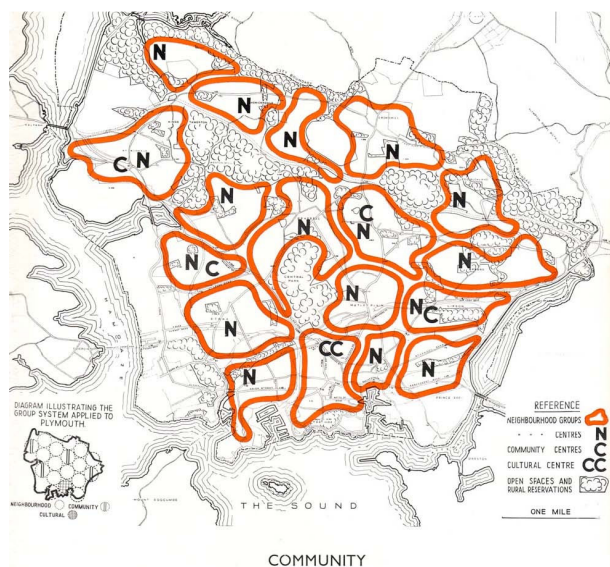


Research in Plymouth The local studies library was a fantastic resource for newspaper articles about Jack and establishing key facts such Jack's birth date (Alfred Sorrell 26.03.17). Efford Library had a minimal amount of information on the history of the local area and/or Plymouth.

I gathered a list of places that Jack had lived and worked and started to plan a 'jack sorrel journey' across the city. I also studied the development plans for the city including the "plan of Plymouth" to understand further the original context of planning Efford. A key aim of building communities in the Plan seemed very relevant in the current masterplanning project: that 'to regain the community spirit of neighbourliness is essential if civic consciousness is to be preserved'.



Participants and audience Flyers and posters were distributed across Efford but in the end all the young people were recruited by word of mouth or direct approach. A core group of seven, all very local to Torridge Way, became the key agents (Sam, Darren, Jodine, Josh, Riece, Kirsty and Amy) but a further eight also took part.



During the 'what makes you smile in Efford?' activity the young people completed 101 questionnaires and spoke to approximately a further 35 people. Most of these people were shopping on Torrridge Way or using the bus service to or from Torrridge Way. They were all residents of Efford and included children, older people, many young people and also the community police. Many people had lived in Efford all their lives but some interviewed had arrived during the last few years.

During the 'what do you know about Jack Sorrell?' activity the young people questioned approximately 40 people passing by their question wall sheet. After the board meeting and during the pod opening the next day I spoke with a further 15 people about their memories of Jack Sorrell.

Unfortunately I had to abandon the 'jack sorrell look-alike's' activity following the incident the previous evening. Understandably the young people decided that they did not want to carry on working on the project. However during that visit I discussed Jack informally with a further 5 local people.

I have not kept records of the number of informal conversations during walks and activities in Efford but estimate that I spoke with at least a further 25 young people during the project, most from the Torrridge Way area but some from Little America and Deer Park.

The Art School and the forthcoming SLOW exhibition at Plymouth Art Centre have provided opportunities to present and discuss the work with a wider audience in Plymouth, in particular with other artists working in Plymouth.

I was supported in the activities by many adults in the community, in particular by Maria Bunker and Rose Lee. I am very grateful to them, and also to the following for their help with this project: Michael Bridgewater, Sharon, Ernie Edgcumbe, Kath Hancock and Paula Orrell.



Budget The main expenditure was travel, accommodation, printing and web support. The overall expenditure was slightly less than anticipated although the number of days spent on the project was more than double.

Evaluation



Efford finds it difficult to describe itself and is an island with few positive histories. The strongly bonded but defensive community has a suspicion of beyond. My immediate response to Efford was that this isolated community and the dilapidated system-built housing needed the intimate and hand-made to rebuild social confidence and a positive identity of place. The first photograph I unwittingly took was of the empty pub sign.

I listened to how people wanted to be positive about the place but could only do this through stories of people, not architecture and landscape. The views that I had naively assumed to be important to the identity of Efford were largely irrelevant to most residents. I reflected whether a view is enticing when alongside aspirations beyond the immediate time and place.

So I set out to find the smiling histories; memories and feelings, through which to start explore the identity of the place. I was pleasantly surprised when the legend of Jack Sorrell began to emerge: a tale specific to Efford with a strong sense of place and enduring resonance. There was little evidence of storytelling in Efford, maybe as a result of a lack of pride in the place and it was therefore great for the young people to hear about the past. People enjoyed recounting tales from the Royal Marine, revealing how people's lives were interwoven with the place and site.

This 'informal' consultation revealed an absence of community social space and possibly trusted social structures, with an associated nostalgia for a shared space and respected leadership. These were much more than a series of conversations about one person: Jack became a means to get people talking and considering what was important in Efford. Many people commented how Jack would have been so appalled by the state of things now, as though he engendered a sense of responsibility about the place still.

I remain disappointed that I did not manage to fulfil the potential of taking the project further with the young people. I had wanted to take them on a journey to Jack's places, in order to take them beyond Efford and 'into' the view. Their lack of skills and aspirations, particularly in planning and committing, was shocking and depressing, as were their appalling diets,

smoking and irregular school attendance. Being so far away in London and with the short timescale I found it challenging to establish my work practise in Efford.

I was confused at times about whether I was attempting to engage young people in the place or in the consultation. The work became both and I believe provides further evidence that an understanding of a place in the past and present leads to active involvement in its future.

The community of Efford were incredibly welcoming and supportive of all the artists and our work. I have huge admiration for the ambition to place art within the process of change. I hope that HECP will continue to be daring and inventive for Efford's future.

In revealing Jack Sorrell's legend and his impact and influence in Efford, the 'jack sorrel research foundation' exposes the significance of the absence of social space now. The 'foundation' provides an opportunity for the place to be described through social exchange and experience, and thereby acts both as a device for revealing the vulnerabilities of Efford and also for building the identity of Efford.

