Key Questions
The workshop participants broke into 4 groups each to make up a StoryCube with ideas around the following questions:
- who is it for?
- what could it be?
- what shouldn't it be?
- what opportunities should it offer?

The resulting discussion created a much larger pool of questions which were the basis for the questions posed to the delegates at b.TWEEN08

Group A
- what are your networks?
- how do you communicate without technology?
- what are reasonable and achievable expectations?
- who are the key people to engage (community gatekeepers etc)?

Group B
- what levels of ‘investment’ should users have to choose?
- what levers could actively engage involvement?
- how can different groups find a common understanding of technology?

Introduction

Co-ordinating Centre:

About the Beacons

Workshop Participants

Giles Lane & Karen Martin

Manchester Beacon Workshop, June 2008
Manchester Beacon Project
University of Manchester
Manchester Metropolitan
University of Salford
Museum of Science and Industry
Manchester : Knowledge Capital
The Manchester Beacon's activities will be shaped and informed by the creativity and dynamism of the people of Manchester and Salford to ensure that all members of the community, particularly residents from the poorest and most excluded neighborhoods, benefit from their work.

They will focus on "reaching out", "listening to" and "learning from" local people. Their programme of activities will be delivered in partnership with a wide range of local businesses, sports clubs, cultural venues, community groups and media organisations.

Beacon Engagement Tool
Just b. and Manchester Beacon will be commissioning an online service that maps connections between people, places, knowledge and creative activity in Manchester an new tool for public engagement and knowledge transfer for Manchester.
Outdoor Inspiration
The mapping exercise was followed by breaking into small groups who were tasked to wander the streets of Manchester researching and recording evidence of the different modes in which creative activity is communicated in the city. The images captured by the groups were printed onto 20 Story Cubes over lunch and used to stimulate the main discussion of the afternoon.

Possible outcomes
- Usesfulness and entertainment
- Two main motives for projects of this kind:
  - Needs definable outcomes
  - People
- Important that it becomes definably useful to
- Removing barriers:
  - Should enable innovation, learning and reflection in universities
- General population describing what has been done
- Building and / or
- Co-ordinating Centre
- What the tool might be

Notes from the discussion
Is there a role for audio, sensory stimulation?

Be good to see the relationship between research in the universities and what happens out in the wider world as a result of this

Find out what people are doing, who they are working with and how they might be helped.

Build bridges between theory and practice

Perhaps there isn’t a single solution, perhaps it’s a series of overlaid, relatively simple projects

Can we connect a number of Manchester beacons and develop projects with them? Make them magnets for other projects and communities

Act as a networking tool or service to facilitate dialogue

Opportunity for emergence, to touch some of the work that’s already out there

**Challenges**

What constitutes a successful outcome from the Beacon project? Sometimes it’s useful to define what doesn’t work

Visual language carries baggage, e.g. Cornerhouse has modernist aesthetic, and this
Final Questions for b.TWEEN Story Cubes
- Who are the key people and networks that engagement tools should target?
- What makes engagement tools sustainable?
- What themes would inspire people to connect using engagement tools?
- What opportunities should engagement tools offer their participants?
- What should engagement tools be or do?
- What are reasonable and achievable expectations for engagement tools?
- What local communities should benefit most from engagement tools?
- What kinds of links to the physical world should engagement tools have?

Other questions from the discussion:
- What does engagement mean to you?
- How would you define 'engagement'?
- What other platforms can you think of that might inspire people to connect?
- What else?
- What would successful engagement look like?
- What levers could actively engage involvement?
- Who are the key people to engage (community, media organisations)?
- How will you communicate without technology?

Key Questions
- What are the main themes that can be used to build bridges between people?
- How can we capture information without it becoming a closed-off silo?
- How do you keep connected with information?
- What do you do next with the information?

Group A
- What would spark big interest?
- How to link to the physical world?
- Who would benefit most from a higher touch solution?
- What would be the easiest achievable and what might take the majority of the budget?

Understanding the context of networks
Important elements include physical location of the team building the tool, the organisational structure and the individuals involved. How could these be contextualised?
Perhaps good to think of public squares, urban space, as analogy. What would a site analysis look like?
Provide trusted intermediaries into communities
What is the economy of this network we are building? What can be moved around the system?
Knowledge is transferred / carried with people
Track the thing that gets made rather than the person who made it
Personal relationships build on professional needs. Relationships change and move on over time.

Ownership, responsibility and commitment
Question not only who is it for, but who will own it. Will universities seed and host it?

Engagement and Participation
Importance of trust relationships in motivating participation
When will the commitment to the project be conceived?
Who is organising this tool? Who will be the moderators? Issues of moderation could ownership be devolved to those