

but going out, I mix with my own community.

Worship of voices



Lots of people in the Broxbourne community think that the council don't listen to them. People are saying that there's no point in trying to communicate because no-one listens. It deadens the enthusiasm when you don't get anywhere.

What would make your community stronger?

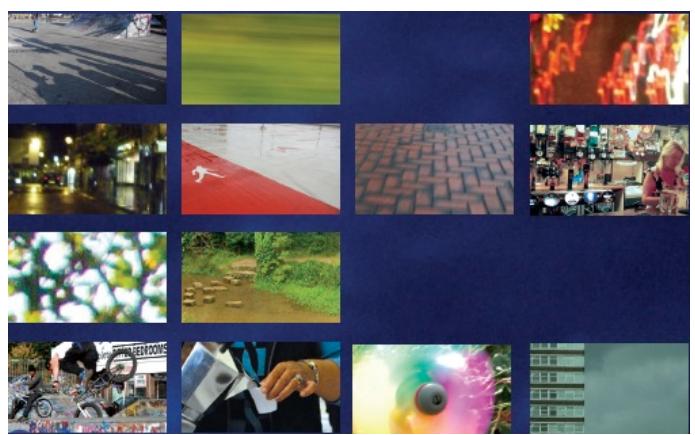
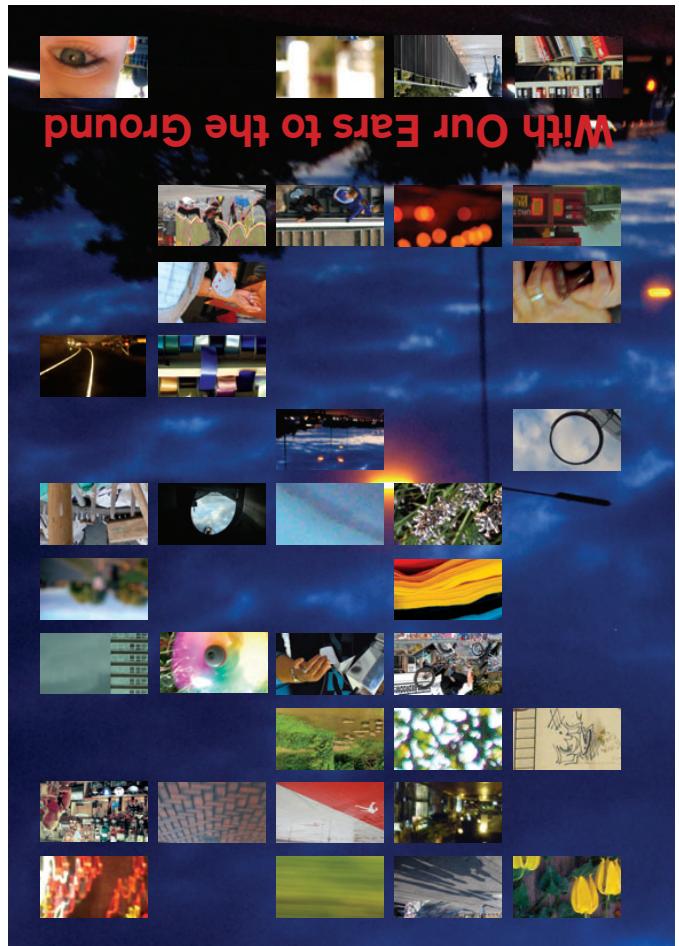
Something that connects you well, be it
a park, a subject or even ^{possibly} a neighbour.

- More facilities
 - yearly events to bring neighbours closer.
 - Interest based communities
 - Diversity
 - Getting together
 - Universal interests.
 - Appreciation of people & place

Supplying knowledge
↳ shared knowledge

Have Fun!

There are a lot of opportunities for people to get their voice heard but they don't always know how to do it.



With Our Ears to the Ground: Listening

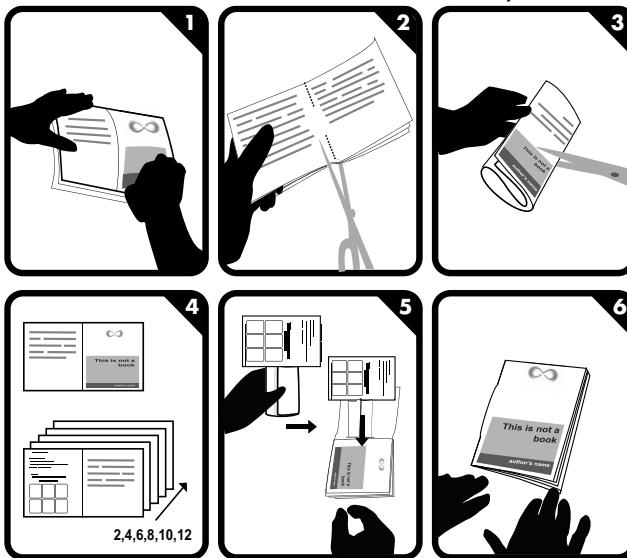
Alice Angus and Orlagh Woods

Thanks

2010-02-04

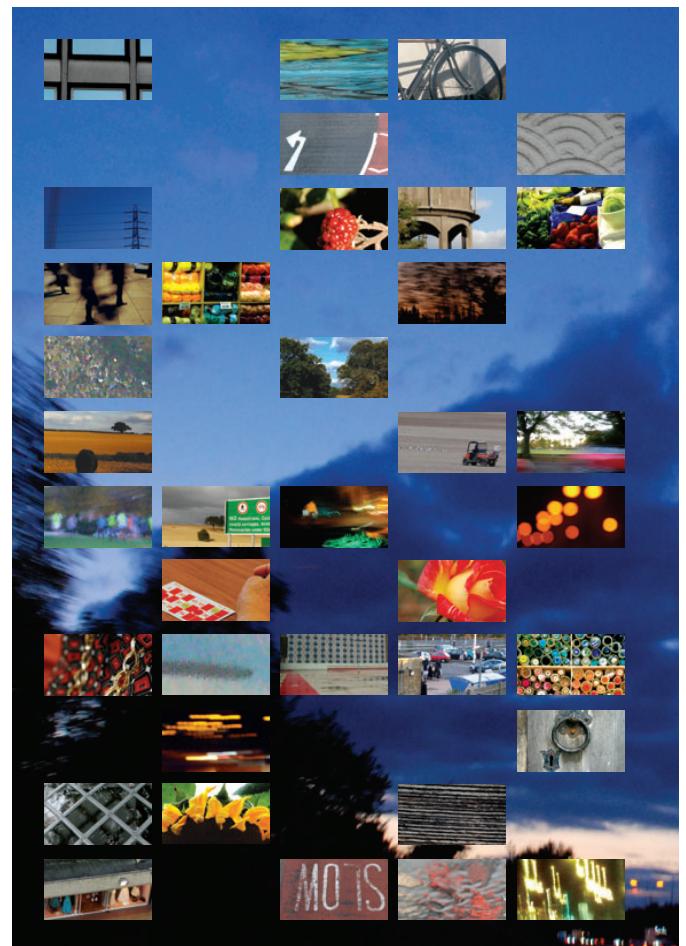
A Proboscis project commissioned by Green Heart Partnership with Hertfordshire County Council to explore peoples ideas about community.
Part 1 of 6 eBooks based on the limited edition publication.
<http://withourearstotheground.wordpress.com/>

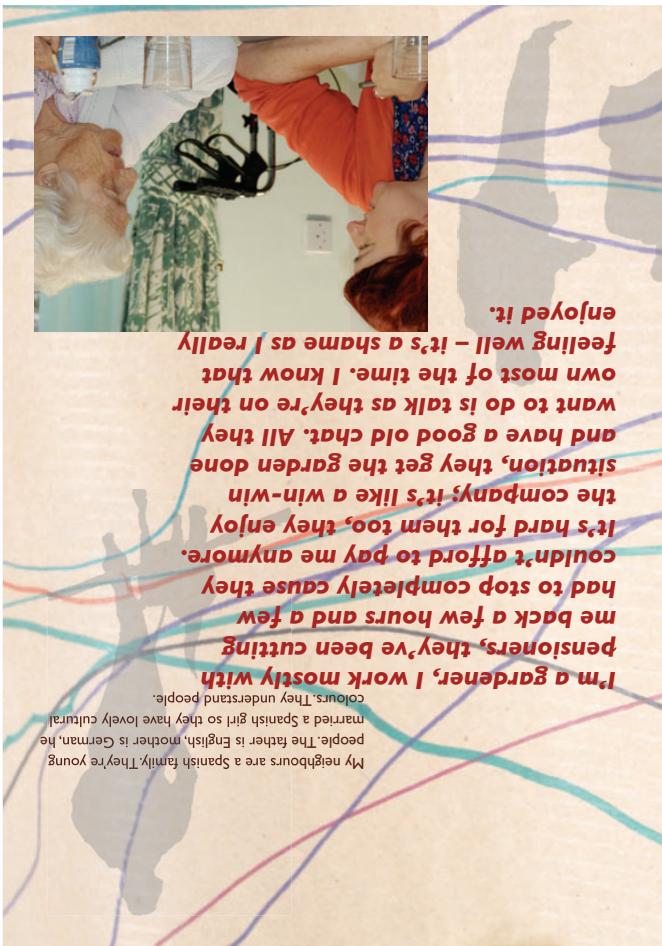
Creative Commons BY-NC-ND Proboscis 2009



We talked to people in groups, individually, inside, outside, buses, cafes, community centres, libraries, at home and at what it's like living in their neighbourhoods and what gathered their opinions and experiences of their community. We gathered the information and emerged with six themes of events. From this research emerged the six themes of Transport, Movement, Listening, Community, Getting Involved and Perceptions, which now form the basis for the project and publications.

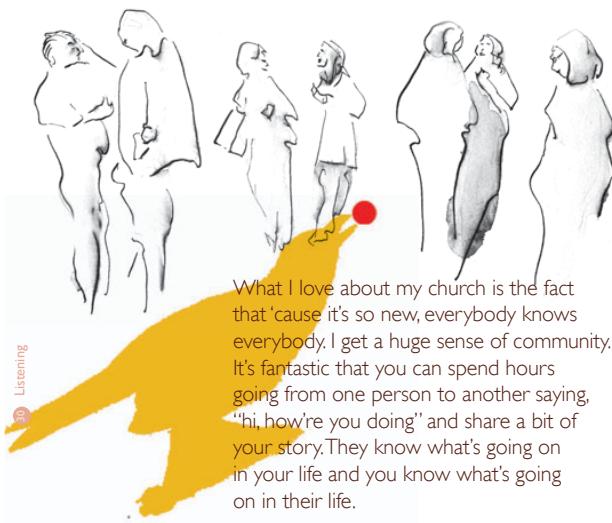
With Our Ears to the Ground



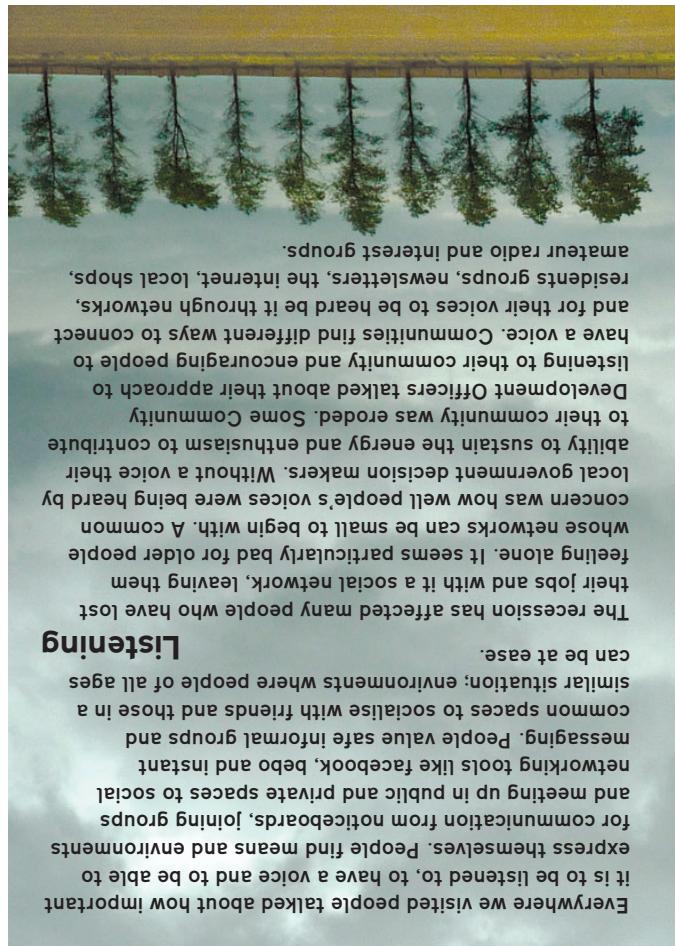


I'm a gardener, I work mostly with pensioners, they've been cutting me back a few hours and a few had to stop completely cause they couldn't afford to pay me anymore. It's hard for them too, they enjoy situations, they get the garden done and have a good old chat. All they want to do is talk as they're on their own most of the time. I know that selling well - it's a shame as I really enjoyed it.

My neighbours are a Spanish family. They're young people. The teacher is English, mother is German, he married a Spanish girl so they have lovely cultural colours. They understand people.



What I love about my church is the fact that 'cause it's so new, everybody knows everybody. I get a huge sense of community. It's fantastic that you can spend hours going from one person to another saying, "hi, how're you doing" and share a bit of your story. They know what's going on in your life and you know what's going on in their life.



Listening

Everywhere we visited people talked about how important it is to be listened to, to have a voice and to be able to express themselves. People find means and environments for communication from noticeboards, joining groups and meeting up in public and private spaces to social networking tools like facebook, bebo and instant messaging. Peopple value safe informal groups and common spaces to socialise with friends and those in a similar situation; environments where people of all ages can be at ease.

Listening

The recession has affected many people who have lost their jobs and with it a social network, leaving them feeling alone. It seems particularly bad for older people whose networks can be small to begin with. A common concern was how well people can be small to begin with. A common local government decision makers. Without a voice heard by their community was eroded. Some Community Development Officers talked about their approach to listening to their community and encouraging people to have a voice. Communities find different ways to connect and for their voices to be heard be it through networks, residents groups, newsletters, the internet, local shops, have a voice. Communities find different ways to connect and for their voices to be heard be it through networks, residents groups, newsletters, the internet, local shops, amateur radio and interest groups.

In all this we've taken Proboscis' anarchaeology approach, to informally and creatively excavate layers of meaning and understanding to get beneath the surface of some of Hertfordshire's communities.

Our enduring experience of this journey has been of the generosity of the people, the ambition of their ideas and the determination and commitment they devote to building their communities.

This book is one of 6 that are based on the limited edition publication printed to accompany the project. It draws together the multiple layers of ideas and experiences we found across different communities and it is designed to reflect those ideas and voices.

Alice Angus and Orlagh Woods, Proboscis 2009

With Our Ears to the Ground is a project by arts organisation Proboscis. It was commissioned by Green Heart Partnership with Hertfordshire County Council. It builds upon previous consultations, by Hertfordshire County Council, that used traditional surveys to find out how well people from different backgrounds get on with each other. This publication and the project research will be presented to the community, Council Members and Project Team to inform the Hertfordshire Forward Community Cohesion Strategy, equalities planning across the county, and to support the partners to build stronger communities where people feel valued, get along well together and feel they belong.



If communities can have a belief in themselves, it will happen, and our job as development officers is to come alongside and encourage them. You have to make sure that everyone gets heard. Listening is absolutely critical, showing a willingness to move, asking people for solutions.

I didn't get a chance to enrol at the time and they said, "We can't take you again until next September." So really, what can I do until I go to college and get my grades? Be a bum? 'Cause there's no work out there, I've tried every shop in Stevenage.

