingly new work in the arts is developed and realised. Space is a multidisciplinary resource for artists and arts organisations, incorporating performing arts and visual arts studio, performance and exhibition spaces. Future plans for Space are for the facilities to be used by a mixture of artists in residence, artists and companies hiring the space for their work, community programmes and projects led by the Arts at Dartington. People could leave contact details in response to the questions :

- What would you like to do or bring to Dartington Space?
- Would you need anything from Dartington to make this happen?
- How could you work in partnership with Dartington?

There was also online questionnaire from Schumacher college to find out from people about what type of new green skills and craft short courses people they might be interested in seeing in the future, information about ways of becoming a volunteer.

The involvement in this information area was limited and slow. Many people read information but were reticent to engage in a deep way with what was on offer. This may have been to do with the way that information was shared and responses requested, or could have been because the community consultation work that the Trust has recently embarked on is still being established as a trusted route.

Mobile shop

Encounters created a mobile version of the shop to take out to a range of different street-based locations. A kit was created that could fit into the back of a car including: two chairs from the collection and a small dart side table; a trestle table; and a portable blackboard. A number of the Invitations to Join In that were on offer in the shop were also re-created and taken out for the mobile shop. These included: a portable Memories and Stories Map of Dartington for people to leave a personal memory or story; Tell me A Story activity for people to sit on the chairs and share personal stories on themes; and Blackboard Questions and Answers. Information about Space and small maps for people to contribute to the Land Review process were also taken out.

The mobile shop visited ; Totnes Market, Cider Press Centre, Area outside the Co – Op in Totnes Town, Pavillions Leisure Centre. Due to wet weather stop offs at Follaton House and The Mansion House had to be cancelled.

This mobile process also included visiting Dartington Primary School, The Grove Primary School and KEVICC where the Dartington Mini world collage activity was also included. At The Grove Primary school a workshop with a selection of children from Y5 and 6 took place before parents and teachers joined in after school

The response was positive from all taking part and there were no barriers presented by venues or requests refused – all were extremely welcoming.

Future Usage

Devising creative and participatory drop in activities that link Dartington with its physical community would be an effective way of building audiences, developing links and strengthening partnerships. These could be creative consultation activities focused on building community involvement in decisions or more activities for all ages focused on broadening and extending the reach of activity that Dartington is offering. Eg; Visiting companies or artists undertaking residencies at Dartington Space could be encouraged to design activities that could be taken out to streets and public spaces in the area. Awareness-raising and recruitment for festivals such as Tagore, Home, Interrogate, could develop a street-based interactive presence before festivals. Prospective tutors running skills-based practical short courses at Schumacher could run stalls in the market for drop-in activity to take place.



Performance



"I just wanted to say how much I enjoyed the performance today. The simple fact that you are there, saying those things in that manner gives me hope for the future of Dartington. I was really impressed by your courage and integrity.

It's amazing how much you've achieved in the space in the last few months and how welcome you have made people feel."

Emailed feedback

To mark the end of the project, and to feedback material collected in the shop, Encounters Directors Ruth Ben-Tovim and Ben Yeger worked with three professional performers: Mark Drummond, Josephine Larsen and Ivan Kushner to create 'Dartington Stories' an interactive performance that took place in the shop reflecting the personal memories and stories, present reflections, and future aspirations gathered from almost 1,000 people who had taken part in the project. Verbatim material was used as well as more improvised interpretative sections reflecting back undercurrents and themes emerging during the Shop project.

Five performances of *Dartington Stories* were presented on April 13th 2011, the last day that the shop was open to the Public. Approximately 125 people came throughout the day to see the performances. The audiences were diverse in age and connections to Dartington and the majority of these people had visited the shop during its three months of opening. There was a very low turn out from staff and senior management. The performance lasted for one hour and a sound recording was made of the performance by Sound Art Radio. The performance was very positively received by audiences, and was a successful way of sharing some of the vast collection of material generated in the shop as well as a potent way of collectively allowing strong emotions to be named and let go.

"I really got a great deal from the performance - it was very healing for me. I must admit to feeling ambivalent initially - I keep having to practice being 'open' when it comes to anything up at Dartington! So when the start of the show felt like it was all going to be 'nice' and happy - I could feel myself shutting down. Then... You really pulled me in. I became enchanted and most importantly - moved. Some of those stories - and the way they were expressed/told/narrated by you all really touched me. I could feel myself 'letting go' and connecting/laughing/crying. I was glad that it got more hard hitting as time went on - very cathartic for me and I felt that the voices of those who have been seriously affected and damaged, actually, by what has gone on at Dartington were being heard (by you anyway).

Somehow that was enough to release me from my 'position' of hurt and anger - perhaps not completely but it has started a process. Towards forgiveness. I would like to thank you for that."

Emailed feedback

The process of taking verbatim written material into performance added value and significance to the material and became a powerful vehicle to hear the voices of hundreds of people with a connection to Dartington. Many people came to see the performances who had left content in the shop and they were able to hear themselves represented back in a professionally-directed performance that valued all contributions equally - thereby increasing a sense of self-worth, inclusion and hope for the future. New people who had not visited the shop until this final day were able to absorb the richness and diversity of the feelings, thoughts, ideas and memories about Dartington.

The performance

As visitors entered the shop they were greeted by one of the performers who welcomed people individually, invited them to walk around and view the shop and find the other performers who were trying to answer the question 'What is the spirit of Dartington'. Each performer was placed around the shop at the different Invitations To Join In stations, and as the audience joined them they invited them to looking at verbatim material generated as a way of answering this question. Once all the audience had arrived the performance began taking place in different areas of the shop with audiences able to move around freely.

Questions were asked in the shop on the blackboard each week (see Shop Documentation material) and answers to some of these questions, starting with 'What's the Spirit of Dartington?', top and tailed sections of the performance. Other questions and answers shared during the performance were 'What keeps you going, what holds you back?', 'What would you change?', 'What makes you smile?', 'What do you fear?', 'How can the seeds of change at Dartington grow?'. In between different performative ways of sharing these lists of answers, the performers read out verbatim personal stories and memories left on the large map in the shop (see Shop Documentation) whilst moving through the space. Stories ranged from people who had been to school at Aller Park and Foxhole, people with personal connections to the Elmhirsts, people who had come to Dartington on teaching courses, Schumacher courses, summer school courses, or had been at the College of Arts, people who have a connection with the land and the gardens, and people who's children and children's children had sat on the Donkey in the Garden.

The performance also included a scene with two performers sitting around the Elmhirst dining table in the shop and taking on the persona of Leonard and Dorothy Elmhirst having breakfast together whilst reading out and commenting upon the [Recipes for creating a sense of belonging at Dartington](#) (see Shop Documentation). This section was a way of sharing this verbatim material as well as exploring the community's relationship with Dartington past, present and future.

"I really enjoyed and was moved by the performance, which I think was an interesting balance of emotion and steel. Some very interesting decisions in the piece I thought - the Dorothy & Leonard segment took some nerve to pull off, but I think you did. The end section was really quite hard and poignant. I'm glad the piece ended with hope, because I think that is a correct analysis. I think you reached a lot of people - in the best sense of that word. I've seen quite a lot of work 'reflecting' on this period of change - not surprisingly quite a few students and College staff made work about this. But that was work made from the inside, and this was much more dispassionate. I think you have drilled down well into the substrata of difference and discontent that (perhaps always) ferments when there is a sense of privilege and Other. "The Trust" will always be a slightly mysterious monolith - show me an organisation where that isn't true - but I wonder how the work can be presented to those who didn't come to the performance? Real value..."

Emailed feedback

The Tears of Joy and Sadness (see Shop Documentation) were spoken softly into a microphone over live music whilst three performers stepped around the lake holding and reading the small bottles of tears. Towards the end of the performance a structured improvisation scene took place with one performer becoming the host of a TV show 'Therapy on the front line' interviewing another performer who was enacting being a Therapist talking about their work on the front line with a complex client 'Dartington Past Present and Future'. In a playful way this section of the performance enabled Encounters to feedback some of the reflections made during their time in the shop (see Key Reflections).

The performance ended with a last question and set of answers 'How can the seeds of change at Dartington grow?' and the audience was invited to transport seedlings planted by visitors in the shop from a table on one side of the shop to the windowsill on the other side to get some light and sun. This collective act of hope and optimism ended the performance.

Future Developments: What's The Spirit of Dartington could be staged again. There are many people, particularly staff who did not see the performance and it is a powerful tool for dialogue and for transformation. The radio recording of the performance could be made available for a wider audience. Dartington could consider using performance to present and explore issues amongst staff or with the wider community. This is a tried and tested method in many organisations who use role play, forum theatre and other creative processes to build community, open dialogue and increase communication.

Shop Documentation

Weekly blackboard question

Week 1

What Keeps You Going?

People / Ideas / Landscape / Unicorns / Trust / Curiosity / Spirit / Art / Landscape / Sea x2 / Food x2 / Drink / Parties / Cats and Dogs / The deep seated desire to disprove the futility of existence / Coffee / Sunshine x2 / Water / Trees / The thought of it being over / Others / Music and singing / Nature / My children / Commitment to change / Twiglets / Love of people and figuring out what makes them 'tick' / Knowledge of death / Love x 3 / Hollywood imi 50ph / The joy and spirit of life / Good drugs / My garden / Kindness / Faith x2 / Inspiration x2 / Spontaneous laughter / Making connections with people and places that are unknown to me / Joy / Daydreaming / Open warm inclusive people / Sleeping well / My daughter / Red bull / Passion / My favourite things / Jimmy / My heart / Not knowledge / Caring people / My brothers and sisters / Past success / Being able to express myself / Morecombe and wise / My children / Hope / Excitement / Curiosity / Change / Flowers / Belief that things can be better / Forget yesterday, live for today and hope for tomorrow

What holds you back?

Resistance to change / Daydreaming / Anxiety of being disappointing / Fear of failure / The lack of ability to just 'Be' / Fear of letting others down / Failure / Fear x5 / Judging / Competitive people / Idiots / Nothing / Time / Bureaucracy / Fear, fear, fear / Not much / Nothing when you really think about it... / Forgetting to ask for help / A 'them and us' culture – why don't they do something? / My limited energy / Insecurity / Impatience / Complete poverty / Myself / Limitations / Pain / Patience / Overwhelm / Not know if it/I am worthwhile / Angry people / My head / Tiredness / Nothing except the weather / Perfectionism x2 / Lack of time / Old age / Not knowing what I need / Lack of confidence / Personal complexes / Lack of money and time / My critic / My head / Fear of getting it wrong / Abject terror of doing something/anything / Only seeing the trees and only rarely the wood / Confidence / Poverty and laziness / Exhaustion / Negativity / My mum / Jealousy

Week 2

What questions do you most want to ask?

How do we learn to listen more compassionately?

When can we have a canteen?

Is change always a good thing?

Is change always happening anyway?

Think about encouraging local arts

What does 'sustainability' mean to the Dartington Trust?

How to encourage approachability and community engagement?

Uniting together, look forward to change, be positive

How can the wondrous understandings held in Schumacher College be shared with those who are not in the academic elite?

When will we see open books?

Who is most likely to actually tell the truth about decisions that are being made/planned

Do you remember Margaret Bar Dance Mime Theatre?

Are we good?

If you could achieve anything in the world, what would it be?

Why is Dartington's Great Debate about Tagore so expensive? Who are the people who can afford £30 for the meal and discussion? I only want the debate, I cannot possibly afford to eat out!

Can you feel nature within and relating to you?

How to honour what was here before the Elmhursts? What local history and culture does Dartington sit within?

What would inspire and enable the Dartington Trust to create an Eco Village?

What would you change?

The intention of Dartington was to bring the arts to the ordinary local people and not just the privileged.
Put the office spaces back to proper use, real hands on work
Less meetings more action
Less corporatism, celebrate diversity
Gather the wisdom and expertise from the local community give local people meaningful work instead of bringing people in from outside
Opinions and perceptions
Less 'silo' working – genuine one Dartington
Studios for local artist to rent at reasonable rates
Going round and round in circles, spirals are better
Use the space for grass-roots involvement and meeting
Transparency- clarity – straightforwardness. Telling Foxhole people renting office/work space that Di would still be working with them, and then making Di redundant... lies to smooth whose path?
What Dartington needs is real community as it was intended to be – participating without profit motive
My willingness to stop and listen
Our educational structure so that natural curiosity was encouraged and celebrated

Week 3

What is your favourite view?

The light through the trees, Twilight, Looking over St Ives, The magic of the river Dart, The courtyard lit up coming out of a late night concert, The river walk at sunset, The sea from the cliffs at Bantham, The darling fritillias in spring on the banks, In the ½ yellow ½ green field, Looking at the sky where the 2 birds flew over my head and reminded me of the mysteries unfolding, Nature, Looking across the tilt yard to the great hall from the end of the witch hazel walk, framed by the branches of the plane trees, The flowering witch hazel trees, Pink moon, Roe deer in the fallen oak field, Pay it forward, Walking up the drive view to the left, The hills in bloom in summer, The Barn cinema screen, Full moon, The sunrise over Iona...., But also the autumn trees, My cat's arse as takes me for a walk around the gardens, Swimming back to shore, Swimming out to sea, Full moon, The sea during sunset, A smile on my daughter's face.

Week 4

What would you risk your life for?

For my beloveds, To be able to walk well, Sustainable earth, The people I love, People and animals that I love, Freedom, Truth and love, Peace in the world, Justice and freedom, My husband, children, family and friends, Increasingly more, Don't know, Loved ones, Love, Family, Friends and pets, Truth, Honesty and loved ones xx, Love, My Family, Being alive! I do it in every moment, Children, My family, Everything and everyone special to me, Freedom

What do you cherish?

Life, My family, My soul, My life, My companions, The trees, The birds, Sea, Sky...., Dartington, Trust..., Loved ones, My family, Every moment, The arts, Spirituality, Music, My son and everyone: for they too are my son, My family, Spring birdsong, Family, Life, The sun on my face, Fairtrade chocolate, Beautiful gardens, Laughter and love, Pets, Friends, Family, Crème brulee, Nature, Healing, Animals, Our planet, Family friends, LIFE!, Friends, Truth.

Week 5 & 6

What is the Spirit of Dartington?

A moving feast, Inspiration in nature meets creative innovation, Togetherness love hope and inspiration intelligence and feeling xxx thank you so much, Its creative vibes, Are the spirits (plural) expanding my own spirit(s), being at a summer school (16), Arts and staying up all night; fantastic sunrise – the world bigger than a semi in post-war austere 1950's Exeter, Permission to 'go there' to places of dark and light, Aspiration to create communities, transient, surprising, engaging, Find new languages, transfer skills, celebrate, live, as fully and richly as possible!, Its uniqueness to everywhere else, The ART, Different types of art, A place to wonder and to wander, Yes! I like this, Me too, Definitely!!, A place of deep nourishment with time to heal and let go....., A beating heart, Inspiration and vibrancy, Generosity

– something for everyone, Beauty justice truth, Long walks, tall trees paddles in the river and adventures in the woods – magic and wonder and rest, Love light and a field of genius, poetry and inspiration – a soft, holding, safe place – unfettered, Freedom to explore, green roaming landscape, Nature, Its peace and beauty, Different types of art, Have fun, Joy of the soul, Dancing and holding, I think the spirit of Dartington was the college – it may take a long time to recover from its loss, Nature, EVERCHANGING sometimes in tune with the world beyond and sometimes not, Bee yourself, Grand beautiful and mysterious, A beating heart, Its creative vibes.

Week 7

What or who do you miss?

Reality (when I forget to be here), My son Mischa when I forget to remember we are one in spirit, my connection to 'god' when I feel separate...My dad when I forgot that he didn't really die, I miss my dad SY, All the music art random oddness of Dartington students, My boyfriend who lives far from here, In the middle of a mirror is an island with a tree, The roots tap into our soul, the tips to the possibilities of dreams, This is my 'Hippy Tree', This is where we belong to Dartington - Mehal, I miss my sister who is on a school trip to Barcelona, Aubs when he moved house, I miss my family when I feel hurt or upset when I am not at home, Ben, we were sad - he was disappointed to leave us, I will miss the peace here, I miss talk and action about social justice, How can we make a better world for all of us not just a few? Summer when the wind blows winter when the sun burns, All the things I never had all the days I lost, Sometimes I miss myself in the moment, How can we make a better world for all of us not just a few?

Week 8

What do you want to grow in your life this Spring?

New songs and music, Confidence, Love and acceptance, Rest and spaciousness, Enjoyment in my new job, A capacity to open my heart even more, Music, Humour, It to be sunny, A son-in-laws safe return from Afghanistan, Constructive and creative use of time left, Peace/friendship/community, Improve my ART, Life and stability, Fondness, Stay inside when its cold, Fangs and a tail, My creative potential, Trust that I am supported, The courage to follow my INTUITION and my body's knowing, Weeds – dandelions ragwort clover long grass brambles, Tadpoles into frogs, Hair – thinking of growing out my fringe, My new projects, Trust, Joy, Kindness, Equanimity, Lust 4 life, Happiness, Friendship, Joy.

How can the seeds of change at Dartington grow?

Linking the messy creative town with neat, safe Dartington – e.g. TTT, Acceptance of what and how Dartington is now, Alongside communication on what and how Dartington is now!, Patience, nurture and the hands of the community, Upwards, Hopefully like a flower garden with sunshine and rain, Hopefully in a spirit of community and creativity rather than with the sole aim of financial gain, Through rain and sunshine – the tears of the past and smiles of the future, Confidence, In people not profit, Actively seeing from all sides, Let children climb the trees, Through greater honesty, Dialogue, Communication – keep!, Colour, Turn vision into mission, For people not to be greedy.

Week 9

What is your relationship to endings?

Inevitable - all things must pass - but some things are eternal, Endings are more important than beginnings, Only change, It depends what's ending: hang on for dear life, avoid the grief at all costs, thank God that's over, Hope – fears – wait – participate..., Nothing lasts for ever, Indecisive, New beginnings, Just because the lizard is nodding the head it does not mean its happy, Optimism – new adventures, Black plastic sacks, What to hand on to whom?, Nostalgia and looking ahead with gladness, Well... it never ends, I do both A LOT..., Sadness in my heart and sheer exuberance at future possibilities at the same time, the sadness subdues under the bubbling newness... to be explored later in a quieter moment, Time to 1. celebrate, 2. put my feet up, 3. review – think – get excited, 4. get started again.

Shop Documentation: Recipe cards for a sense of belonging

'Acceptance, warmth, interest, two way conversation, challenges, recognition, variety' (Sally age 65)

'Listen to the quietest voice. Ensure the good natural evolutions endure (i.e. the memory path higher close to Aller Park) Overwriting is not always a good idea' (Jenny age 30)

'Home –wherever you go make it beautiful and be optimistic. This way you'll find home anywhere. Love – forgive don't be jealous, let love take control of everything this way you'll truly be happy. (Holly age 15)

'Participation and engagement, sense of community ownership over projects, meeting your husband and getting married at Dartington!' (Alicia age 36)

'Trusting the trust, consultation (local) transparency, honesty, integrity' (Liz age 59)

'4 eggs, 1lb flour, 11b butter, ½ 1lb of sugar, a grate of Zest humour, 1 smidgen of silence, a large handful of creativity. Mix with the minds of many' (Andrea)

'Being a poet and translator from Danish, Norwegian and Swedish. Loving Dartington and all it does and has done. Have read here at Dartington.' (Anne age 86)

'Keep doors open to locals. Accommodate local entry into events (like is a Ways with Words and like used to be with music summer school). Free parking. Café open/White Hart.' (Kitty age 52)

'The experience of belonging might have problems as well as advantages associated with it if you try to force it to happen.'

'Growing food on the estate, communal allotment, big food sharing day. People like this.'

'I am crushed by the latest evolution at Dartington i.e. the cessation of creative activity – will continue to visit to observe next stage of development.' (Mary age 88)

'Create flow of energy by having a bank of electric bikes at Dartington, Schumacher and Totnes.'

'Do not turn it into a corporate/business park/wedding venue hell. Arts must stay central and supported. I love this place.' (Kate age 28)

'Friendliness and connecting with people.' (Carol age 65)

'Access and participation is the key. Need to be able to come and do things, more that happens more people feel engaged and a sense of belonging. Getting people to do this is another question.' (Cathy)

'Genuine community engagement/involvement/consultation. Take a blank sheet, Ask people a question – let them ask the questions, Ensure no answers before start.'

'A combination, developed over many years, of good experiences, discovery, constancy and generosity, on a bed of welcome and warmth.' (Robert age 49)

'Unwinding tensions in the social system so we all relax in a deep authentic truth – a mutual home. And at Dartington, massive communication between departments, a sense of families within a big family. Looking out for each other – lovely.' (Victoria age 46)

'There are lots of local musicians who need space to practise and perform. Is it possible to have some affordable space at Dartington.' (Jane)

'Recipe for belonging is to unwrap all your inner connection that keeps you to be in your own bubble and show your need for love and to be accepted by others.' (Libertad age 44)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

'Practising gratitude for the things, people and activities around you.' (*Chris age 39*)

'Encouraging diversity, ambiguity and care: Don't break things that aren't broken. A black and pink pig. (*Awen age 9*)

'Exchanging jobs for a week. Deep ecology walk. Experiencing Dartington through our senses.'

'Encourage a connection to place, a space to create e.g. shared allotments, studio spaces, hubs, hot desks, walks with foraging, activities open to all.'

'Many people (including myself) have a special memorable connection to this place already – feeling free here to mark this will celebrate a sense of belonging.' (*Lucy age 54*)

'A place of freedom.'

'Put the past-present-future all together, mix it and get the today better, special and unforgivable.' (*Jo age 33*)

'Awareness of all that has gone before. Forgiveness and compassion for the present. Energy for the future – standing on the threshold of a new way of belonging that is infinitely more sustainable holistic and healthy.' (*Simon age 40*)

'Key people holding the various spaces, people who actually know us as friends/neighbours/responsible community members. People like Di at Foxhole.' (*Kitty age 52*)

'Functional space for local community to use, without it being prohibitively expensive. Such as the dance space.' (*Kitty age 52*)

'Mutual ethos, empathy, respect for all things, joy of life, friendly disposition.' (*Stephanie age 47*)

'Five weeks of concerts, classes and music making, 1200 students, 200 artists, 100 concerts, 100 volunteers = people from around the world feel like they belong and have ownership.' (*Emily age 34*)

'Invest in people's uniqueness and let them express it at work.' (*Wayne age 50*)

'Stay the night and walk in the grounds very early and watch the mist clear and feel the presence of the soul of the garden, the perfumes, the peace and solitude.' (*Bea*)

'1. Walk or travel around the landscape. 2. Listen to what is going on. 3. Join in at any level.' (*Amanda age 50*)

'Put something into Dartington in some way or other.' (*Wendy*)

'A space for painting and drawing and exhibiting work of artists or 'aspiring' artists.' (*Jane*)

'Transparency, community, access, affordability, conservation.'

'People, love and laughter are key to belonging. Forget about 'corporate' and 'spin' – the place will die if you add those ingredients.' (*Di age 56*)

'Inviting people in, no back biting, friendly, love and care, supportive of each other, personal friendships.'

'Welcome – sincere rather than polite. Jobs for local people with local accents. Minimum barriers – physical and otherwise – open access. More affordable access to opportunities.' (*Georgia age 53*)

'Coming to enjoy the beautiful gardens. Interesting events involving music, dance, art, poetry, history of Dartington, folk club.' (*Mo age 60*)

'Trust, reciprocity, friendship, engagement, Town↔ Estate' (*Janey age 53*)

'Don't allow Dartington to become financially elitist. Make the previous student accommodation into a 'HOSTEL'! Clean, fresh and welcoming for visitors from around the world at a real affordable cost.'

'Friends, wildlife, creativity, books, discussion of art, possibilities.' (S age 35, TQ9)

'Taking the time to smile and say hello to everyone, no matter what their circumstance and joining together more. Afterschool workshop for parents and children to come together.' (Sharon age 40, TQ10)

'Greater honesty and transparency about how things really are for DHT' (Laura age 57, TQ9)

'The sense of 'individuality'. The whole area has it. The Cider Press HAD it but has been made bland like anywhere else.' (Jo, TQ12)

'Involve local talent more, commission local designers, artists, architects, celebrate what you have here. Don't be SNOBS' (C, PL21)

'Relax and Bee Happy' (Susi, TQ7)

'Creating an amazing progressive world famous art college would help me feel Dartington belonged to us/Totnes/the World?!' (Nick age 52, TQ9 5FQ)

'Settle, open the doors, invite people in, go out and visit them too, get to know them. Stir together thoroughly and bake long and slow on a low heat.' (Cari age 32, TQ12)

'All ages need to be involved in the mix, tolerance, ethics above money, small above big, and cook for the long term.' (Lindsay, age 39, TQ9)

'Music, fun, parties, noise, stories, flowers.'

Charlotte, 49, TQ9.

Sack the Trustees and replace them with local people. Establish a Transition College. 99 year leases on outlying Land to growers etc near Totnes allow a land- based community.

Eileen F, 69, SL1 8NW

It does in itself, it's in the vibes! Friendliness, attention, beautiful people. Amazing variety of music, welcoming from the trees and a sense of love in the Great Hall. Feeling of home.

Beth, 31, TQ9 6HL

Lots of juice, stir, leave in bright redeeming light and let evaporate all water until crystalline. The juice comes from us and the earth. x

Michael Bowes, 23, TQ9 5UG

I feel the recipe for belonging is Freedom and spirituality that Dartington oozes. A truly beautiful peaceful space for people to relax and reflect.

Daniel Burston, 25, EX6 7QT

Community is born of people sharing time and place – meeting their need through work/livelihood. If Dartington can once more provide meaning for Employment for the local people, then community will come.

Magada Crace, 63, TQ4 6HG

Beauty - soft – glory – center – something – sprit – tender – level – care – truth –conscious – justice.

I see no connection now with the people who are running Dartington and its history. Maybe that's a wrong perception, it feels like that though.

An event for locals – create with locals to involve the local community, a celebration. Maybe a reflection on our history.

Inclusion – don't pay lip-service to welcome – got out of the way to be accessible – there has always been a town and gown divide between Dartington and Totnes – need to change that and break down sense of exclusivity. Find a balance between paying the bills and open, easy, exploration – find a way to escape from top down paternalism of the Elmhursts – let people in and bring ideas.

Sue, 65, TQ9 5RQ

Being able to participate and give 'something' of yourself to 'whoever' and try very hard not to judge the others.

94, TQ9

In practical terms I think, for the local poorer people, and annual ticket to ANYTHING (except the Big Greetings) so we can afford to come (it'd be a regular money for the estate!) I miss so many things here. Also you need evening and Sunday transport, car share! You're not sustainable all these cars! Think long term. This down-time is a blip in the big pic!

Remove top-down control in favor of participatory governance.

MG, 51, EI7 8DB

Creating the balance of honest heartfelt encouragement and personal space and independence.

It has been killed – it was horrendous when they closed the college. I have every expectation that Dartington Hall will be turned into a medieval theme park.

Joanna, TQ9.

Sharing meals, working the land, space to roam, creative space...that is open to all...like this space.

Robin, 27, TQ9 5SE

Business and Trust need to mesh so business follows the ethical principles of the trust e.g. promotion of locality as averse to Globalization.

People are withdrawing saying they don't want to have anything to do with Dartington. There is no responsibility for the past people or history.

Henry, 12, TQ3.

Nice trees and the café is nice. I think the castle is really great. I like the donkeys.

Jill, 63 TQ12.

Magic. What is happening here!! (Cider Press Center) It has lost its magic. Christmas was sad. Why have you got boring men's clothes in the window of the cider press centre. It's all like yet another department store.

Sheila, 72, TQ9 5TN.

Be open – not hidden. Imagine a wide horizon. BREATHE, and let some of the pain around your heart, leave, maybe through the palms of your hands.

Brian Evans, 74.

Dartington is a place of change. It must not lose sight of what community means

Lesley, 46, TQ13

Respect. Integrity. Appreciation of different contributions. Inspiration. Mixed with risk of 'grass roots' rising where wind seeds it...

A picnic field.

Sarah, 50, TQ9 5NZ

Ingredients: Friends, warmth, love, fun, laughter, tears, caring, patience, tolerance, comfort, feeling truly at home.

Wendy, 53, TQ9

Having been to all at Dartington for everyone. Why not reduce the price of tickets for concerts and offer the school children when they are not a sellout.

PLS, 49, TQ9

Generous adults and mentors and gardeners...add challenge and time and effort and friends and love... bake over long summer eves and finish in open log fires, serve to the next 7 generations, with no conditions, just hope.

Simon, 43.

Love ♥

Danielle, 26, TQ9 5JS

Add one individual's personal sense of resonance to arts, sustainability and social justice, to a collective driven by making Dartington and the world a fair place for all sprinkle with fun and serve with integrity.

Hal, 36, TQ9

Accessible/affordable accommodation to make it possible for more people to operate low-impact land-based businesses. Sustainable and reliable

Shirley, 47, TQ9

Get involved in tree planting and care. Maybe adopt-a-tree and involve families in wild life initiatives.

Heather, 27, TQ9

Listen with an open heart.

Becky, 33, TQ9

Respect each other – we're all people so let's direct our energies in a positive way rather than venting anger.

Helen, 29, EX5 2AS

A handful of fantastic, special people, add some beautiful enthusiasm, a dash of inspiration, landscape/environment. Shake. Will create a unique mix. Dartington is special because of the people who live/work/visit here.

Catharine Sky, 14.

Lots of acrylic paint and manga anime, final fantasy and web blogging! (esp. homestuck!)

Be human in dealing with staff change. Operate at a human level don't just hand out letters about people's lives – call people in like a doctor and explain – make a process that reaches people where they are at rather than do it to them.

Reply to emails, belonging feels like it's being eroded here, very local groups of artists and others are being ignored.

Jacki, 55, TQ9 5JJ

Ensuring that those who feel marginalized can find a welcome. Creating a mini settlement that satisfies the need of a small community in times of transition.

Julia Watson, 14, TQ69HJ

People accepting you, for you. Showing unconditional love.

Take a rich history add: the love people have for this place add: a management who care about longevity - combine with group process, Non-Violent Communication and The Work that Reconnects. Have skilled facilitators (like Jenny Mackewn) mix this together. And out comes the future.

Chris Bathen, 69, TQ5 0PL

A continuation of creativity which encompasses the wider community.

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Georgia, 53, TQ9 5QL Since the closure of the college people are 'suspicious' about plans for Dartington. Belief that it will become more and more gentrified and elitist. There is the sense of it being something of a network for the privileged. Just read the other comments about people being ignored. SO TRUE – emails never answered.

Include everyone, dumb things down a bit to let people in on what's happening.

To live there. Emphasis on sustainable business by local people, also studios. Farm the land and supply produce. Welcome people to walk on and hold events on land without asking excessive money etc

Clare

People who care. Beautiful music. Tranquil gardens.

Emily Serem, 27, TQ1 5NA

Free/ discounted tickets for husbands/wives/ civil partners.

Jamie, 21, EX4 6HB

Commitment to putting people as individuals first.

Kat

A little bit of listening, a lot of respecting, 100kg of hard work, 7 tablespoons of compassion and spiritual love.

Matt Linley, 35-39, CO7 9DU

1 cup flour, 3/4 cup cocoa. 1/4 tsp salt, 6 tbsp butter, 8oz chocolate, 4 eggs, 1 cup sugar, 1 1/4 cup Guinness.

Whisk everything together. Add the Guinness. Pour into a baking pan. Bake for 25- 30 min. Enjoy. (The essence of this recipe- creative flair, a good stir, a stout intervention and a marvelously bubbly moment!)

MG

It's not about being equal to the trust, it's me coming in and seeing what I've been given on an individual basis I can walk through these gardens for free, other places you have to pay.

–The films are great – all these talks we can go to Sharpham – people woodlands and flowers we can see – we can walk along – and people have misunderstandings about what the trust should offer – they are forgetting how long they had with cheap rent – we need to be grateful for what we've had – the trust is OK but they could do it better, sit people round and negotiate – they've been spoilt and people in trust need to listen and keep word. At the end of the day it's their shops, their land and I have to get and receive what's possible- they are into money but they've got to be – I don't know the nitty gritty but there are things going on here that you wouldn't get.

James, 42, TQ9

Don't tell everyone you are open, experimental and innovative when you are the opposite!! Bring back the spirit of the Elmhirsts. Take Risks!!

Alice, TQ9 6E7

Living on the estate knowing the living history by being there. Knowledge and conversations with the Elmhirsts.

Shelley, 44, TQ7

Long trestle tables. Warmth outdoors. Food and drink. A wider group of invitees.

Jade, 41, TQ9 6AB

The management shouldn't lie to tenants, and then deny it blatantly. Vaughn Lyndsay shouldn't be paying himself over £100,000 a year to lose money. Claiming 'social justice' and then sacking trusted staff like Di Hearn does not help foster a sense of belonging. Poor Gypsy, the 16 year old foxhole resident cat who was kicked out of her home after being promised a new place at Lower Close, was obviously thought not 'to belong'.

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Jenny, TQ9

Enable people to use the facility at a reasonable cost. Run courses that are affordable for those living simple, ecological lives.

Accessibility

Jennie, TQ9

Smiles and open hands. Music – open to all. Words, art and music in conversation. Free or affordable events.

Brian, 59

Communicate between departments and tenants and with the whole organization. It's so hard to work with you at present.

Sue Milner, TQ10

Until there has been a chance for the community to be heard in their upset over change at Dartington it will be hard to move on and community to be real.

David, 39, TQ9

Just stick to their philosophy of social justice and stop lying to people. Should be a place for community not multi-national conferences.

Sheila, 58, TQ10 9LF

Live and work locally making connections with people and land and river.

To create community and cohesion in Dartington, use land and facilities to benefit local residence i.e. going toward creating celebration and meeting places.

Alex, 23 EX20 3JP

Spaces open for experimentation, involving lots of media-- radio, theatre, growth and art

Milly, 6, TQ9 6GA

Like it and be happy. ☺ ♥

Charlotte, 49, PL21 0QR

Music, books, sitting on lawns. Wondering, wandering, space to think and come inside and talk. Both a sense of history and a sense of editing future.

Claire, 42, TQ9 6GA

A dose of unconventionality, one pinch of creativity, a spoonful of no judgments, a bucket-load of optimism and a joy of life.

Richard, 52, TQ9 6N

Homes. Odd stuff. Trees. Gardens. Fun ideas. Neighbors. Random encounters.

Shop Documentation: Map stories

I first understood Gaia here. Thank you! (*The Old Postern, Schumacher College*)

Wonderful walks at lunch time with my amazing friend Di Hern xxx (*Foxhole*)

I love visiting Dartington, the shops, the food, and mainly the people, they are open-minded, different. Pauline, over 21!

My son just starting to walk – though he loves with visiting Grandparents – exploring fountains.

Walking in glory every day. I love the land and the land loves me. Kathy, 45.

When this room was a grocery shop you could buy excellent ham. Later, a tense meeting with trade union shop steward is about redundancy. Saw an elephant in a pink petty coat walk down Warren Lane. She spend the night behind this building. (*The gallery*)

Our first visit to Dartington was at the scrap store at a singing and planting seeds workshop organized by Chris and Lue and ran by Mikki + Duncan. What A Wonderful Start To Our new Journey. Susi / Merlin + Tallula. (*Northwoods*)

The amazing walk in the woods of Dartington estate. Cecilia, 27 (*Northwoods*)

Got Lost here. First day of work. Lost in the woods. Found by 2 old people with 2 dogs – one black lab, one chocolate. They drove me up the hill. A nice start. Ed, 39 (*Northwoods*)

Every week we walk along the river from Staverton to Dartington and watch the changing season – hide in the trees, paddle in the river, have picnics in the grass, fun in the sun. (*River Dart*)

This is where we came to celebrate my sons 21st birthday and my husbands 40th. Joyful family time, swimming in the river together. Sarah, 47 (*Northwoods, River Dart, upriver from Mill Town*)

Walking with the family and the dogs by the river and seeing a Kingfisher and the steam train on a sunny morning. (*River Dart*)

I kayaked here! Ben, 16 (*River Dart*)

Suzy and me had given each other leaf crowns a couple of weeks previously. As they had dried, we decided to give them to the river. This was our very private pre-wedding ceremony. We threw them in, one crown got tangled up while the other flowed down stream but then... it turned around and came back, upstream, reached the first one and freed it, flowing down together. (*The River Dart*)

When I saw my first Dolphin - I saw my first fish. Lauren, 10.

I pierced a national grid power line cable with an iron bar while digging to install a bench down by the river. I survived by a miracle with only superficial burns despite a huge explosion but my action cut the electricity to Dartington & Totnes. Sebastian Kelly, 42 (*Northwoods, River Dart, down river from Mill Town*)

I sat with so much love in my heart, next to you, in bright light. I realise again how blessed I am WHATEVER happens. ♥ (*Bank of the River Dart to the North of the estate*)

I tested how deep the water was my mum and dad thought I was going to use my stick but I used my foot and water came in my welly after I tipped the water out there was a massive puddle.

(Drawing of a shaggy dog) (*Northwoods*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

This is where Alan led us on a full moon mediation walk in the style of the 'Japanese Cherry Tree' ritual. And we sipped cherry wine in the silence and moon light. Sarah, 47 (*Northwoods, near St. Mary's Church field*)

This is where I connected with a Yew hedge. I felt its warmth and support. Rosanda, 47 (*The Old Postern, in wood behind pool*)

This is where I spent a week at Schumacher College and met John. A door opened that week into a new world of being. Sarah, 47 (*The Old Postern, Schumacher College*)

This is where Oscar was born at 7:10pm on Sunday at the beginning of a short course – & it was Heather Gillard's first day of work too! (*The Old Postern, Schumacher College, Coach House Cottage*)

I LOST MY VIRGINITY HERE IN 1973 (*The Old Postern, west side of Northwoods accommodation block*)

I SLePT HeRe (*The Old Postern, north end of Centuries accommodation block*)

Entranced by the vastly pregnant orange moon crest above the trees, sheltered by the pungent fragrance of the garlic leaves being crushed as I sat, unsettled by the rustle of the badgers. Contented and happy, waiting for you to be by my side. (*The small bit of path in the road going up to the football field*)

Lying on the cricket pitch planning the next anti-GM crops action. (*Football field, cricket pitch*)

Scored first goal (football) Sam, 10.

I was lucky enough to live in Foxhole during my first year at Dartington College of Arts. Seeing the estate every day. Changing through the season. So many memories. Forever in my heart. (*Foxhole*)

Being greeted by Gypsy the little black cat at Foxhole (*Foxhole*)

When a group of us from Foxhole and the parish wrote to Vaughan Lindsay to express our regret at Di being made redundant. We had an email back saying I don't interfere with your business don't interfere with mine. (*Foxhole*)

I began a training here and for the first time in my life, began to experience peace in my life ~ which by and large has remained. (*Foxhole*)

The security men clamped a "managing director" of a business renting space in Foxhole (an arrogant man who thought rules were for other people). He hadn't got £10 to have the clamp removed so the security man (the egg man) took an I.O.U. – I was dismissive & said if the M.D actually paid up – I would wear my knickers on my head! Guess what! ☺ (Smiley face with knickers on head – hair protruding through the leg holes). (*Foxhole*)

We have only been here for 9 months but already have lots of memories – good and not so good! In December we woke up to snow on the ground and I took my little boy out on this brand new shiny red sledge. The Sky was blue and at Foxhole there wasn't a soul (it was a Saturday) – such a fantastic bright day – will stay with me. (*Foxhole*)

Here I come almost every Week to play Games and it is really fun. Flynn, 11 (*The Lawn next to Foxhole*)

A KISS I WON'T FORGET (*Foxhole, corner as you turn in*)

Seeing a performer at the ciderpress – drinking coffee + having fun with my 5 year old. (*Cider Press Centre*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Walked from Totnes to Dartington Ciderpress in glorious spring sunshine with my good friend, planning how it will be when I move here in a month! Liz, 41 (*Cider Press Centre*)

We have been walking along the cycle path for 6 years. We walk here with the dog! I always look at Kate Highams jewellery! We have Hot Choc @ the Ciderpress on Xmas eve. When the weather freezes icicles form on the water Wheel – like huge wands! MAGICAL x (*Old Mill, water wheel*)

AN ICY WALK IN THE WARMTH OF MY MOTHER'S COMPANY (*Field between Foxhole and apple orchard*)

I lay in this field in the wet long grass. Felt like it was only me top of the world wind rushing at me from all directions. The grass and the blue, blue sky lifted my mood – I felt human, after a long depression. I love this field. (*Field between Foxhole and apple orchard*)

At Foxhole in the 70's we made a film here (about ghosts). (*Abandoned building in wood near lime kiln*)

This is where I had an encounter with bats and thought I might have breast cancer (but found out 6 weeks later I didn't). Sarah, 47. (*Before the large marshy field along the stream from the old mill heading towards Dartington main gates*)

I had an ambulatory interview & I remember an ambulatory tutorial in which we climbed over a gate. [for Arts + Ecology M.A] Anna Keleher, 51 (*Wood above marshy field near entrance to estate*)

Each night we walked together – and you never knew I loved you. (*Dartington estate*)

The river walk – in spring, summer, autumn and winter – remind me of happy times in ??? (*Path along the Dart*)

This is where my youngest daughter came for picnics with Sasha, a very special childminder, more like an aunty really, and learned to express her wild free nature. Sarah, 47.

Rope swing!! (*In wood off main road as you enter Dartington*)

This ash tree gave me back my inner warrior. Sarah, 47 (*Ash tree in wood along main road to the Hall*)

This is where I took my first walk alone in nature without feeling fear. I saw a fox in the sky and on the ground too. Sarah, 47 (*In the southeast woods and fields of the estate*)

This is where I lost my Headband (*One of the southeast fields we aren't meant to walk in*)

Good Times. Skateboarding down the hill from Dartington to Totnes. (*Dartington main road*)

Whenever I pass this point on my way to work I stop, look at the beautiful view and am thankful to work in such a lovely part of the world. New memories every day. Rob, 25 (*looking over the Dart from Dartington main drive*)

This is where I made love with my husband hidden in the rows of tall, golden sweetcorn! We hadn't had much fun for a while and really needed some. Sarah, 47 (*Cornfield with stand of large trees in it, just outside Dartington gardens*)

Actually this is 'my' field. I've done a series of paintings here over years...I've only 1 left... must do some more as it remains so beautiful. Wendy (*Cornfield with stand of large trees in it, just outside Dartington gardens*)

On my birthday in darkest January my friend Martina surprised me with a candlelit picnic in the 'bus Shelter' after work. Lovely food, a bottle of wine and such a beautiful + touching thought + special location = a wonderful memory. (*Cornfield with stand of large trees in it, just outside Dartington gardens*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Steve & I wandered in the beautiful gardens on a sunny spring afternoon – I enjoyed the big, big trees. (*Cornfield with stand of large trees in it, just outside Dartington gardens*)

Making love in this field.

This is where I saw a badger as I walked home after midnight, and remembered the first time I ever saw badgers walking at dusk with my husband in the fields just above here. Sarah, 47 (*Field at the bottom of the Gardens*)

The children and me played in the colourful leaves on the tree at the bottom of the gardens every year. Lovely memories x (*Bottom of Dartington gardens*)

Autumn gardens grouse.

Why come to the EX-peaceful gardens when, for months, men with noisy vacuum machines Hoover up the beautiful leaves? WHY? VOLUNTEERS WITH RAKES??! (*Dartington gardens*)

I accidentally stepped on the gravel in the chinese garden (*Dartington gardens, Japanese rock garden*)

Photograph of me sitting on the donkey age 4 in the 1950's. Age 4. (*Dartington gardens, Donkey sculpture*)

Happy memories of our 3 daughters (and now their children) sitting on the donkey in the garden Jill, 63. (*Dartington gardens, Donkey sculpture*)

I remember watching Shakespeare in the beautiful gardens – lovely atmosphere. Liz L., 32. (*Dartington gardens*)

A beautiful + peaceful garden which we bring our grandchildren to in the summer. Please allow small children to play with balls in the garden! Margaret. (*Dartington gardens, near the path behind the blackened trees*)

This spot, next to Henry Moore, is where I spent an ecstatic night – wide awake – totally sober, as a teenager from the middle of a city, suddenly seeing the sky, listening to outside night sounds, experiencing the world as a place of wonder. It was June. Later I came back to Schumacher College & found a community who shared the anxieties that caused me concern, environmental renewal & sustainability in the teeth of exploitation & degradation – will with me – but work is possible now – & change – we can only do what we can do. No more, no less. (*Dartington Hall gardens, Bank of the tilyard, Henry Moore Sculpture. The Old Postern Schumacher College*)

The tilyard a great inspiration! (*Dartington gardens, tilyard*)

I have wonderful memories of hot summers, freshly cut grass and rolling down the outdoor theatre slopes. Dreaming of pixies and fairies and lots of make believe. Sam, 37 (*Dartington gardens, tilyard*)

Rolling down the Tilyard slopes as a child (when nobody was around!) (*Dartington gardens, tilyard*)

Rolling dreams out from my heart, into the lawn with Johan. We were knighted by a boy in the echo chamber, an eternal circle of amplification. A great place to be knighted, overlooking a flat lawn. (*Dartington gardens, tilyard*)

I like the hills and grass because I like to run around on them (when it's a sunny day). Maya, 9 (*Dartington gardens, tilyard*)

I came here with Mum 6 or 7 years ago. Mum can't come now but we live in hope. Paul, 54 (*Dartington gardens, tilyard*)

One day we held on to a rope and walked blindfold in sensory explosion. (*Dartington gardens, on a primrose*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

At 27, I lived my first spring through Dartington's transformation. Myself embodying, for the first time, The May Queen. Experiencing the ever metamorphosing banks of flowers, through each change I thought it was ending then more flowers would arrive with their new delights. (*Dartington gardens. Age 27*)

Happy memories of sitting with my lady friend is the sun, on a wooden bench at the front of the round thatched hut, next to the Mulberry tree. We picked and munched the tasty berries as we sat looking out into a perfect view, on a glorious day in the summer of 2010.

Happily sitting with my lady friend is the sun, on a wooden bench at the front of the round thatched hut.....I accidentally left my bag behind & when I went back someone had left a note to collect it from the 'White Hart.' – When I opened my purse – I realized they had taken my £5 note (*White Hart*)

I think I had my first bottle of milk under a tree and now we call it my tree. (*The first tree on the lawn as you come up the drive to the White Hart*)

I was a pupil at Totnes High School for girls. During 'A' level music we were privileged to have Dartington String Quartet perform the set works. Every Christmas we were invited to the Hall for singing, performances and hand bell ringing. Happy days of listening to B Britten, P. Pears, Julian Bream + John Olda. Marilyn Ellis. (*Dartington Hall*)

IN THE MOMENT. Recently to come here, is like entering a vacuum, a silence, nothing there – gradually the old values of inclusion + honesty are being replaced. Instead is a hard veneer of packaging of a false gloss, which belies as real rottenness. It is an exclusivity posing at being inclusive. Money, money, money at all cost is the mantra

Sharing performances around the estate, waiting until daybreak to watch our friends in site specific pieces, 2007.

Friend, family get togethers – all really fun... Nature is gorgeous all the flowers, plants and trees – fab!

The schism that's always been there is between Diligent altruistic arts philanthropy and the wider non-professional community Eg Margaret Bars Dance mime theater did work between highly skilled professionals and completely unskilled community set up in Dartington at the beginning. Kurt Jeuss (sic) artistic Director of Ballet Russe (sic) was invited to be here fleeing soviet Russia – Kurt wouldn't share facilities with Margaret, thought it was demeaning and it would damage their reputation so Elmhursts choose Kurt + Margaret had to leave – 9 months later her company dissolved. *As the seed is planted so the tree will grow.* The schism between high status big money art + community participation + expectation is the gap from which all the problems stem from again + again it's the same cycle. Cathy

BEING LUCKY ENOUGH TO BE INVOLVED IN THE FIRST 'HOME' FESTIVAL. AMAZING ARTISTS, GREAT WEATHER, FABULOUS ATMOSPHERE AND HAVE A ESPECIALLY FOND MEMORIES OF JOINING IN THE SALSA BAND! HOPE I CAN COME BACK THIS YEAR

Dartington is in my Soul! When I first came to England in 1970 to study from Amsterdam, Dartington was the only place I felt at Home, accepting, edgy, Arty, etc. When I later settled in Devon and my family visited. Once I had a young family, Dartington was our focus, Being together, in the Gardens, picnics feeling at home in Dartingtons warm Embrace, My Memories and Dartington are linked, and always lift my mood. Thank you Dartington. P.S. My parents 1972 under the Cherry tree visiting from Amsterdam. Shelley Post

I met a ginger Matt in a toyshop!

By The Cott inn is my girlfriends house, Toby Moloney, 15.

I have played squash up at Dartington squash club on + off for the past nineteen years. My children are now learning to play. (*Higher Close*)

I played squash at the squash court near the school. Patrick, 16. (*Higher Close*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

I played my first game of Squash. Rowie, really really 10. (*Higher Close*)

I went to the barn Cinema with my friend Aimee. Issy, 9 (*Dartington Hall, The Barn Cinema*)

Conceiving our son in the delightful beamed room with the Bernard Leach fireplace. Strains of Imogen cooper drifting in thr' the open window (is this too personal?!).

– SKIPPING ROUND THE SWANS FOUNTAIN AFTER SEEING SWAN LAKE AND FALLING IN –
AGE 4

– Hiding IN THE HOLLOW CHESTNUTS + HEDGES – AGE 8

– MAKING POTTERY + OUTDOOR ACTIVITIES AT YOUNG DARTINGTON – AGE 10-14

– DISCOVERING THE JOYS (+ OCCASIONAL WOES) OF PRINTMAKING. AN ART I HAVE FALLEN IN LOVE WITH.

– DOING 'THE DROWNING ROOM' IN THE CLOCK TOWER

Kate Marshall, 28

The church hall flooded. K.W, 10.

I went to a halloween disco at my friends friend. Josh, 9.

I loved it here Mrs. Bird you are one amazing teacher! :D ♥ Gennie, 15.

I went to a Kevicc tournament it was good.

I saw somebody fall down the stairs and break their leg. Solly, P [9].

I went here for a walk with my dog Dotty, Harvi

'The flower of Hampstead in the garden of Eden'

This tree healed me

My House is here!

I was Born

I came to Dartington on a week's course with my ex husband in the mid 1970's. I remember feeling lost and isolated by the intensity of the course. We came from London & this was so completely different from anything I have ever encountered before. My ex husband was completely sucked in by it all + so we returned to live here 20 years later. (*Dartington estate*)

As a teenager in the 1950s staying with my aunt Barbara Jewell at Shinnars Bridge farmhouse I vividly remember her spinning between the 4 retail outfits she managed for the Estate (the charming tea rooms at the Farms house, the unique & irreplaceable Retail Shop the Torquay Outlet, and the "Hall Shop". This was in effect a "village store" stocking food + general supplies for the convenience of the staff + visitors to the Estate. I do not remember by who why the shop was finally closed.

Barbara Whitehead (*Dartington Estate*)

I have vivid memories of the Estate Shop. It was a very convenient "corner shop" for my parents who lived in 8 Warren Lane from 1953 until they moved into Totnes in 1961.

Bruce Nightingale. (*Dartington Estate Shop / Gallery*)

The facilities man came to lock up at 10pm and while I packed up my materials he told me how nuts all those arts students are: getting naked in studios for no apparent reason (I wasn't naked). (*Foxhole*)

One particular day working as a Volunteer at High Cross House there was someone playing the Grand Piano downstairs. The music swirled up the stairs and created such a harmonious effect linking music with the wonderful architecture that is High Cross House. Keith Fielder. (*High Cross House*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Happy memories over the years. Had an engagement present from here in the "60's"! My work friend always made her own cloths from Dartington tweed. Have always loved it here! Theresa, 68 (*Dartington Hall*)

We occupied studio 45 as a space to create our work together. Once we spent an evening cooking food we had foraged and sat & ate together. We danced the night away with sparklers and music from our Sound art radio. (*Dartington Hall, studio 45*)

I have read my poetry here, Dukes Room. Over many years listened to music and poetry, shared the gardens with people I love. This is one of the Places I come to refresh my soul. Long may it remain open to all and beautiful. Jennie (*Dartington Hall, Dukes Room*)

Once, on a summer's day, we walked down past "The donkey" toward the Henry Moore sculpture. Far down to our left (below the Tiltyard) we watched a young girl practicing her ballet positions + steps. Pat B., 71 (*Dartington Gardens*)

My twin girls aged two, entwined, naked around the swans. An old man approached, delighted. "Willi would have been so pleased." One memory of many, Sean (*Dartington gardens, swan fountain*)

I remember walking in the gardens in Dartington, + the peace + relief of arriving here, at the beginning of a new part of my life. I have often returned to the same part of the garden, when times have been especially difficult, to savour that tranquillity – now it is not the same.....the honesty has gone (*The bit of lawn, scrub and trees that you reach before the path with the swans when coming down the garden form the back gate*)

We cast my dad's ashes here in the middle of the night, stars + moon shining bright in the midnight blue. Now I come + dance for him ☐♥ Helena, 63 (*Dartington gardens, on the point of the stream which you can cross*)

Going with Brad by the River under the big oaks. Emma, 39 (*Dartington Gardens, Tiltyard*)

Got a job cleaning over the summer but after 2 weeks got fired. I found it so funny. (*Gallery / Sound Arts Building*)

Seeing children & teenagers running around Great Hall courtyard in pyjamas, nighties & wellington boots. I was 14 & visiting (with my older brother in his 1st car - a triumph) my brother's friend who was at the school. This vision of a freedom made me feel this was a possibility for me...I've carried it always. Kitty Watkins, 52 (*Dartington Hall, central courtyard*)

This is where I had many interesting conversations at coffee break with other members of the AA Dept. (*Dartington Hall*)

I once peered through the key hole of the old tower & it looked like you could see right down the length of the church that is no longer there. I've never looked again! Jo, 31 (*Old St. Mary's Church tower*)

Visit here again on b'day bit spooky, folk'd say there is a doorway to another world. Mo Tayler. (*The Ancient Yews behind the church*)

The first time I met her she powerfully yet gently let me know of her strength and that she eats people. (*The Yew*)

Communing with the ancient yew tree and the robins.

So enjoyed a walk from the church ruin, down through to walled garden, there just above was a purple carpet of crocus' with hundred of bees buzzing, Heavenly. Susie B, 66 (*Main Lawn next to Dartington Hall*)

Walking behind the music college bit; the sound of music floating down thro' open windows, combined with the 'spirit of piece' still resonated. E. George, 74 (*Lawn between Dartington Hall and Music College buildings*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

I came here to an art teacher's course. It began to snow heavily and everyone wanted to go home – except me. The courtyard looked even more beautiful in the billowing snow. Pat B., 71 (*Dartington Hall, central courtyard*)

My daughter for her primary school choir which she joined voluntarily being asked to perform at Dartington Hall in the gardens for some corporate event to charm the participants of a business conference. We found a white-ish polo shirt for her to wear with her jeans (she's got no school uniform). I delivered her up to the garden and had to wait on the far side of the grass in the trust of other parents while she and the choir sang. The conference was led round and handed wine by waiters, stood there smiling went away again, drove my daughter the 30 minutes journey home.
Kate 48

This is where we did our first radio show. Jodie + Ruby + Holly, 13 (*Gallery Sound Arts Building*)

Surprised and thrilled to meet Buddha hiding in Dartington Hall gardens :-). Sam Shelly-Jones, 41 (today) (*Dartington gardens, Buddha sculpture*)

We engaged in underwater jousting in the tiltyard. I think there was a pond or lake there, this is what I imagine. Anna Keleher, 51 (*Tiltyard*)

Kayle walked the tightrope here. Anna, 51 (*On the lawn below the thatched building*)

I celebrated my birthday walking around the gardens with some dear friends. Dorothy's border was purple and yellow, it was June 9th. Mo, 60 (*Lawn outside the great hall*)

I like the barn cinema - It rocks. Daisy, 9. (*Barn Cinema*)

Sitting in the Yew tree with my new baby 10 years ago. (*Graveyard*)

I've been truly, truly inspired and spine tingled by the incredible 3rd year festival performance xxx! (*Tiltyard*)

Attending Teachers' Lectures and wandering round the garden in the evening. The frost on the trees in the moonlight was memorable. (1969) CH. (*Tiltyard*)

I SANG IN THE GREAT HALL ACCOMPANIED BY A GUITARIST AND I WAS PAID, IT WAS EMPOWERING AND LIBERATING. (*The Great Hall*)

The Mimosa's Bobbie Cox's strawberry flan. My wedding night. My history. Tea with Leonard Elmhirst.

I SLePT HeRe (*West side of Lower Close*)

A very warm memory of coming here last week with my son, who doesn't engage with much at the moment and he had "a really nice time". ♥ Claudia (*Gallery Sound Arts Building*)

In the late 80's, there was the first production of my play VARIATIONS, performed by the students of Dartington College, directed by Annie Castledine. It was a very challenging and exciting process – the first of many student productions around the world. I spent many weeks here during rehearsal and performance and loved being here. Sheila (*Dartington Hall*)

This is where we found the Hippy Tree, me for you and you for me. X Methal (*Along the short drive to the main entrance to Dartington Hall on the side of the cinema*)

Many wonderful musical experiences in the Great Hall. My Son (now a professional musician aged 33!) aged 12 coming for a residential weekend – making music. Also bringing him to viola lessons (ages 17/18). Many lonely walks round the grounds en famille and with my 90 yr old mother. (*The Great Hall*)

My partner aged 47 with my daughter & her friend right inside his T-shirt (they were 3 years old). The very swollen shirt... as the girls "hid" from canoeists going by on the river.....picnic...fun...Kitty, 52 (*River Dart*)

Picking blackberries became an important way to relax. Anna, 51 (*Field behind the buildings on Warren Lane*)

I SLePT HeRe

I danced with the Buddha near the 12 apostles one night. (*Dartington gardens, Buddha sculpture*)

TAKING PEOPLE ON WALKS OF LIFE THROUGH THE DARTINGTON GARDENS IN 07/08 USING THE SPIRITUAL ENERGY WITHIN THE PLACE TO PROVIDE INSIGHT TO A PERSON'S LIFE PURPOSE. USING THE HEALING QUALITIES OF DARTINGTON TO INSPIRE PEOPLE INTO THE FUTURE. Simon Blackler (*Dartington gardens*)

I spend too much time here ♥ (*Gallery Sound Arts radio building*)

Arts award => (*Gallery Sound Arts radio building*)

I SLePT HeRe (*Field below Higher Close*)

Of moss and pigeons and snowdrops and buds bursting from old crabby wood of my life coming back in a flow, of hope and love and growth. These feelings and thoughts coming through as I sat in the rain with a Robin briefly in my hand, sharing my sandwich. I again feel blessed to be alive. (*Dartington gardens, The 12 Apostles*)

I SLePT HeRe (*East side of Lower Close*)

Swimming in the river on hot summer afternoon with a good friend, + sitting under a tree and talking and talking and talking...(1965) Steph (*River Dart*)

This is my class.I pick up Sky from his class on most Fridays. Robert (*Park school*)

A place to share with people I love. My grandfather flew for the 1st time, aged, 80 to see me, we came here. My close friend emigrated to America and we picnicked here to say goodbye. My children have run through the gardens filled with flowers & laughter. (*The lawn and trees cradling the tiltyard*)

I Love Park School. I liked it because it had a big climbing frame. The Estate is really pretty and I like the forest there. Asha, 7. (*Park School*)

When I was 10 I used to walk from Aller Park to Barton farm and learnt to like cows, now when I go back to the old milking parlours I see all that remains of them is a pyramid of crushed concrete. Charnaud, 50

The lives of Leonard Elmherst and Rabinranath TAGORE, of W.Bengal, India, were strongly linked. L.E want to work with Tagore & was inspired by his philosophy, mainly that of education, founded Dartington and all that it means, even today. I spent 6 months Teaching in the Art Department at Santiniketan (Tagore's University, School) and now I live 6 miles from Dartington, it seems the two worlds have happily met!

Fishing fish (*River Dart*)

POSITIVE memory. Arrived at Dartington 1981 – A real amazing place, full of opportunity. Studied Art is a very special place. Now a professional painter. WONDERFUL PLACE. Thank you Dartington. M.G.

When my new baby Puppy was going for a walk. S.C, Y5.

Singing along to 'nothing compares 2 U' by Sinead O'Connor with Uta in the wasteland. Christy O'Donnel, 24.

Taking a role in 'The Little Sweep' (Britten) in the Great Hall in 1990. Chris Bathen, 69.

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Mrs Mardell gave everyone a twix but me. Billie, 14.

In the 7 short years we've lived here I've played lots of concerts here, been to films and out for drinks with friends here, played with my children, tonight singing at Park School, walked here, been to the toddler group with 2 of my children and the playgroup too,.. I only hope...

The first time I walk my dog hollie. hollie was 18 weeks. Chloe, 10.

Fell in river and sprained ankle. I saw my first glimpse of a chinese garden. I fell down the bank by the cider press and sprained my ankle.

This place holds memories of great learning and collaboration. I did a Jazz course at the summer school and had a lovely experience. Oscar Kary, 16.

Me and a close friend of mine went for a bike ride all around Dartington for three hours regardless of that fact that it was pouring down with rain. Lucy, 14.

When I was 8 I saw a badger for the first time. Once a year I look there. Patryk, 13.

Sitting under a jasmine bush each day + being visited by a v. tame robin. 6 months pregnant, on my own – but not of course, + deciding to move here. Blissful moments. August. Hot. Sun. (*The lawn outside The Great Hall*)

I SLePT HeRe. (*Park School*)

The Health and Safety officer walked right pass me + my dog Sunday in a forbidden to dogs area at Dartington. She just looked at Sunday + walked on. Anna, 51. (*Lower Close*)

Sitting in + sitting with sun & searching in the Zen garden – after 165 bus journey... (*Japanese garden*)

We come in the Spring to see the flowers. We're from Paignton– we see the crocuses then a special one, the daffodils, and what I called the fire tree. Lovely red flowers Roger + Daphne, over 21. (*Dartington gardens*)

There's an extra door handle on the Blacklers front door. My dad put it there in 1979 so I could open the door. Emily, 34 (*Dartington Hall*)

I SLePT HeRe (*Field at bottom of Park Road*)

I had a picnic with my family :) Guy, 44. (*Lawn at back entrance to Dartington Hall which goes up the White Hart*)

My children and my grandson have all enjoyed sitting on the Donkey as babies. (*Dartington gardens, Donkey sculpture*)

In 1996 – facilitating a performance w. the young children at Park School in which they whirled in through the windows and Autumn Leaves. Very beautiful + tender. Susannah, 47 (*Park School*)

40 years ago I delivered groceries to customers in the surrounding villages for Mr L. Ryder – very happy memories + look forward to seeing what the future will bring. (*Gallery - This shop*)

Being impressed by daughter Caroline Born's film about the age of woman at Dartington Cinema, a most fascinating experience. Anne Born. (*Barn Cinema*)

I have had lots of fun with my friends doing activities, shows and clubs at the radio station. Morgan Waters, 11. (*Gallery Sound Arts Building*)

This is where my son went to school for 2 years – so that he could climb trees! (He's a doctor now). (*Park School*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

Nice memories of coming to Dartington. I come from time to time to see a film if its on. When our grandchildren were here we'd bring them to see the donkey they are nearly grown up now – Mollie Harvey, 80.

Where I lived in the first year of university. Where I made life long (I hope) friends. Where I first fell in love with Dartington. (*Lower Close*)

My friend Peter who is no longer here his smiles laugh and his big tough beard. (*Dartington Hall*)

In 2010, a group of entrepreneurs met here every couple of months or so... dreaming how to make the world a better place, hearing stories from those that are doing precisely that and supporting each other in the journey. (*Dartington Hall*)

Fire Cans. Aller Park in the 50's was a quite wonderful place to be as a child – so very different to education in the outside world. One great thing we used to have were "fire cans" which were baked bean cans with holes in them which were swung on long lengths of wire. You lit a fire inside them and swung it in great arcs to a loud whooshing sound. When classes came you'd fill your can up with twigs etc and then line them up outside the class - then between classes you'd run out and swing the cans – reignite the fire, feed it and then dash back into class. Brilliant!! C. Nicholls. (*Park School*)

A young badger on the roadside stopped and looked right at me. Heart-stopping-the first time I'd seen a badger in real-life. Rosie. (*Driveway after Lower Close*)

My son on the drive home from school (Park) ~ I'm very lucky to go to school here on this Estate! Anna, 59. (*Park Road*)

Enjoying a swim in the river on a hot summers day. (*Dart River*)

First time I did Front of House, the Film broke down three times in one evening. By the end I was in the dark calling out that evening was abandoned + people could get their money back + I was doing a runner! Robert Bull.

DEVON CENTRE + THE 'POWER' OF DARTINGTON

We held a weekend course for parents of 'severely disabled children' – 1970s labelled 'ineducable' and excluded from schooling. At the time Devon Education Authority had plans for a 'new era' school at Dartington to provide for these children. Local residents argued 'we already have enough education'. The parents who came to the course formed a constitution and lobbied councillors. And a pioneer special school was built as Bidwell Brook. (*Higher Close*)

I was walking up to Dartington, my son had died a couple of weeks earlier, he was 32. My husband had died a few years earlier, I was in a bit of a state. I bumped into Louise she said are you alright, I told her, had a cry. She said come and be part of us - be a volunteer. I came into steward the Great Hall the next day. My life absolutely changed thanks to Dartington. I've been volunteering for 20 years. I did the box office every Sunday + Thursday afternoons - you make so many friends. It turned me into someone worth living, it changed my life. I think Dorothy + Leonard's Spirit is still here - we all feel it. Whenever I'm a bit down I go to the garden. Jill Wise, 91 (*Dartington Hall*)

Higher Close/Summer School parties in the common room, H.C. (Daniel Barenboim fooling around on Piano.) Yvonne (*Higher Close*)

Finding inspiration. In all with a Growing heart. For A Growing me!
What a treat for me over the last 2 years to be able to walk and to come to classical music in the Great Hall. It feels like the nearest thing to Heaven for me. I am moving nearby at Rattery soon. Thanking God for such a gift in my life. The people I encounter here are beautiful. I enjoy being a friend of Dartington and a member as well. Long Live Dartington Estate 'One day at a time'. Eileen F, 69 (*The Great Hall*)

2007. A meeting of future art + ecologists. We designed a wishlist for a fully sustainable society while laying on the lawn in the sun. I had no idea how far reaching those new friends + ideas would take myself. Amanda Pellatt, 50 (*Park School*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

It was harder to be here more socially than academically, and I am not an academic. The competitive, small minded, egotistical, judging young students – except for one or two – ruined it for me in this beautiful space.

Foxhole was a gentle shining beacon for me. I came every week to see a psychotherapist – for nearly five years! It changed my life. When I come to Dartington I think back on those rich nourishing years – which were so difficult + yet so vital. Dartington makes me feel warm in my soul. Veronica 61.

This is my first visit – nice people + highly recommended beetroot + chocolate cake at the cafe. Jimmy Currie + Simon.

Enjoying care-free teenage days with fellow music students when I stayed at Dartington Hall for a residential music course in the summer of 1984. Melanie, 44.

Come down for mushroom farm + found this place by accident. Jimmy

Dartington had a sense of history which it brings to the present visits. Roger

People are what make Dartington such a happy Place – 40 years ago everyone worked or had worked here. Now it seems the people come full of ideas – spend their money, then go.

I cried here. Then pulled myself together here + talked with my cousins here + Laughed + then sat quietly here. (*Dartington Hall*)

My 3 children went to Dartington Playgroup - games with Tanja. Then Dartington Primary school. I got and Elmhirst Grant to buy woodwork tools. What is 'special' on the map is still the ethos that exists over the area. Andy Loldry, 56.

Dartington has been a community from birth- death where all ages enjoy the grounds and space. It brings the young adults... Totnes has a good diversity of ages not just retired older...

My home ~ where I grew up! ~ endless memories.

I fell out a tree. somewhere around here... Suki.

We like it very much in Dartington Primary School. James B.

Walking out family over the Staverton with the dog on a warm afternoon from Totnes and stopping off a Dartington for a cup of Tea. 44. (*Dartington Estate*)

I remember beautiful summer days as a teenager – all over Dartington – particularly the gardens.

I scored a double hattrick. (football) Gabriel Rogers, 10.

A picnic by the river with friends who I used to go partying with when younger. We all met up with our young children and talked about old times and watched out children play together. Alice, 35.

We rided a raft and saw Fishes. Alfie, 7 and Felix, 5 (*River Dart*)

The hollow trees near the tiltyards I had one of my first romps inside. (*Tiltyard, blackened trees*)
Walking through Northwood in February – loving the shafts of sunlight winking though Devon damp trees. Peter. (*Northwoods*)

Differing memories over the years. Staying for meetings and courses in the then Devon Centre and early morning walks in the gardens. Superb food always at the White Hart. Way with words— such a wide range of speakers over the years. The Barn Cinema... music school – attending in their pyjamas. Dartington playgoers productions outdoors. This year's Christmas Tree Festival.. All add up to what Dartington means to me.

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

On a mask making day Age 10 I got drunk for the first time when my mum bought me cider! Never drunk again. Charlotte, 48.

We used to belong to the ramblers and we used to go up and walk around Dartington around the fields it was wonderful but I should have taken up bird watching as I've had really bad hip problems and walking with a stick. But I loved every minute of it but now I'm paying for it. Marie, 72.
(*Dartington Estate*)

Leonard Elmhirst coming to my office door (gardens) troubling to ask how I was after being away for a day or two with a bad cold. Yuoane, lady of a certain age! (*Dartington Hall*)

We had our wedding receptions in the Cider Press Shinnars Bridge house 1966. It was on a Sunday we were married in the church I met my wife at Aller Park School when we were both pupils. Jeremy Howell. (*Dartington estate*)

Dartington Hall Gardens. Playing with my kids and the donkey sculpture – + now with my grandchildren. (*Dartington gardens, donkey sculpture*)

Everyday school run on the Cider press path...endless walks and cycle rides..the “playground”...

Studied GNVQS 1995 in Horticulture + I won 3rd best in England + Wales Thanks to their expertise. Daniel, 33.

I used to be a volunteer at the Arts office in the early 80s, typing and general dog's body before computers, making posters with Letraset, addressing envelopes with the “one armed bandit” (metal plates) – oh those aching arms..., typing tickets using about 5 different golf ball fonts, having to be exact to the fraction of a millimeter (well, almost!). I remember this shop in its literal meaning then the excellent café/restaurant, later The Arts Office. Helga Watts (*Gallery*)

Beenleigh Road on a warm sunny day in July – by the river – slapping shores – my first Wedding Anniversary. Helen, 47

Walking through the brittle corn-stalks. treading across the dark, soft, clay.
Bitter wind,
Black, skeleton trees.
Soft, gentle, warm hand,
Against a harsh, great, cold winter sky
The sparking of your eyes,
And the magic of your thighs...
memory of winter 2009
NSW

1st Sat every time we used to come from Exeter to the English Barn dancing on the gardens is where I met my husband. Joan B, 77ish

Felix aged 4 spotted a four leafed clover and then the rest of the family one each as well. This all happened on a beautiful sunny walk though the meadow. Jeannett

Finding out that the bronze donkey wasn't as big as the Titanic as viewed through the eyes of a small person. Felix, 22.

I spend time sitting by the DART weir just being quite and still with the fish and birds. (*River Dart*)

“Secret bench” overlooking the fields onto Dartington Village, we took out oldest son and his siblings there to watch the combine harvester working. He had just finished intense chemotherapy and this is one of this first outings. Taking the children for a run in the flower garden. Tira P, 37 (*Dartington gardens*)

Picnicking by the river with friends and a summer's day, Bullocks approached, and while I saved my bumbag from one, its brother ate my favourite hoodie, Charlotte, 49. (*River Dart*)

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

A lovely memory of watching + listening to musicians playing carols at Christmas – mostly local school children – including my son. Lin, aged 56.

A walk to Dartington from Totnes in December 2010 when the hills were all covered in snow – beautiful. As we stopped to admire the view the steam train went by – the Santa special full of families, just before Christmas. We walked to Dartington + finished our walk with a glass of mulled cider in the White Hart. (*Dartington estate*)

Dartington Gardens empty + alive early one eve. Walking to PARK school with my daughter. The amazing YEW in the gardens – so OLD! Sue, 50.

First time I went to Dartington with my daughter and three other friends we went swimming in an open air pool. Sun was shining it was a beautiful day + I felt so happy beautiful + shinny. Many other happy times here over the years – Thank you! Jude, 58.

My son won a competition to design the 75th Anniversary flag and he was invited to raise it on foundation day 2000. Hazel Willis + family –James.

Seeing my sister riding her bike for the first time. S.W., year 9.

Running down the river through the woods behind Park School, with the sun flickering though the leaves. Soft, warm grass in the fields, and amber water. Hiding behind the trees from the teachers that came looking do us (we had snuck out of school at lunchtime). Fiona, 19 (*Park School*)

Fell in love here, Spring 2010, and slept out in these woods amidst the bluebells and under the stars. I love some of this land, and sometimes you have to break the rules! :c) Dan.

I made a camp in Dartington nature trail! ♥ Bills

A special memory of the gardens is having a picnic with my friend whilst the children rolled down the hill. Tania, 41.

Wonderful memories of the Pottery Camps can't remember the dates '70s?

Gifted and talented science. Caleb, 9

Attended a Maths course here. Stayed in a room overlooking the courtyard. I was struck by the tranquility + serenity of Dartington. The gardens are wonderful too. Dartington was my late husband's favourite place.

One of the things about Dartington is its place in the local county was a curious thing- there was definitely an assumption that people at school + college here were posh- if you looked like you were from Dartington you could get pushed + threatened. Initially it was so ahead + out of place in South Devon - now rest of world has caught up - awareness of Dartington + anything to do with it being different especially the school + college

I used to walk off

When Elmhirsts bought Dartington in 1925 it was £30,000 at that time Dorothy was worth 39 million Dollars – when Dorothy + Leonard's daughter Ruth got married to Maurice Ash who she met at school here, they bought Sharpham estate to live at..

Interested in the progress in community participation. It needs evaluation having been involved some years ago with the P.C.C. Dartington Housing Association. Bon courage, Nick Baron.

Sitting with a lump of clay, attempting to model swans at my 1st workshop in Dartington (which 10 yrs later brought me to move here from London).

Peace in the Zen garden. (*Chinese Garden*)

My Husband and daughter chasing each other in the fall leaves. Jo, 33.

Walking a line around Park copse – never ending concentric circles in danger of disappearing up our own “rural idyllic arse” (Misri Dey – 2004) Daniel Anna. Daniel again- one man amongst 10,000 men who have greatness inside them. Most of all I remember wet + cold + dark.

Arriving from London to start work and walking across the river from Staverton (Town Mills) to get to estate council! Very different to the tube. (*River Dart*)

The first time I had coffee was in the Dartington cider press café and I was ten - I ran around solidly for 2 hours and then fell over and I have never had coffee since. Amber Bruco, 15. (*Shops at Dartington*)

January 1967. The Barn. As a ‘new boy’ to Devon’s Education I attended annual conference of County Hall Staff with Headteachers. Peter Love, 86. (*Barn Cinema*)

A visitor said ‘you should have some music playing’ so I brought a CD – a Dartington third year student called Celeste she played the songs at her final show last Summer and I brought the CD there. Its lovely. So I brought it in to Encounters shop. (*Gallery*)

First purple crocuses under the swamp cedar. Spring!

I started my freelance training work here in 2007. 2x 5 day residential for childrens centre – fantastic space to reflect, learn + have fun.

In the 7 short years I’ve lived here I’ve played in concerts here, been to concerts, 2 of my children have been to toddler group + playgroup, I’ve been for films + drinks with friends, walked here, helped with music at Park School and enjoyed being part of it all. I only hope the next 7 years bring as much give and take but it seems perhaps not...

I worked in the White Hart for 12 yrs + have delightful memories of walking though the gardens at lunch time – the peace + beauty will stay with me for ever.

I lived at 1 Barton cottages for 4 years + had the gardens as my front garden my son was (almost) born there – so we walked in the gardens a lot. I was very upset to have to leave.

Playing with the dog in the river and swimming in the river. Becca, 10. (*River Dart*)

In what was the F.E Centre I run the seminar for principal designate of the forthcoming community colleges in Devon. Bernard Harvey, 81.

I worked as a waitress at the ‘Old Postern’ back in 1988. We all hated the ‘management’ back then, nothing changes! I have yet to meet a person who says ‘Oh those people who run Dartington are wonderful’. They are steadily destroying everything that is good about Dartington. Jade, 41. (*Old Postern*)

The Devon Centre in the East Wing, 60s and 70s. Once a year weekend courses for parents of disabled children – with crèche organised by the late Tom Griffiths. Quote of a life time from one parent: “until I came for this weekend I thought I was the only mother of a deaf child in Torquay” Peter Love, 86. (*Dartington Hall*)

Playing in the Park and having fun with my friends.

Gathering outside the Hall with music, costumes, chalk slogans on road, for the march down the Drive, past KEVICCS where students joined up, up to Market Square, for speeches + music. Then down to the petrol station to sit on the forecourt. All to say No to War in Iraq and to make the link with oil. Charlotte, 49.

Because of Dartington’s history people expected to be treated in a certain way.

Encounters Shop at the Gallery, Dartington, 2011

I attended Meadow House School in Totnes during the 50's. We had a strong relationship with Dartington and every Christmas held our Christmas Concert in the Great Hall. I have memoirs of standing on the stage in the Hall, dressed as an angel, playing my recorder. Must have been 1955, A magical place for a child to enter, to be sure! Hilary, 64.

I was employed to teach English 'A' level to preparatory students. One was Kate Ash granddaughter to the Elmhursts, daughter of Ruth + Maurice – at same time I was published collection of poems + one was in Dartington news, about trees + wood. It caught Dorothy's eye + she summoned me, invited me to tea + I got to know her + Leonard, on that occasion I read my poems to them over tea then she set up a poetry reading for me + that inspired me. I organized foundation days for estate employees – one year I remember I created a firework display on the terraces that burnt up and produced a fire sculpture of the White Hart - it was quite a winner. Foundation days ended when there was a whole change of structure about 10 years ago, it was sad, end of the 'community' of employees coming together + seeing themselves as a community – it was an enjoyable experience, Great Hall as tea room on the front lawn to set up 'The Asses Jawbone' a poetry + music group which toured all over the South West for several years. The Elmhursts saw me off to India to Santiniketan + Sriniketan, they were two colleges created by Tagore, when Leonard visited, he wanted us to re-connect with those colleges + that began the development of one such connection that was strong in the music department, I was with Jack Dobbs – I'm terribly sad to see the end of the college it had a strong role in local county + Dartington – sad expansion would take place here – I'm still in touch with some of those students – it's a loss for the estate + local community. Peter Kiddle, 67.

I started at Aller Park by building underground rooms in the woods linked by small tunnels with little fire places in them – then when I went to Foxhole I constructed more elaborate little sheds in the woods with fire places or stores in them – even extended electricity supplies 100s yards down to them. Some of this involved breaking limestone – I used to like exploring caves. This involved... to get into caves. I used to build walk ways between trees in Park copse in order to be able to go over from one end of woods to centre without treading on badger sets. When I was 14 I was giving lectures to the 6th formers about the natural history + wild life. My rapport with Leonard was founded upon our mutual interest in natural history + trees and I intimately knew 100 sq m of the estate so when Richard St Barbe-Baker came to visit, who was a founder of men of the trees, Leonard asked me if I'd mind showing him around. My rapport with Leonard increased my sense of belonging with the place it made me have a feeling of seeing Dartington in the bigger picture, as a child. As an adult I've still got my fingers involved in an infinite number of pies like I did when I was a child. I've moved on I didn't want to cling on to a group of people I went to school with but lots of people who went here are still in close contact but when I really bought into the Romance of Dartington, but it didn't really prepare me for the outside world. I left feeling very enlightened and I had an open outlook on society + the world it was an illusion that if I'd stayed would have sustained me, but I didn't stay. One of the things the school didn't ever prepare me for was making a living, because that was part of life that was lost in the utopian world of Dartington. I thought I'd find something I enjoyed, was good at + incidentally would get money for it – I didn't think about a career in that sense. The commercial side didn't fit with the ideology I went to the school, and most expensive school in the county. That had an effect on people who were there, if worked there children did get a reduction but part of utopian attitude in school was to do with violence – if they had a dispute Dartington's way to resolve was by debate + conversation. We had some young people from Yorkshire on student placements- they just thumped people- we viewed them as un-evolved life forms, we were insulated, that was one of the problems. Charnuad- 50.

Sharing trifle and wine by the sunny border the warm summer evening (and subsequently finding out eating is not allowed in the gardens – can you believe it!!)

I remember when the White Hart was a private club you had a private membership if you were here – staying or working. I was a member when I was part of a group of international educationalists coming together it was a very diverse forum talking about education in the future. I stayed in Foxhole. Bernard Harvey.

People invited to be trustees who the significant in the world rather than that they've had connection here, always used to be the other way round.

From the age of five my mother took me here from Torquay to listen to the Sunday afternoon concerts. So I got hooked on Dartington. My husband's cousin was raising money to start a scheme to go to India

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+ teach them marketing skills etc. so we asked Leonard Elmhurst + him to meet in our house. It was great to talk about India + L. Elmhurst got so excited he broke the arm of one chair.
Bee J. All, 76.

I used to walk off bird nesting all over the place – there was a lot of freedom when we were at Aller Park we'd walk to the Postern once or twice a week for swimming, we'd walk up Park road, through the church yard, out the gardens, to the pool I learnt to swim there we all swam there up until age 13

Dartington Haiku
The mist rises now.
Trees, trees, grey stone, music fades
Ah what silence calls
Mike Connelly 72

Shop Documentation - Lake of Tears

I think with fondness and longing about The Salinas Valley, its oaks and blue jays. I think with sadness about the violence and dissolution of community, human and biological, that has come to afflict that beautiful place.

Happiness, loss, fun and love, loss, lucky to live here, strong sense of history

Tears of sadness being only ½ alive
Tear of joy as I count my blessings

All I am grateful to brings about all the problems that others don't have. Laughter, miles, sunshine, creativity, conversation.
We are all connected and the same yet some people are dying of starvation, poverty. How is that fair?
What did my ancestors hope I'd be, like did they think about me?

Gratitude for all of my joys and this beautiful Planet
Sadness about Separation and Loss

I am so lucky to have my ancestors looking after me ♥

Everything changes. We are the Past and Future

I think I will never be good enough. I feel like I am dependent on too much.
I need to be left alone. I am grateful for my health

My Broken Family and Humanity as a family

Love of family

My Selfishness and Lovingness. Coming and Leaving. Friends and family. Love and Hate. Long Lost Ancestors

Myself and the ones I love in this strange Place...The universe...The greater meaning. This world which we must take care of... our past, in the stars..and the future.

A Loved one Lost. Great welcome

my family COLIN our Planet, my grandson, UTE her passing

me fitting in so well after we moved

Big Realisation. Selfish tears joy and sadness

tears of gratitude for the 1st generation's gift. Tears for the 7th generation and their loss.

Containment, eternity, Truth, Freedom, Joy and Breath

Territory, money, jealousy, worry, birth of son, sun, wind, water

Tears of joy and gratitude for life friendships and the beauty of our environment

Joy, hope and optimism for life

Silent, loss, lonely fragmented – ancestors journeying across the seas, to a wild place. came back. Finding another silence, held and nourished. Belonging even though its not mine

Too many early deaths Jean and Thicia

Confusion – overwhelming Dartington. Is it right?

Tears for protecting what matters

COSMOS

Milly, nature, animals and people

I have circled the Mystery all my life and still it remains a Mystery ♥

Tears of joy Bring happiness, my family had brought me patience and a big smile on my face.

Pain and frustration at lack of mobility, regret at the passing of youth

For my very remarkable father alive & well and the rock of my being and the sadness anticipated of him not being there one day this brings tears to my eyes but also makes me cherish him.

Swimming in my/our animalness! – a whole lake of tears

Teachers, inspirers, family, friends... The stairs, the sun, the sea, the woods + forests...
...That we will destroy + break it..

my friends

spaciousness, time to experiment, play/express, beauty, love, expansiveness, stars, informing my life.
hopes, aspirations, seeding dreams

The physical Dartington and the music in the soul's joy

the glory of Loving: Friendship and family. The deaths of my mother father and brother
Music music music. singing listening sharing

Things lost and found, my heart

Lack of Grandchildren, Love and friendship

My family brings me Joy.

Bother tears of joy & sadness for babua

Energy, creativity, Loving family, part of something bigger. Injustice, Inequality

Welcoming

My Mum, Dad. Hope, Love. Café, Need to Cry

Joy, happiness and a bit of sad.

Love, wave, flow

Loneliness and fear. My daughter and her partner on my allotment. Lack of respect and consideration
for the environment and other people
Past experience, stories of knowledge

All the wonderful people who were here but aren't any more and still are ♥

TIME TO NOURISH + RENEW

new life welcome. Always letting go into the moment, tears of frustration. Presence.

When your life is a bit wobbly it teaches you how to balance

When my grandmother died I did not cry because I did not love her. The most interesting thing I know about her was that she knew all the knights and queens of England by heart. Later I cried because of this.

Thank you, Clarity about what i feel

Leaving

Every sadness brings a new hope. Joy is for each moment. Keep it.

2.2.11. Family – love, Mother – future, Scared to lose all those.

Bells ringing, dancing, babies smiling, love, letting my child down, fear of the truth

Missed opportunity grief, loss, separation, Loss of direction

Questioning loneliness

Easy confidence. This is my land- it holds my ancestors, the planet will go on without us

In order to advance our souls humans must encounter a society of healing and then inter-connectedness

1/2/2010: last night dance- feeling, Centred and connected grateful for the space. The stars, driving home. The fire; my partner smiling warmly; snug cats. Son tucked up safe in bed.

A sparking cocktail of life

Company of mr crazy. Can it be right

My family. Music. Friends. Good health. Illness. Depression.

Allow these tears to bring life + love ♥

It is a tragedy that the magic and beauty that is Dartington has to exist in the real world.

People that I have lost friends

My spiritual journey the sunshine Dartington. The river, my granny, snowdrops & Robin Song
My woodstove, community, my body.

Missing Di so tears of sadness

Tears of disconnection from ancestors and Sadness in self.

Both tears of joy and sadness

Shop Documentation: Micro world collages



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Evaluation report

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