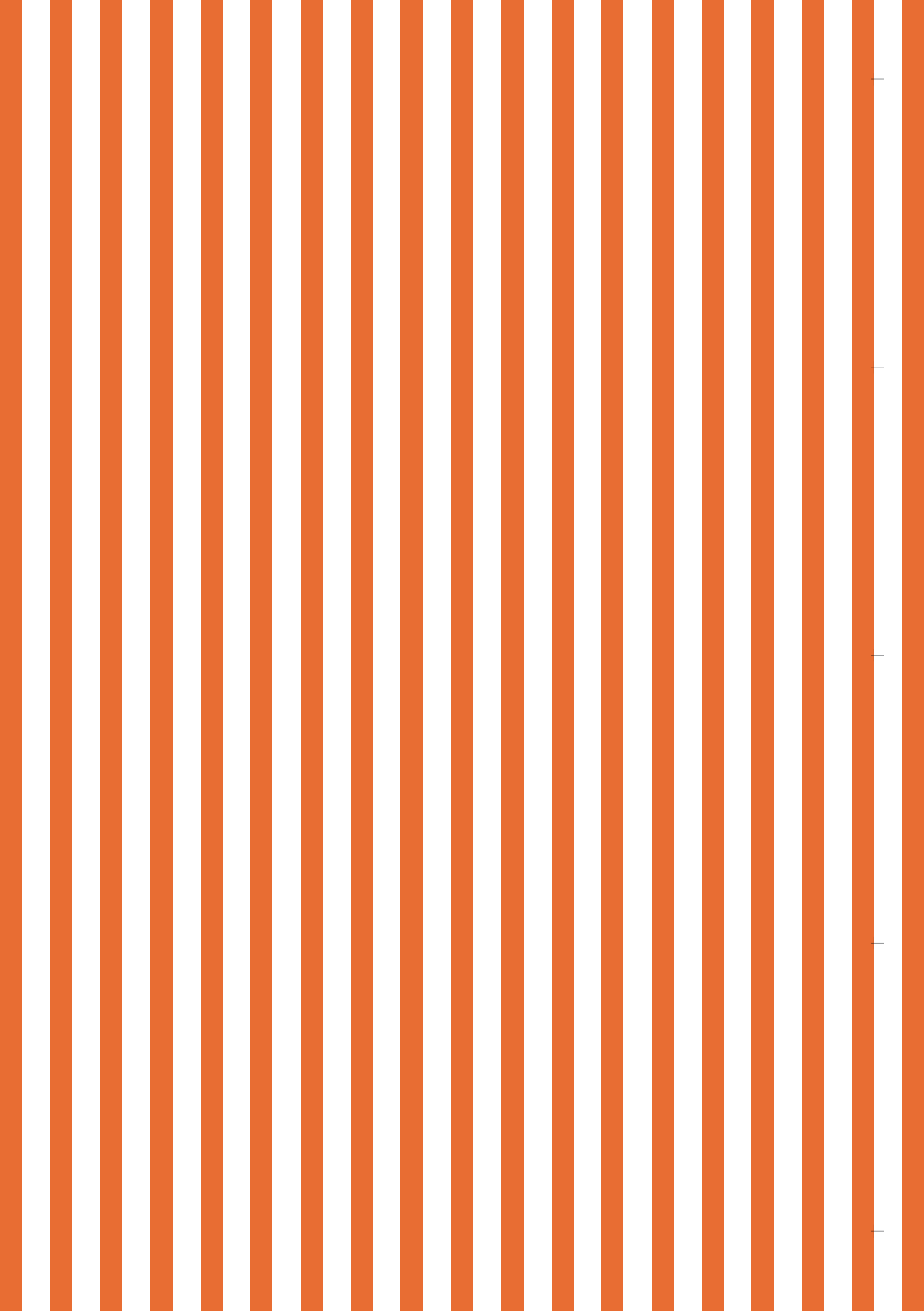reflections

reflections
on

# the getgo project

MEDes Minor Project GSA | Sept '09 - Feb '10+

Eeva Campbell

# contents

# introductions

## project team

From top left:
*Sara Pateraki*
*Amy Marsh*
*Holly Brenan*
*Sarah Drummond*
*Angela Fernandez Orviz*
*Laura Franzini*
*Fee Schmidt-Soltau*
*Heji Jeong*
*Joe Slavick*
*Rose Hutton*
*Başak Okay*
*Eeva Campbell*

We are a group of twelve students at the Glasgow School of Art.

This group is composed of eight Master of Design Innovation (MDes) students and four returning fifth year Master of European Design (MEDes) students.

The former course is a new one-year masters programme, with people from a wide range of backgrounds; the latter MEDes programme is a five-year course where participants have spent two years abroad in different schools before returning to complete their studies.

# the brief

The initial brief came as a competition set by the Audi Design Foundation. After discovering that 'no, we are not going to design cars' we set off on an individual read and understand of the brief.

In short, the brief was to design a social enterprise in Glasgow into one of five themes: Crime, Finance, Aging Population, Health, Energy and/or Climate Change.

## Social Enterprise

That the brief in essence called for a social enterprise, the first challenge was to define this.

My definition of social enterprise:
- a thing that has a social purpose
- a thing that has a surplus of income
- a thing that uses this surplus to maintain it's social purpose

This is not a deep definition and certainly sounds simple. Yet it is more difficult than imagined to change an idea with social incentive into the 'thing' that also address the two last points.

We avoided becoming lost by the definition by developing an umbrella organisation and values for our project.

reflections on | *social incentive design*

I explained this understandably to myself by comparing it to the role of a designer manifesting new technology into a product in usable and desirable ways. We manifested new working methods into socially orientated aims.

The way in which it differs from socialwork, is that socialwork makes a point to find out how an individual operates in the whole, in order to help the individual. The design approach gathers individual opinion to conclude something as a whole, to benefit the whole. In this sense it is somewhat superficial.

When working with a social incentive, I have now learnt that there are more challenges than this superficiality. These are challenges to the ideal approach.

An ideal approach must seem un-authorative, yet there is also no way that a solution can be entirely so. There is always a decision-maker. The ways that these decisions are made can create the illusion of equality. Working with a deprived community meant that saying ideas were co-created allowed us to unconciously maintain this illusion for the benefit of everyone involved, ourselves included.

Not imposing a solution is replaced by imposing a promise, which is even more difficult to deliver. It is this inadvertant promise of deliverance that we should have checked. Yet without it, raising aspirations, hopes, trust and therefore participation is impossible.

I learnt about my capabilities in this regard. I enjoy working with this social incentive and with people, but now have a more realistic view of what can be acheived, and know that more care should be taken about the promises that are communicated.
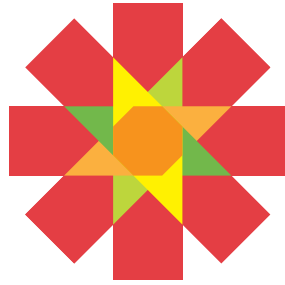
# getg❋

## umbrella organisation

To keep us on track, and specific yet wonderfully broad, we set up an umbrella organisation of ourselves.

We developed our brand through brainstorming what we wanted to acheive and the values our enterprise should hold.

In our values-development, methods were used such as: if our brand was a person, who would it be? It was a good way to get people thinking, but as I am not very up-to-date in popular culture, some things went over my head. Other methods such as mission statement writing and brand value identifying I am comfortable in, and fully participated in. Whilst myself and others worked on these words, others designed the visual CI. We also decided to have a website, a blog and a twitter feed: all new to me and from which I learnt the usefulness (and annoying-ness) of these social media tools.

Our living brand became an integral part of the project and founded our project aims.

# listenUp project

Following the research phase, we split into smaller projects under getgo. The proposal I worked on until recently was called 'ListenUp'.

ListenUp operates in the field of community consultation. It is a social enterprise that aims to build trust and aid communication between the community and its stakeholders using creative methods and community involvement.

ListenUp embraced the project aims, although you will find that the writings on each uses the holistic project as its basis, rather than the specifics of ListenUp. This has occured as for me, the project has been geared towards one fluid whole with joint ownership, rather than the development of my own project.

listen uP
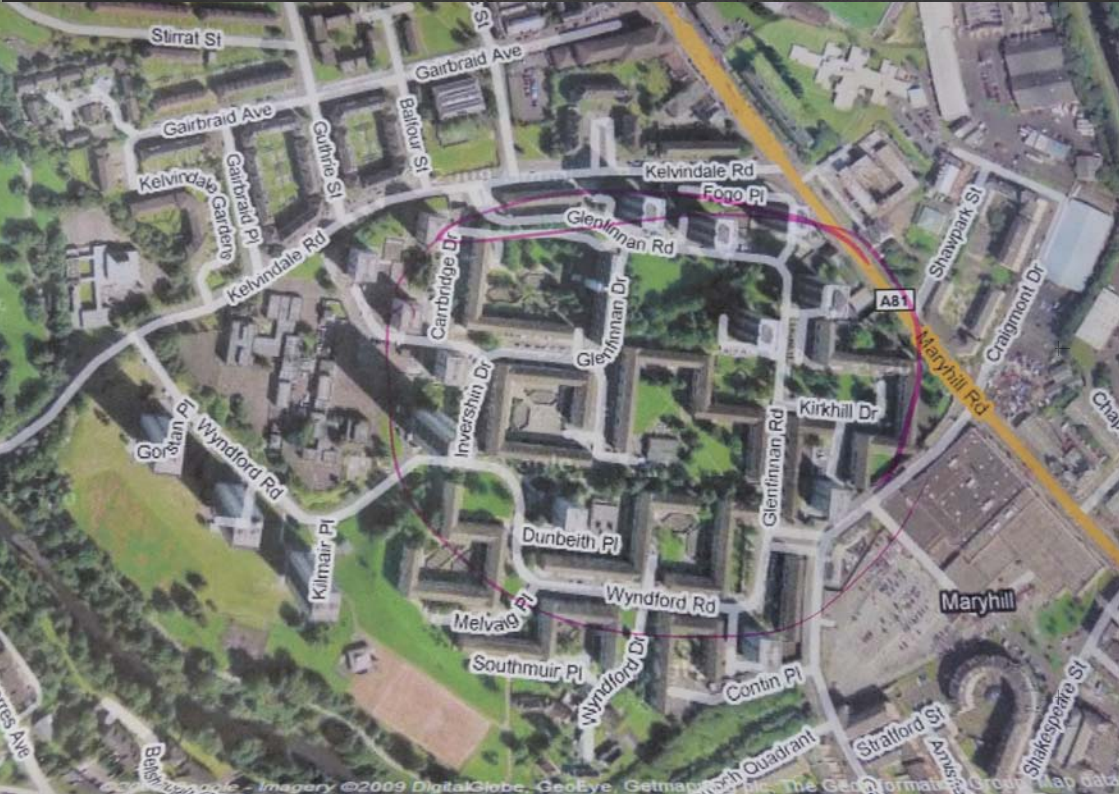
# wyndford

Wyndford Housing estate in Maryhill, North Glasgow is statistically one of the most deprived areas in Scotland. We identified quickly that there were many potential project opportunities in the area. From the situation of the area, there are often groups coming in, promising things and then not delivering. We aimed to avoid this at all costs.

However, the statistics do nothing to account the positive willingness of the people to talk and engage with us. (Even though as design students, often middle class and/or foreign, we may have appeared to be slightly suspect. I think being a mostly female group helped...) The residents we worked more closely with, some of whom accompanied us to the regional finals, really made our project what it is. Thank you.

...ent :

Our Goal is to inspire
community involvement
through creativity.

Together we can identify
real needs and create
lasting solutions using
design.

# project aims

These I have post-defined from our initial mission statement and discussions of the desired project process. They show how we worked and what we wanted to acheive.

Outside the majority of our comfort zones, the aims became the giant learning curve of the project.

defining our approach and tone

# *one*)

## use a 'fuzzy front end' approach

### No assumptions, no pre-definitions

Beginning with a 'fuzzy front end' requires a certain type of capability. One must remain focused without assuming ANYTHING. Bring into the equation eleven other people who are all expected to do the same, most of whom are new to the approach. Twelve people, mass information, no assuming. I would say that given the circumstances, we managed rather well.

Meeting together for perhaps the first time, it was decided that we would ignore 'the five themes'. Had we pre-defined which was the issue to work on, we would have delivered a self-fulfilling prophecy. This was the founding decision of the approach. It was also advantageous, especially as the themes are wide enough to contain almost everything, and our project would not have come as an immediate descendant from one of them. It gave us the moral high-ground over the brief, allowing is to be freer of it throughout the project.

## the dreamboard
the dreamboard worked to swiftly engage (or scare off) the user, providing quick opinion canvassing.
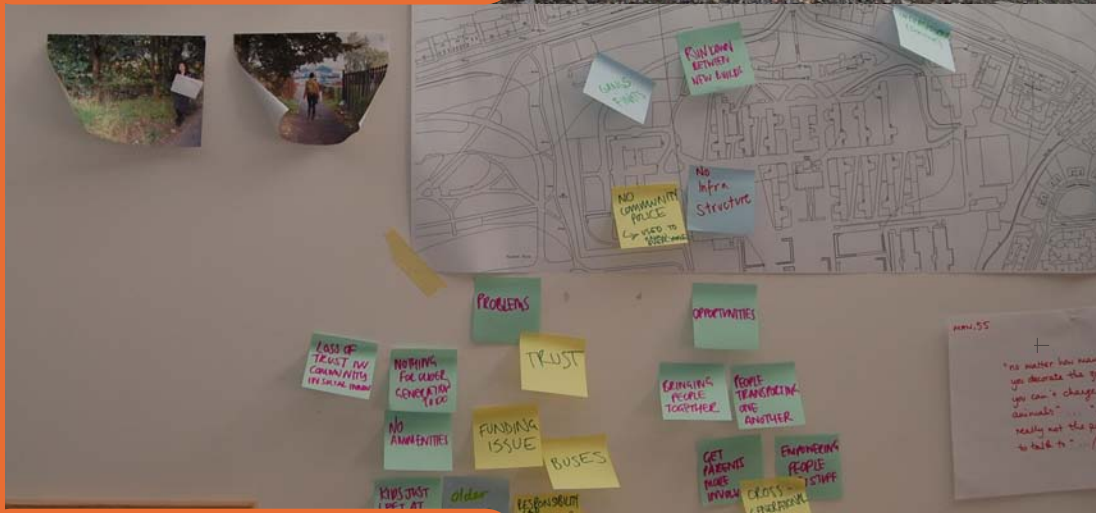


## mapping the areas
communicating the opinion gathered and opportunities and problems of working in each area.

# Finding the community

The foundation was solidly laid with the second decision to let a community to work in come to us, rather than us blindly pinning the tail on the donkey.

No community, no theme. Finding both. First the community. Out and about in the north of Glasgow, where we had previously contacted and visited two community centres. (OK, some of the unassuming did come with multiple choice answers.) I was out in Ruchill, which was a challenging area to get into. It had taken a bit of organising to ensure all teams had someone confident to approach 'the man on the street'. This 'man' had an extremely wary attitude of what we were trying to do. Putting name or face to opinion was a case of suspicion. As the only native English-speaker in the group, I was 'in charge' of approaching people. Coupled with the attitude of the people and my sudden onslaughts of shyness (which have become fewer during the project), the day was not entirely productive. Our Dreamboard tool and consent forms scared people off.

More luck was had in Wyndford. There people were willing to talk, which is essential if the fuzzy front end is to lead anywhere. Issues gathered were also of the somewhat cliché but now justifiably un-assumed issue. Expressing the issue less colourfully than it was to us, and a bit too conclusively: the young folk wanted something to do, the old folk were scared of the young folk having nothing to do, and the middle folk were all up for finding something for the young folk to do.

From this easier accessibility in Wyndford, we now faced one of many - of what I saw as - moral issues. As we had already had contact with the community centre in Ruchill, and had promised something of sorts (a new way of working, we are different, we do listen) is it possible to just leave and all work in Wyndford? This was solved with the agreement that our getgo umbrella would allow us to spread any successful outcomes back out there.
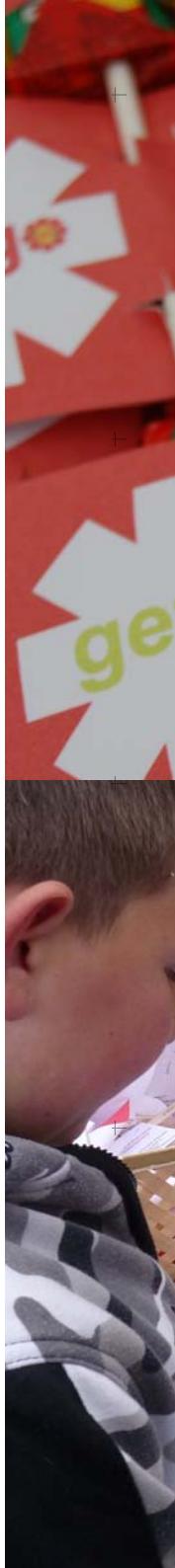
Deciding to work in an accessible community was necessary for us to establish ourselves and our strengths. Was I hugely troubled by the moral issue of leaving Ruchill? Not greatly. My personal morals were still hidden as an anonymous part of a bigger group. This later changed, and in hindsight, feedback should have been given to the community centre leaders of our reasoning with a suggestion of opportunities in the future.

## Finding the theme

Engagement tools were one of the key elements of theme-finding and also ensured the success of our project.

Together with attractively engaging the user and directing them to answer uniquely yet comparably, an effective tool must also look successful. The role of the tool moves from simply finding out something to proving that something was found out. Visual proof provides justification of decision making to everyone you are trying to impress - in this case back to the community and to those evaluating the project (Audi and the GSA). As I was often part of the tool development team, I learnt a lot about how to design an effective tool.

It would have been a good exercise to design communication tools for our own use, as one area where we lacked this successful outward communication was amongst ourselves. We were to map all the visual and verbal information gathered up on the wall. This mapping was largely done by the previously-studied-designers amongst us, as we are used to working this way. I am sure that much information has been lost in translation from different ways of documenting. It seems that a lot of my time was spent encouraging information exchanges that everyone understood. However, we managed to gather the information required to be in the position to identify opportunities and obstacles in the area.

Message 236
Thanks for the lolly
:) as for issues, it's
nice too see
someone out asking
people these things.

Reply      ☰      Back

Look around.
What would you
change
in your communit...

Text Maryhill
and your issues t...
07968638496

getg◆

## brand lollies

. . . spread our name:"it's
the lolly-people again!"
and the SMS we received,
although only one, made
it look like we had done
something amazing..

## the mapping tool

. . . was nice in theory
but didn't work as well in
practice. It asked for too
specific information, but
looked good!

## developing engagement tools

A lot of energy went into designing tools and how to engage people. Most of the time someone was working on tool development. As we did not always have a clear idea of what we wanted to acheive from the engagement, many went unused and others were time consuming to produce. However, it was not time wasted, rather time spent learning.

## Stakeholder Liaisons

The weeks had also consisted of many meetings with stakeholders in and around Wyndford. The stakeholders' invaluable information provided us with a glimpse into why 'the man on the street' said what he said. I am curious which provided us with more insights: the stakeholder or the community member. Our insights came from community opinion, as did the justification of our outcomes. However, the information from stakeholders was the key to identifying why these issues existed, and were therefore the path to directed insights.

With little previous experience of working with authorities, I was keen to be involved in the stakeholder meetings to learn how it is done. It is not really as difficult or as daunting as one (myself) might have previously thought, and the two meetings I attended were handled capably. They are just people, after all.

The difficulty of stakeholder relations lies more in identifying and benchmarking the responsibilities and aims of each. We created a map of stakeholders and the relationships that exist. In getgo, 'stakeholder liaison officers' were allocated, one of whom remained consistent throughout. This set allocation of responsibility ensured that at least this aspect of our project was always under control. (well done Rose!) I say this, as with our fuzzy front end approach, came a constant fluidity of responsibilities and team-changing within getgo.

## Identifying Insights

Our biggest brain gym and direction taking in this stage came when devising insights and oppurtunities. As an MEDes with no lectures, I had the time to be drawn into this battle. (I can also never resist the opportunity to involve myself in creating definitions of the difficult-to-define.) From this, the focus was widened from the initial feeling that it would be 'youth crime'. This itself is not an insight and many of opportunities we felt to be emerging, especially following discussions with stakeholders, did not fit in this category. What makes what we have found out in Wyndford particular to Wyndford? Overleaf you can find the polished issues-to-insights map. Upon these discoveries, the fuzzy-front end ended and the focus appropriately became 'communication and interaction - changing the lack thereof'.

## To conclude . . .

This open approach is what designers are good at. In many previous projects, I have gone in blindly, finding out everything from scratch, with differing methods. In this project, a fuzzy front end worked to our advantage. It gave us the credibility of differing from many other authorities, and from the luxury of setting our own aims and fulfilling them in our own timescale, we were able to ask basic questions that are often skated over with statistics or lack of time. The knowledge gained from this allowed us to build up an outcome with a fresh beginning.
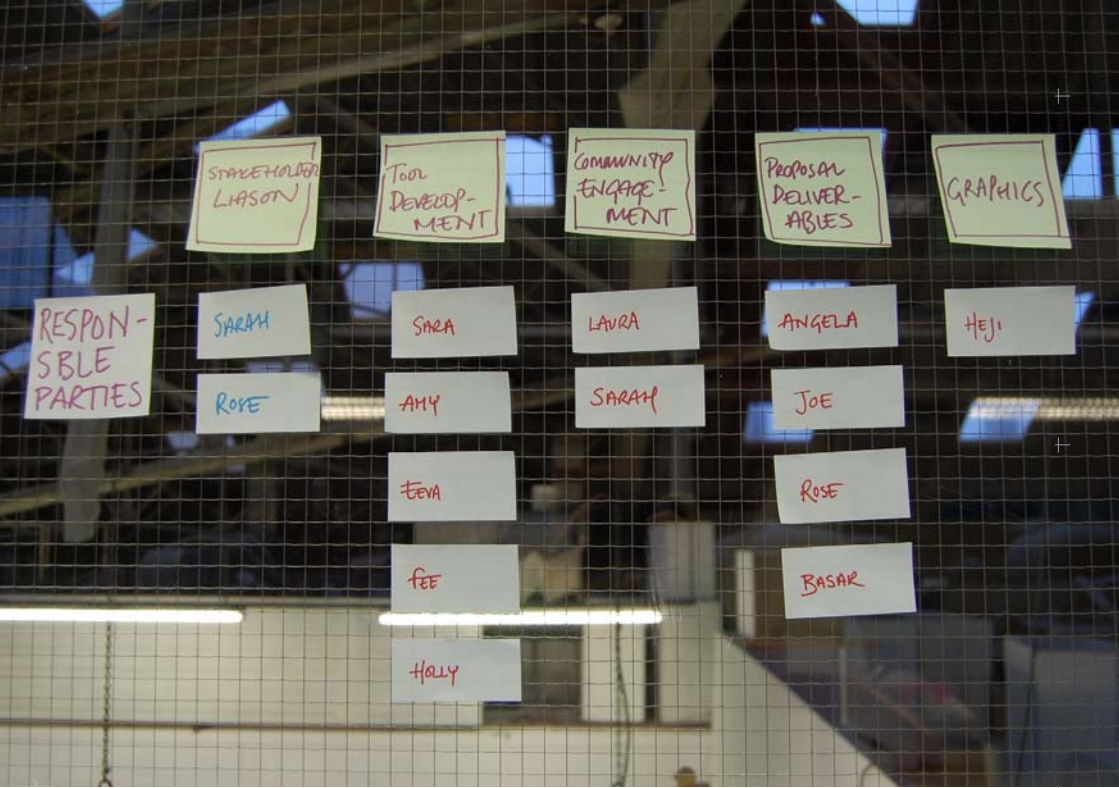
# *Teamwork*

We faced issues of leadership and responsibility delegation. I often found myself chasing people to make sure that they felt like they were playing a fair part. This was not because they were lazy, but more because others did not know who to trust to carry out tasks how they were envisioned. The background of each of us was unclear, and unusually, I feel I do not know all my teammates very well. Perhaps because there was so many of us.

The leadership role was often gapingly lacking. The initial kick-starting leader came charging with ideas, then disappeared. Several of us tried to take over at various stages and I feel that there were many leader-personalities, but the owner was new or lost in this situation.

After a period this resolved itself. Stronger organisers emerged and overall, we acheived an amazingly democratic way of working, adjusting to the fluidity of responsibilities. A great skill to have learnt, although one which I feel will not present itself very often in as intense a setting.

My roles in this team have been largely idea developing, event structuring, devising ways to deliver content for our values, communications coordinatating, and lots of other bits and pieces. Making financial projections was the only task I was not involved in at all. I have found that I like to be informed of everything that is occuring, to maintain a holistic view that can be transferred to others. A clear definition of direction is something that I often pushed for. Another discovery is that people who make decisions or conduct work without understandable communication to everyone else frustrates me, and in future I will ensure internal communication structures are devised.

one of Wyndford's football pitches and closed schools

# *two*)

## gain trust

The aforementioned engagement method was one way to gain trust in the area. The next stage was to co-create the ideas for enterprises. This would prove that we were not simply waltzing in, saying that we know best, and imposing. The co-design workshop should also provide the necessary sense of ownership of an idea required to make it sustainable.

Our issue mapping had not, however, provided us with a magic wyndford@hotmail.com. We needed to target invites. But to whom? And for what incentive? We solved these issues through a chance encounter, like so much of our project.

On my third visit to Wyndford, I was faced with the closed schools and derelict football pitches. These two depressing elements gave us the needed base for our project. From the school closures, a group of active community members had created their own network. We found this network on the football pitch. Not there and then, but on our random accosting way through Wyndford, we got chatting to David, who pointed down to the end of the row of houses, where

a man kept peering over at us. "That's Franny. He's the one to speak to. A bit rough, but the one to speak to." We thanked David, and met Franny.

Franny proved to be a very useful person to have met.

He told us that, as a community united, there was a plan to resurface the football pitch to "embarrass the council into action". A light lit up - if we go down and give a hand, we'll be in the position to show that we really want to work together. This want to 'embarrass' also gave a glimpse of an issue running deeper than there simply being no amenities.

## Actively out

Saturday, at the football pitch. We met Franny and other members of this network including Allison, extremely active in the Save Our Schools campaign, and Frank, a law student interested in community politics. These three became our main community champions.

In the toil and tool-lacking work, with fog and failing machine, we invited people to the co-design event. The invitations remained closed, and I was unsure how motivated they were. In a break from the rain, sheltering under the tower block, we explained a bit further.

The following day, we attended a meeting at the CCA. Allison turned up. Various people from around Glasgow with an interest in community led action were also there. I drove home a pitch directed at Allison, about our values and work, convincing her to come, and to spread the word.

The invitation of people to come to an event must be delivered as a mutual advantage and a mutual basis of trust: we both need each other, rather than the patronising "you need us" or the cliché "we need you". Getting the tone of this right is always a challenge.

resurfacing the pitch, come rain or shine

# Co-design event

This tone was just right in our co-design event. Reworking the structure, resulting from the initial one focusing on issues with complicated procedures, acheived this. I worked on turning it around, setting the movie to be motivational, presenting the insights as oppurtunities with proof of where they came from, and exciting the watcher to work with us.

An accessible approach also set the tone. Ideas were generated from a voted-upon story that set the scene of an opportunity. A role dice was also used to free up thoughts, so as a caveman, or a millioniare, you were asked to solve the character's issue. My table was adamant to fill all 'dice' sections, which, although discussed to be restrictive, worked well to push out ideas. The scariness of sticking up post-it notes had been tackled in the beginning with the devised 'getting to know you board' where simple questions about oneself were answered on post-its. I am very pleased about how well these participation methods worked.

Our football and meeting activeness had also worked! Franny turned up saying "I almost forgot, but I couldn't let those lassies down". Allison and Frank were also there, with some friends and a few stakeholders.

At my table, I had three broad-spoken Glaswegians. Luckily I managed to understand them. All in all, there is much juggling to be done when facilitating. A lot of listening, understanding, thinking and saying on the spot, along with thoughts about how much to input my own creativity and ideas, or just listen. Choosing to listen more seemed to fit with our ethos. I felt our outcome could have been a bit more exciting. Had I become too committed to the idea of co-creation that my own creative imput suffered? This listening did, however, fulfil its aim of gaining trust.
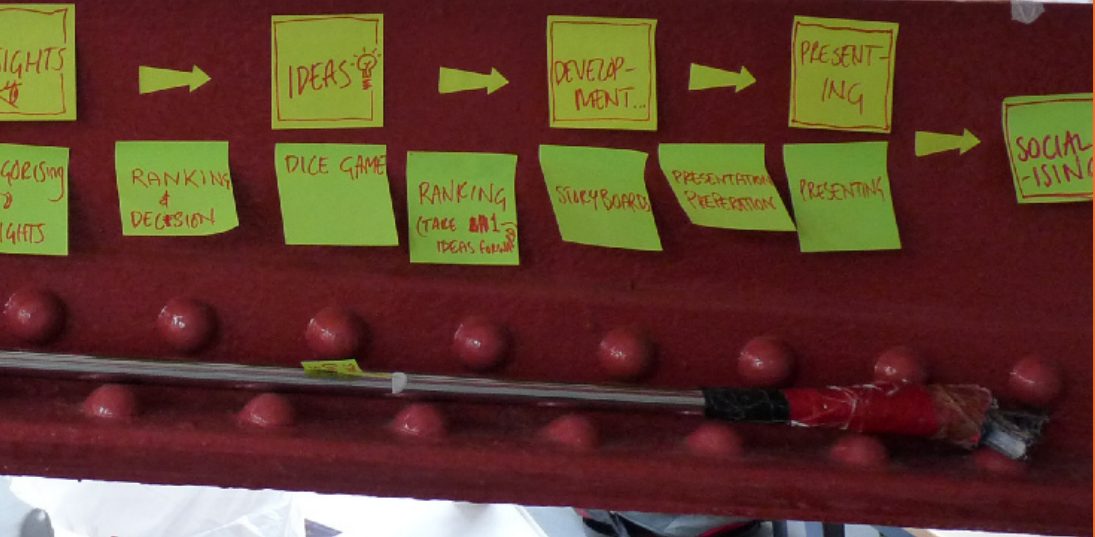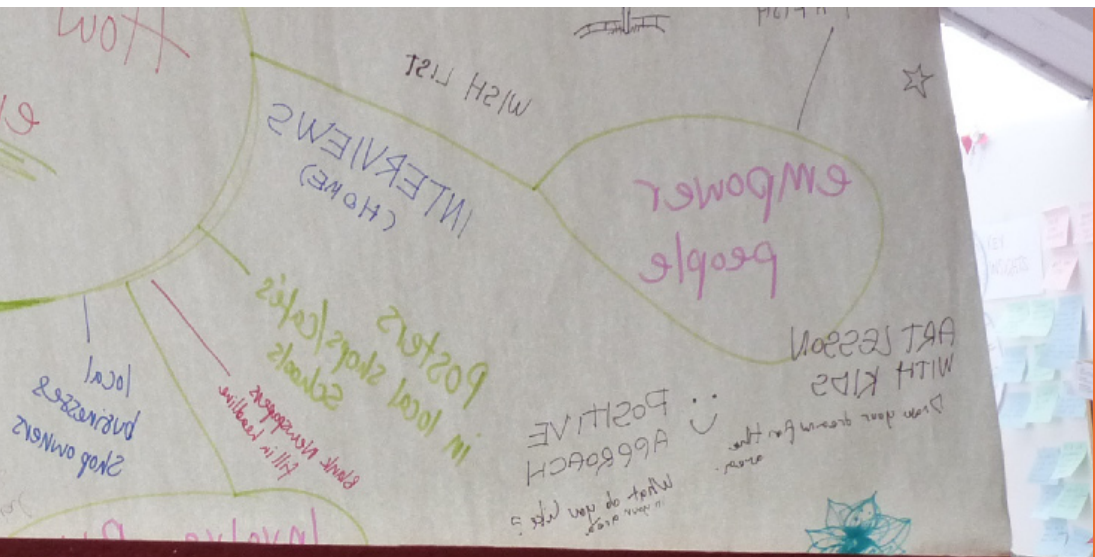
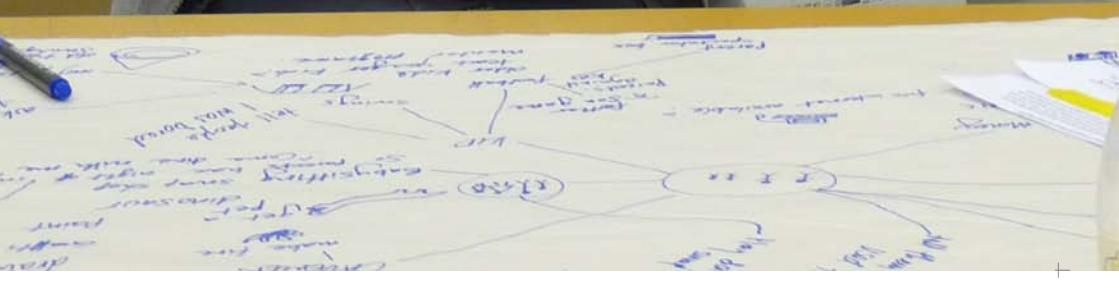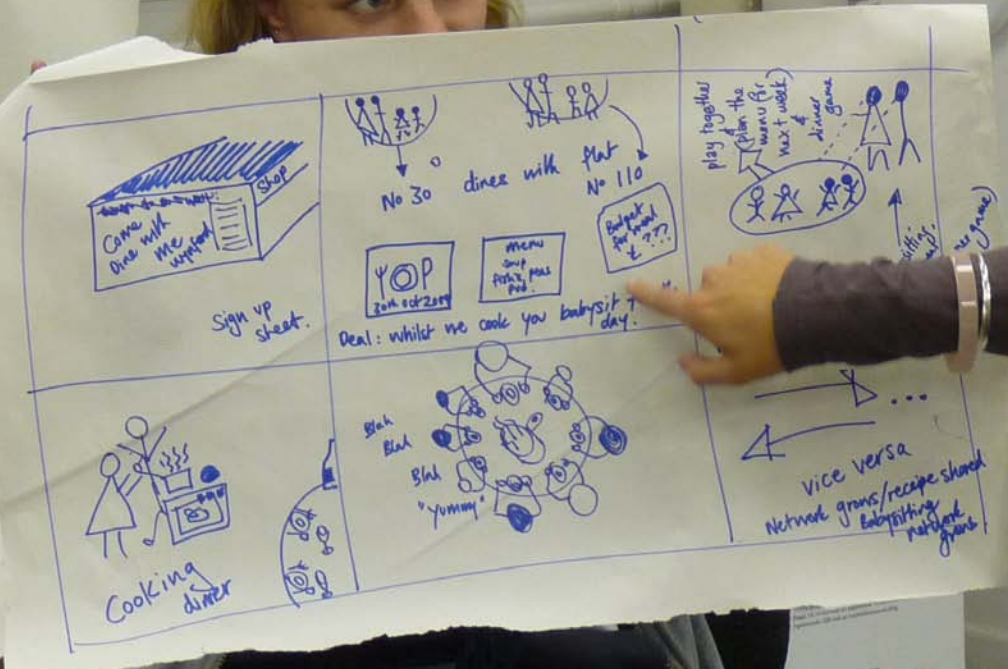facilitating a table, brainstorming with the role dice

The co-design workshop left us on a high. The ideas developed were workable into real designs, and the feedback from the attendees was: "that was fun!" (from the community) or "that was more successful than I thought" (from the stakeholders). It was a humbling feeling that these people wanted to give up their time for us, and the pressure to deliver built up. With the community members, it felt like a more personal relationship was being built than with stakeholders, contributing to our motivation of striving to deliver especially to them.

Maintaining contact is also a large trust-gaining exercise. Pro-active contact from our weekly football pitch sessions achieved this. However, on the enterprise development front, our time was given to the approaching Audi submission deadline.

The co-design event gained us trust from the attendees. It also provided the starting point for enterprise ideas, more quotes to use for credibility and the vision that whatever ensued had come straight from the mouth of the community.

STRUCTURE

TASKS

WELCOME → INTRO → ISSUES !? → INSIGHTS

Movie

SPLITTING UP, STRUCTURING

WARM UP SOMETHING ALREADY ON TABLE

(US)

PRESENTING (US)

WRITING DOWN ISSUES etc...

CATOGORISING INTO INSIGHTS

public !!!??

engage

Sustainable

CONTACT STAKEHO

FOOD

talk

workshop of communi...

Movie

Badge Making at schools.

How

wish list

INTERVIEWS (HOME)

empower people

Posters in local shops/cafes

schools

local businesses shop owners

ART LESSON WITH KIDS

POSITIVE APPROACH :)

Draw your dream for the... area.

What do you like in your area?

INSIGHTS → IDEAS 💡 → DEVELOP- MENT... → PRESENT- ING → SOCIAL- ISING

CATEGORISING GIFTS

RANKING & DECISION

DICE GAME

RANKING (TAKE 2 IN 1 IDEAS forward)

STORYBOARDS

PRESENTATION PREFERENCE

PRESENTING

restructuring the co-creation workshop

## workshop mock run

After generating ideas in the run-through, motivation and direction were regained in our group. Led to hold back from formulating ideas to prevent assuming, we had been steered into a maze. Increased idea generation of where we saw the project going would have been a useful tool for us to remain focused as a group.

CONSULTATION
OF THE PARENTS
& YOUTH.

FIND OUT WHAT PEOPLE WANT
IN Family Centre.

| 3 | 11 | 21 | 47 | 62 |
| 5 | 17 | 25 | 48 | 81 |
| 7 | 19 | 30 | 50 | 90 |

FUNDING (BINGO
RAISING

OUT WHAT
E WANT IN
CENTRE & ADVERTISE

PEOPLE
COME & PLAY £1.50
PER BOOK

ARTS + CRAFTS
COMPUTERS
SPORTS EQUIPMENT
GAMES EQUIPMENT
DANCE TEACHERS
EDUCATION DEPT FOR ADULTS
MUSIC WORKSHOP
LAUGHTER SCHOOL CLUBS
DRAMA GROUP
KEEPFIT
FOOTBALL TRAINER

STAGE FOR DANCING

EY IS REINVESTED

WITH NEW RESOURCES,
KIDS PUT ON SHOW AT
BINGO, SO PEOPLE COME BACK
& SEE THEIR MONEY IS REINVESTED.

reflections on **_self-creativity vs. facilitating_**

Making something completely realistic is at times rather tedious.

Yet the process of planning and executing facilitation is exciting: designing ways to engage people and understand what could bring them into a creative mindset. Releasing grounded mindsets was the biggest challenge of facilitating that I found. There is nothing wrong with this sort of mindset, it just makes idea generation difficult. This challenges the belief that something hugely exciting will be derived just because it was co-created. The co-creation itself is the compelling part, as is what it means to the parties involved. On the other hand, I believe that it is much easier to make crazy ideas more realistic, than it is to make realistic ideas exciting.

This grounding was both the case in some of the teamwork and in the co-creation workshops. Maybe I am too used to being in the company of designers, and have lost the ability to communicate crazy ideas understandably to anyone else. I hope not. The experience I now have will be used to counterbalance this in the future.

Facilitating to seed a sense of ownership in someone else works, and was effective in our project. However, on an egoistic level, the ownership was taken away from myself, and motivations had to be found elsewhere. Luckily in the project, the motivation to deliver was rather overpowering.

- brainstorming key principles
- developing the task of the enterprise

# *three*)

## design an enterprise
## that embodies our values

After the high from the workshop, we gathered to systematically work out which ideas to continue. Those chosen were: the Wyndford Olympics (becoming 'getgoing!'); Green Gorillaz (remaining so); and Consultation Methods - taking the elements from the two ideas tackling the building of a community centre, which stressed the importance of community consultation (this became ListenUp). ListenUp's beginnings were difficult. It did not directly come from one specific idea from the co-design event. Instead it took on feelings from stakeholders and the community that there is little communication, creating misunderstandings and feelings of animosity, especially from the recent school closures.

Listening. Why oh why, do I always end up with conceptual beginnings, immeasurable entities and imbedded moralities?
Transformational change, it is called. (I love it really).
But it doesn't make projects easy.

This one was especially difficult, as the proposal specifications set by Audi were very unforgiving. They required 200 words in each pre-defined section, financial projections and a 3-page, 3-MB supporting document. How do you work creatively with that?

We also faced teamworking issues. We could fill in the 200 words, without really defining how ListenUp as an enterprise or idea worked. I wanted to do this definition, but found no idea bouncers, and others saw the filling up as more important. Which, I suppose it was, as that was the way to the next round.

I felt my role as a 'creative' had disappeared. Egoistically, I was trapped in 200 word boxes. And a 3-page, 3MB space of creativity.

We pulled it together, filled in the required fields and made the submission. More involvement of the people our proposal affected should have taken place, but the deadline was such, that box-filling was all time-consuming.

There is no doubt that the change we wanted to acheive with our proposal is needed, and embodied our values, making them transferable. However, this stage of the project was more introverted with the issues it posed, and therefore this transfer was soley an assumption.
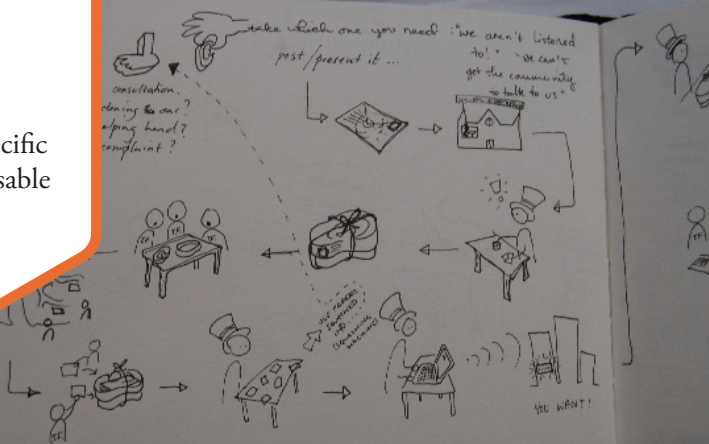
# ListenUp develops . . .

An overview in pictures of how ListenUp and its content progressed throughout the project.



CONSUL-
TATION
METHODS

from the chosen ideas to develop further, ListenUp became toolkits containing listening and getting heard tools . . .
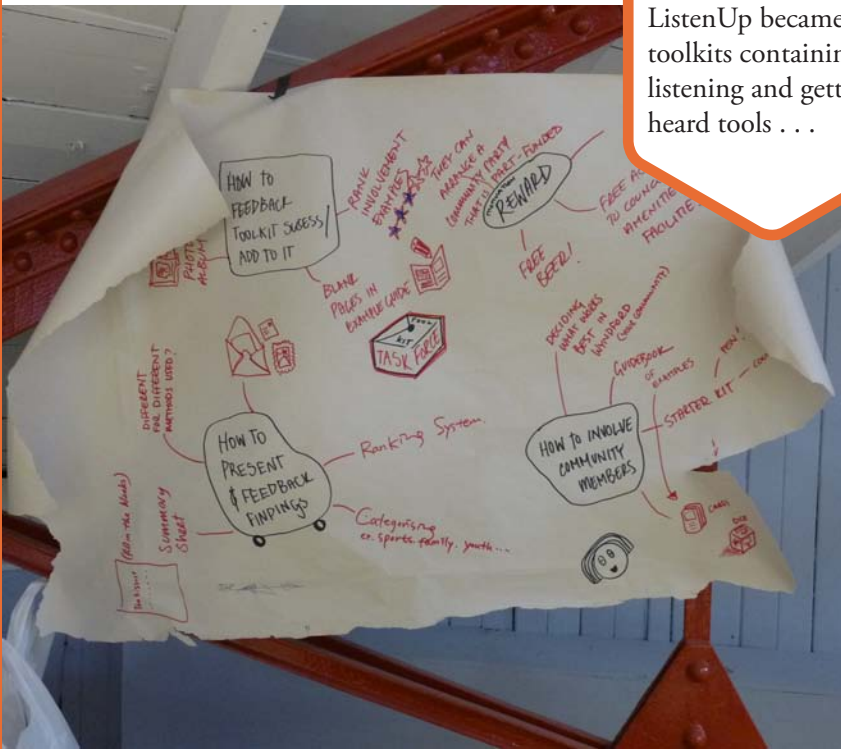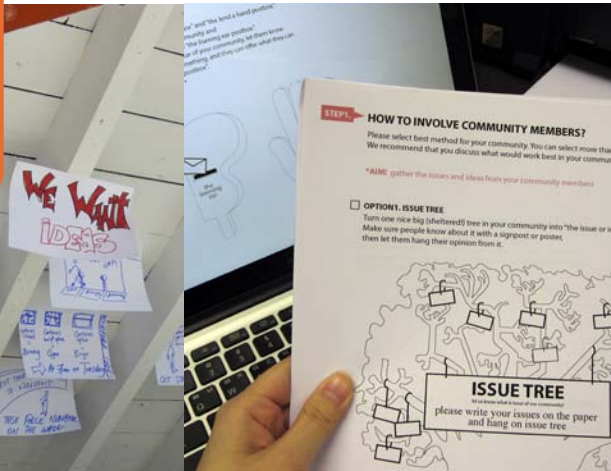
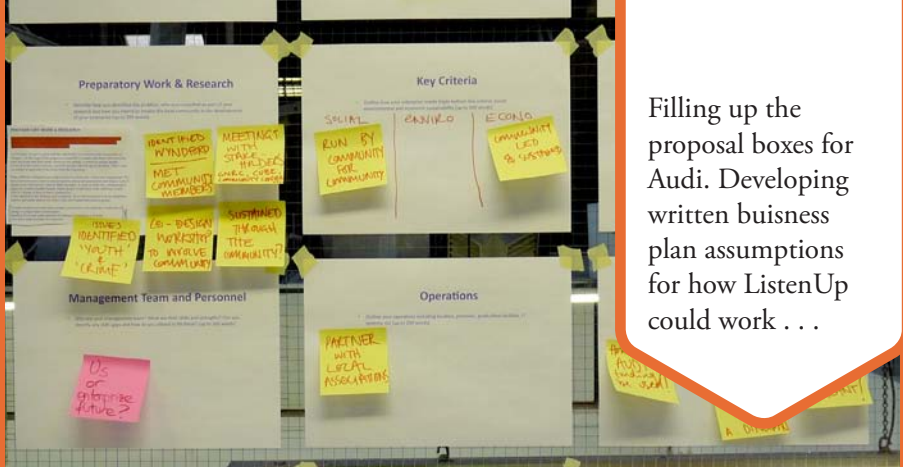The tools were specfic in a specific location, accessible to all. . .



The school site development was identified as a project opportunity, however we kept ListenUp aplicable in many situations.
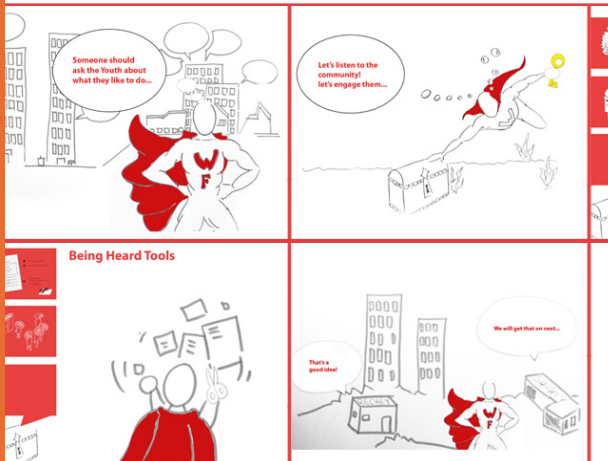


Ideas of listening & being heard tools were also thought of, and toolkits were quickly mocked up.

Filling up the proposal boxes for Audi. Developing written buisness plan assumptions for how ListenUp could work . . .



After proposals submission, a co-development event was organised. For it, the analogies of a superhero and treasure chest of tools were developed.
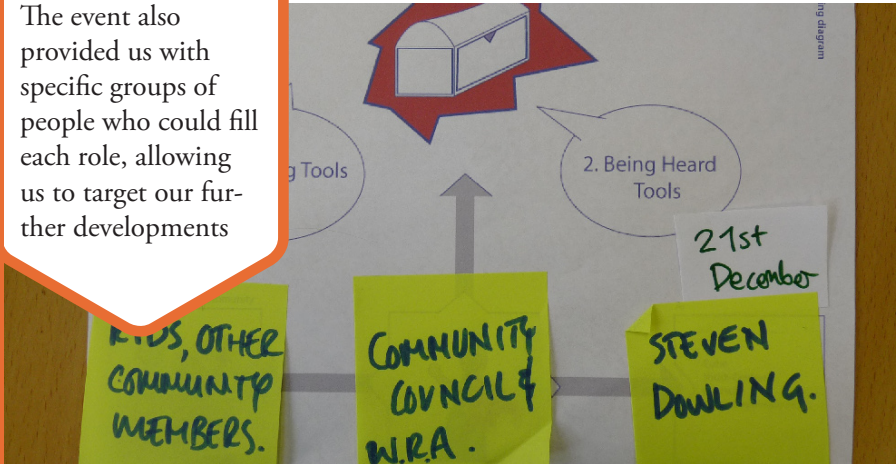


The analogies were presented in a explanatory film and storyboard. In the mock run, realistic ways of implementation were identified.
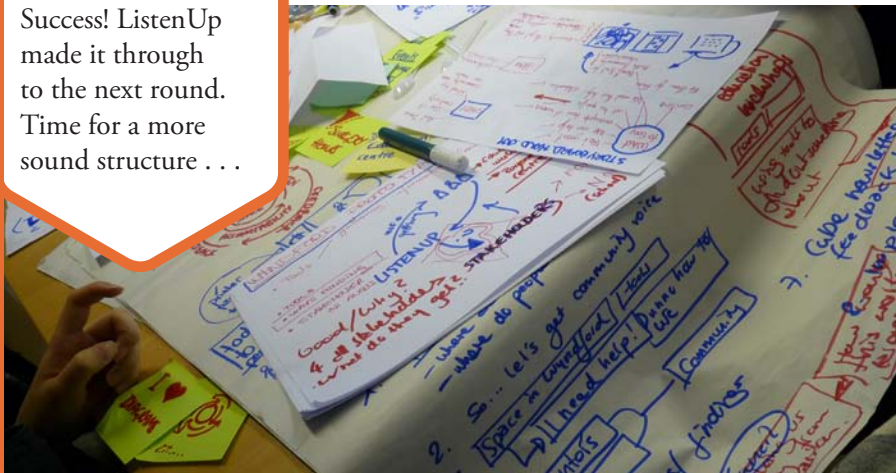
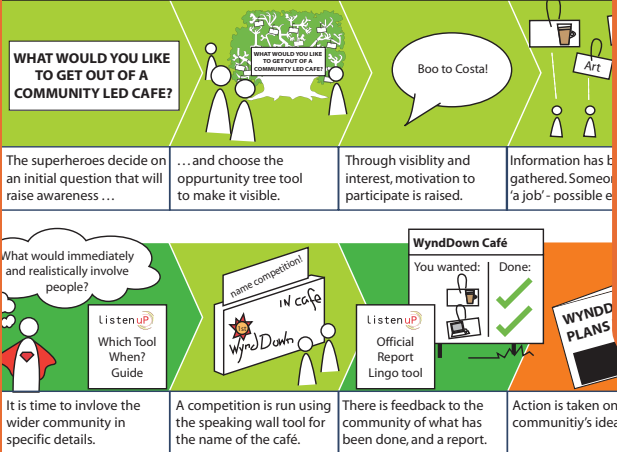In the actual event, the storyboard was used to pinpoint issues.



The event also provided us with specific groups of people who could fill each role, allowing us to target our further developments



Success! ListenUp made it through to the next round. Time for a more sound structure . . .

**WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET OUT OF A COMMUNITY LED CAFE?**

Boo to Costa!

Art

| The superheroes decide on an initial question that will raise awareness … | …and choose the oppurtunity tree tool to make it visible. | Through visiblity and interest, motivation to participate is raised. | Information has b... gathered. Someon... 'a job' - possible e... |

What would immediately and realistically involve people?

Listen uP
Which Tool When? Guide

name competition!
IN cafe
WyndDown

**WyndDown Café**

You wanted:    Done:

Listen uP
Official Report Lingo tool

WYNDD...
PLANS

| It is time to invlove the wider community in specific details. | A competition is run using the speaking wall tool for the name of the café. | There is feedback to the community of what has been done, and a report. | Action is taken on the communitiy's ideas. |

Presenting at a community council meeting gave us feedback from authorities. Scenarios of how ListenUp fitted in were prepared.
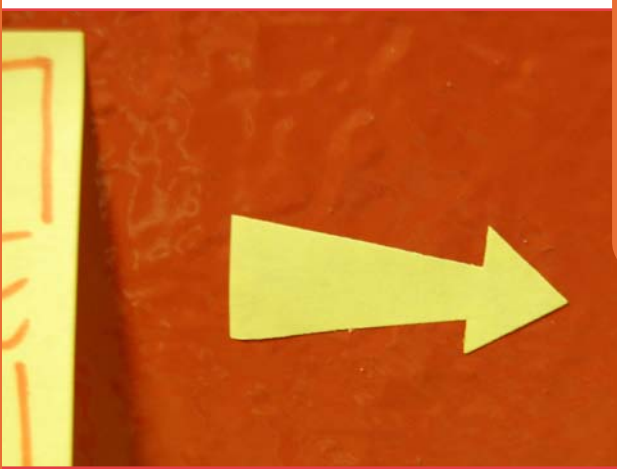


Interest was raised, however, it never followed through. No replies. And the preperations for the regional final were underway.



How is surplus generated? A chat with Hannah Clinch of Glasgow Wood Recycling led us to charging for services alongside events . . .

The project steered to the business side of things. Tool development was handed over to the people who would be in charge of ListenUp.



Roles of the employees, a constitution, the expanding buisness plan of growth, a tool suggestion catalogue and website were defined, as was the pitch presentation and how ListenUp would use funding to run a prototype project . . .

## ListenUp Website

The ListenUp website will be launched after the prototype is completed.

**Content from Mobile**
Internet access could be a problem in Wyndford. Anyone can add content using their mobile phone. There will also be a mobile compatible website.

**Opportunities**
Text any community issue to ListenUp. It will be displayed here.

**Public Events**
Upcoming events, workshops and consultations.

**Project Update**
This is where any events which need support would be posted.

**ListenUp login**
Access to project contacts, internal papers and organisational structures.

**Past Project Blogs**
Projects will be documented in blogs with emphasis on transparency and information sharing.

**Blog News**
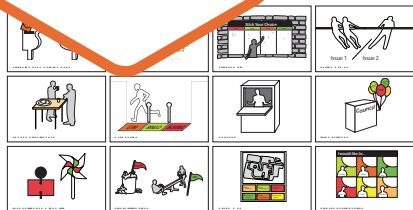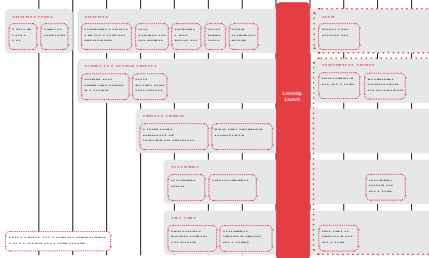Any news on delivered consultations, successes and opportunities.

**Tool Box**
View, download and upload tool templates and examples.

**How to? Films**
Films explaining use of tools and past projects.

### Timeplan 2010
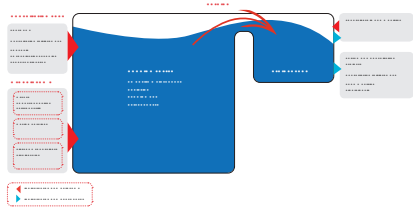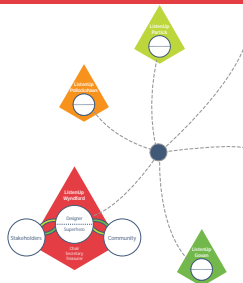


ListenUp Launch

### ListenUp Financial Flow

### Beyond the Prototype

. . . leading to the regional finals in Newcastle. (As you can see, the super-hero had lived on!)
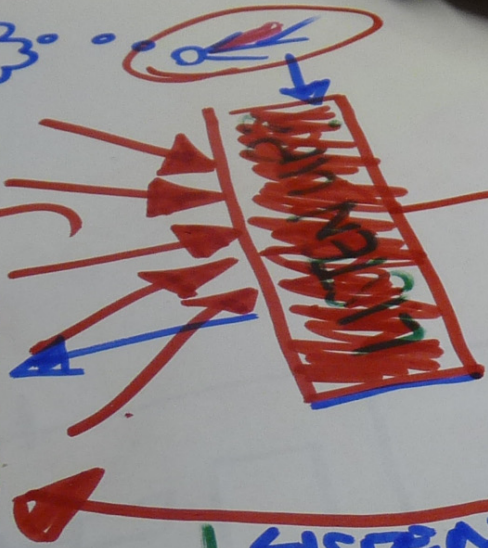
ListenUp was not successful - but the other getgo project was. Go Green Gorillaz! Time to feed in the business side to them . . .

photo courtesy of Mike Urwin

Wyndford Community

Listen Up

Website. Forum

Stakeholders

# reflections on *ListenUp*

Perhaps that we are more used to develop interesting ideas than business plans, turning an idea into a surplus generator became one of the biggest challenges faced. This was especially the case as it is rather contradictory to design with and for the good of a [deprived] community and then expect them to input the surplus for such a service that inevitably ensues. For our project proposal we managed to devise a theoretical plan that would avoid this, by using the surplus of stakeholder fees to fill a community project tank.

ListenUp's strength is the belief in the issue it addresses and in the live prototype it suggested. The proof from our own methods of working also gave it credibility, but also a: 'well how is it different?' feeling.

I feel that ListenUp as it is could have achieved the desired outcome, it just lacked the reference of an already known way to do this. It offered a solution spun from our own ideal about how consultation should be run. It did not use theories from any other source than the people we spoke to. This meant that a certain transferrable credibility to those who care about statistics and facts was missing, as throughout the project there was the attitude that the community would provide all the answers.

ListenUp at the co-development workshop

# *four*)

## maintain involvement

ListenUp had gone through to the next round to be presented at the regional finals! Was I suprised? Very! The proposal was not concrete, and much as I believed in its cause (always powerful), it was pitched to be unassuming from its beginning but went on to make large assumptions of the workings. More involvement in its development should have taken place.

After the initial proposal submission, re-involvement of the community did take place at the co-development workshop. This happened before Audi announced the successful projects. We owed the people we had been working with something, and throughout the project the community drove us more than the Audi brief. However, after the co-development workshop, focus shifted to delivering a pitch for Audi, and the re-involvement dwindled once again. Working to deliver to so many separate groups consumed time.

The second co-development workshop did not take as much planning as the first. We had learnt something. The workshop aim was to identify ways to make the proposals real.

ListenUp became a graffitti wall in this workshop. I took more initiative than in the first workshop, however wandering attention spans, or less captivating tools, prevented us from focusing on the aim. The graffitti wall was a creative idea fufilling what we had sought in the first co-design workshop. This proved that the attendees had also learnt something about design methods. Do we as designers flatter ourselves that we are naturally creative, or have we simply had the privilege to learn it? A bit of both, I would say. One of ListenUp-as-an-enterprise's aims was to transfer this privilege of knowledge.

After the co-development event, we had the opportunity to involve stakeholders at a community council meeting. City councillors were there, and if they asked us a difficult question, a community member present would pitch in with: "the lassies have been great. They *were* out and *did* listen". This was very powerful feedback, although it gave me a guilty feeling as I had been frustrated about the project, and felt we had not been as involving as we had promised.

From the meeting, we raised the interest of a man from Glasgow Community Safety Services (GCSS) in charge of the school site consultation project. He said: "that's embarrassing, you've done our work for us". We got his contact details.

Christmas came. The GCSS man appeared to be ignoring us.

Involvement from authorities is even harder to gain, especially is you are challenging their way of working. We should have worked more on how to gain this. But again, the community had championed as the driver for the project.

Also, as we were working as an umbrella organisation and didn't know which project, if either,  would suceed, it was diffcult to specifically engage authorities with details. This uncertainty followed us through the project.

Overall our maintainance of involvement was not ideal. It is on the rise once again at the moment, through the preparations for the finals. Participation is something that has to be worked at, and time, our own experience and lack of motivation from feeling lost were against us.

Throughout the project, there have been four main groups to satisfy. The community, the Audi brief, GSA requirements and myself. Schedules of deliverance did not align. Juggling all of these was extremely difficult. An excerpt from my own writings in January shows the feelings of this:

*Part of me wants to see this project work, part of me just wishes it could see an end. With the moral obligations founded and deliverables needed, there is quite a lot and quite little pressure at the same time. I don't know if this moral obligation driver has taken over from the personal driver and to what end. Is it possible to be solely driven to serve others? Usually I would say yes. But I feel conflicted, because somehow not serving the Wyndford community seems worse than not having the time to think about my masters topic. One is solely important for me. One involves many. And it seems that the 'powers' seem quite happy with the work we have done and think it is sufficient (hence the 'little pressure'). For me it is nowhere near sufficient to give the community what we inadvertatly seem to have promised them. But at what cost can we provide this? Take over our master-writing time? The two things are on so completely different realms, that it is quite impossible to make a justification for not doing either: serving the community to the best of my ability, or not spending adequate time for my masters. They are both wrong. Altruism Vs. Personal Gain?*

One month later, we heard the result of the regional final. It was a relief, for want of a better word. We had secured something for the community and a bit of responsible weight was taken off my shoulders. Supporting Green Gorillaz to make it happen is not as daunting as managing it.

*A note to the project-setters at the GSA:* In future can you please make sure that projects following competition deadlines and combining different masters courses fit with academic year requirements? Much confusion and stress would have been aliviated had they not conflicted so greatly. Also, if there is the likliehood of a live project, tutoring regarding how to work within a community and ensuring something is left, should also be offered. Self-initiated learning took place, but support would have been wonderful.

the superhero analogy in full force
at the regional finals in Newcastle

# *five*)
## deliver

We set out to deliver something credible to Audi, something pass-worthy for the GSA and something sustainable for the community that they would feel a sense of ownership for. Something that would last after we left.

Well, we haven't left yet. So it is difficult to say.

Within the active community, our name is known. The ownership of the project is seeded but not complete. Now that Green Gorillaz (GG) has secured £10,000 pounds funding after winning the regional finals, I think it would not be too great a presumption to say that something will be left. We have re-grouped again to all work towards making GG happen. We have had an expression of interest from a community member to become the chief (the GG version of the ListenUp superhero). We have recruited third year design students to take over from us, and are in the process of reworking the financials and pitch for the finals where another £10,000 could be won. A launch event is currently being organised which will hopefully spread awareness of GG to the wider community. A website is being set up. We already have a relatively established getgo blog and twitter

feed - thanks largely to our social media queen. We have had a mention in the Scottish Parliament. In our group, this project has become known as the never-ending project, which is both satisfying and frustrating.

To Audi, we have already delivered two credible project pitches, one of which was successful and secured £10,000 for its implementation. In the project, a straight definition of how to communicate to Audi was developed. It is: whatever we do must make them look good. This will no doubt apply in the future when working as a payed designer.

Delivering in response to the brief was more hazy. Both projects pitched did not directly respond to any one theme. The ListenUp proposal became a social enterprise, as by the definition in the beginning of this piece of writing. This was, in my view, at a price to the creative idea behind it. As far as I could see, GG embraced the creative problem solving side rather than the business planning side, and became more attractive for it. This goes to prove that briefs can and should be ignored.

For the GSA, the delivery is yet to be evaluated in the academic system. We have however delivered the opportunity of work experience in a live project for the years (or at least year) to come.

As for myself, I have learnt a lot. I delivered to myself a greater knowledge of running a socially oriented project in real time and real life, juggling my own stakeholders and time management to the highest point. A wiggly upwards curving line took me from the naïvity of a social-do-gooder, to a cynic, to acceptance.

All in all, it is a successful project. Especially in the ways it can owtwardly communicate its intentions, rather than solely fulfilling them. An idea is an idea is an idea. It is an instant. An instant that must be justified. This justifying was done, and the ideas became extended and shared instants.

onwards!
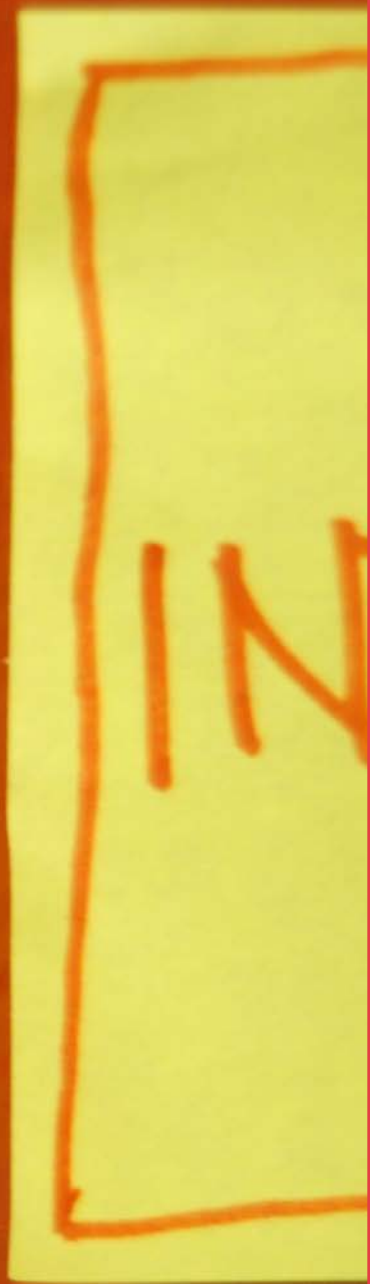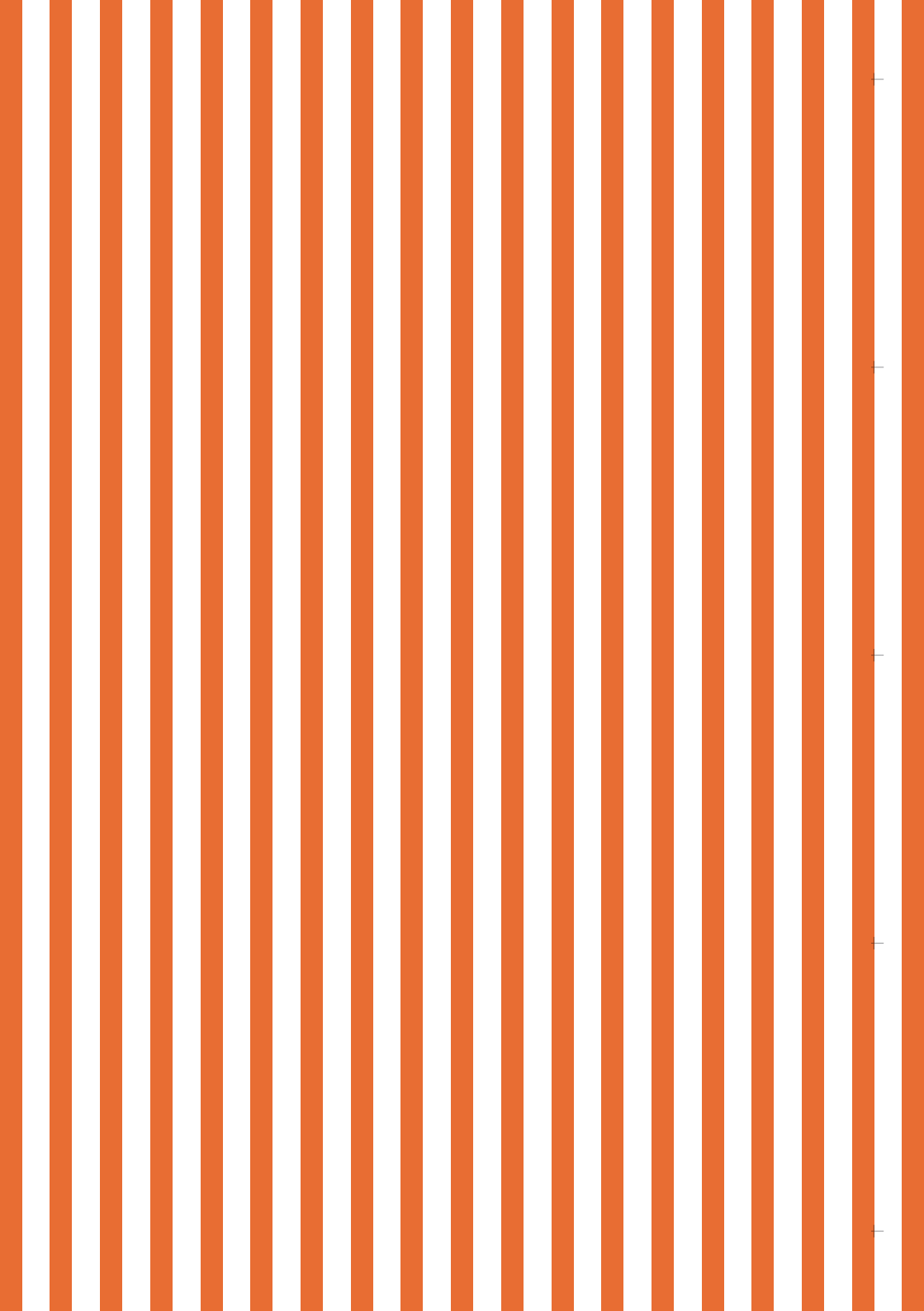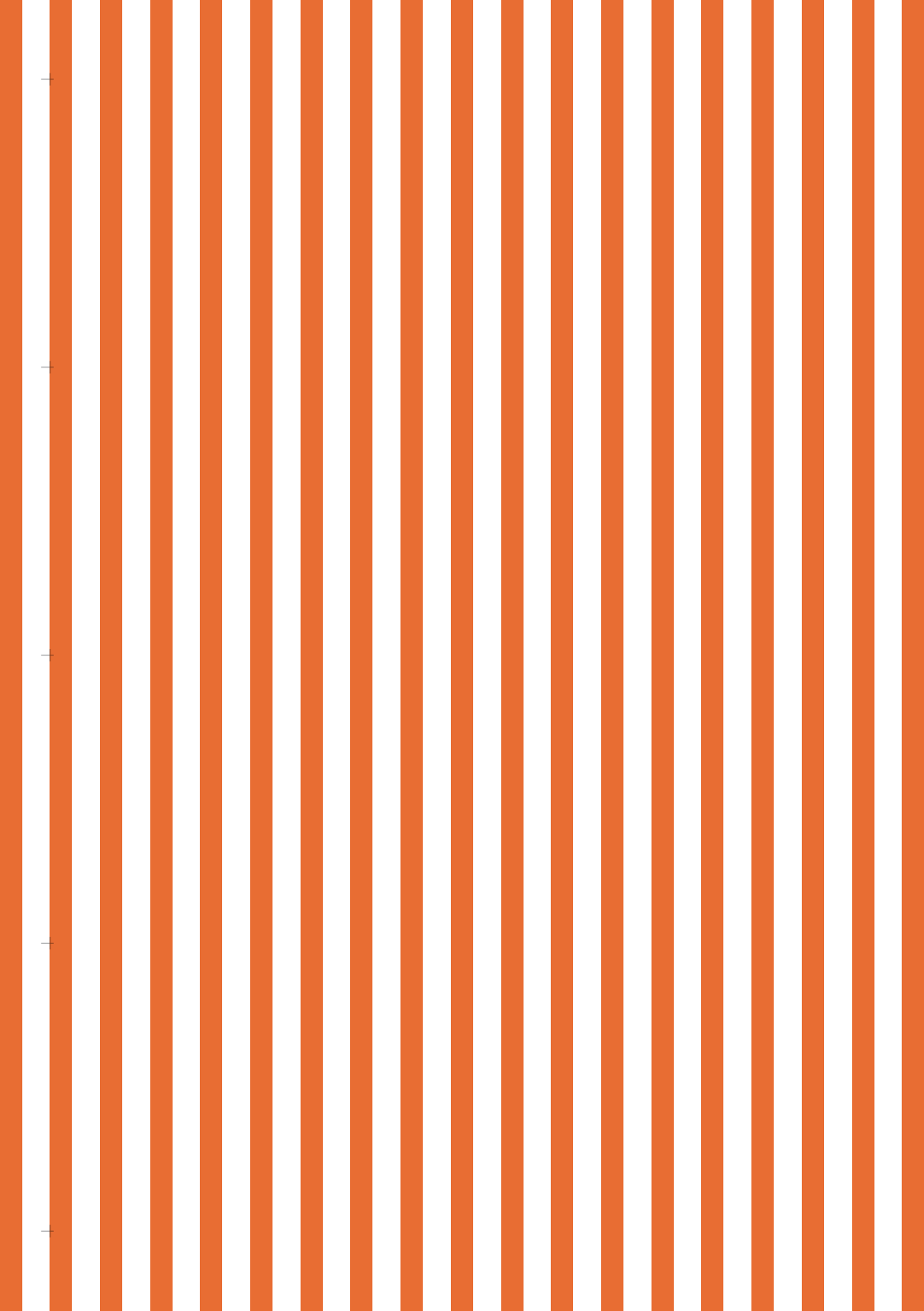
# getg✽

**Eeva Campbell**

February 2010

Glasgow School of Art

MEDes Minor Project