

East of England

Newsletter August 2011

It is pleasing to find Fellows in the region becoming more involved with activities in their local area. So, thank you to those of you who are initiating activity, those who are supporting activities and Fellows and Guests who attend meetings and events organised by others.



Engaging in these activities in whatever small way may have a lasting positive effect, which at the time may not be visible, but over time comes to fruition. So, please continue your support and encourage others to take part with you. Remember, we welcome guests and people from other organisations who are interested to attend with you, all have something to contribute. Look at the activities currently taking place and join in. I would be interested to hear from anyone who would like to organise an event in their area, email me gladys.jones@virgin.net with your ideas, plans etc. and we will support where possible.

Saturday 10 September 10.30 a.m. for 11.00 a.m. East of England Region AGM at firstsite Colchester , 'Visions and Values of firstsite' presentation by Wayne Warner, Commercial Director and conducted Tour. Buffet Lunch £15. Afternoon Heritage option.

An introduction to this iconic building, designed by award-winning architect Rafael Viñoly. firstsite's new home will reinvent the traditional art gallery as an innovative cultural and social space with contemporary art at its heart. Be some of the first to view this building before it opens. www.firstsite.uk.net Further details and booking information on page 4. **Deadline for booking Thursday 25th August.**

Dates for your Diary

Matthew Taylor visits the region on Saturday 12 November 10 a.m. University Campus Suffolk
See details in the next Newsletter.

A special invitation to Fellows and Guests -

**Monday 20 February 2012, 7.30 p.m. West Road Concert Hall Cambridge
Concentric Paths, Britten Sinfonia**

Thomas Adès • conductor/piano Pekka Kuusisto • violin

Couperin • Les baricades mystérieuses : Couperin arr. Thomas Adès • Les baricades mystérieuses

Thomas Adès • Three Studies from Couperin : Ravel • Le tombeau de Couperin

Stravinsky • Airs du rossignol and Marche chinoise : Stravinsky • Suites Nos. 1 & 2 for Small Orchestra

Thomas Adès • Concerto for Violin (Concentric Paths)

Subtitled *Concentric Paths*, each of the concerto's three movements has its own circular design containing spiralling high jinks, shifting harmonic sands and other-worldly soundscapes.

IMPORTANT

If you would be interested to attend please let me know, so we can make provision for an RSA group booking, email gladys.jones@virgin.net If sufficient interest is shown details will be in the next Newsletter.

Network Dates : News : Updates: Reports ; on the following pages.

- put Dates in your Diary for future reference -

RSA Cambridge Network

Wednesday 14 September 6.00 for 6.30 p.m.

Networking and Presentation by Heather Hilburn FRSA and CEO of Shape East www.shape-east.org.uk

Shape East's central objectives are to:

- Inspire and excite people about the built environment and help them see it through fresh eyes
 - Increase understanding of the importance of good planning, urban design, architecture and construction
 - Encourage people to participate in the planning and other processes which shape change in their communities
- Prepare the ground for the future by engaging children and young people in built environment issues.

The Cambridge Network meets 2nd Wednesday in the month at IdeaSpace, Cambridge To register attendance please email gladys.jones@virgin.net by Monday 12 September.

NB Following our last meeting on Education and Skills we are planning in September to form an 'action group' in Cambridge with the intention of exploring ways of 'bringing schools and businesses together'. If this is your area of expertise or interest and you feel you could contribute, please contact me gladys.jones@virgin.net

RSA Chelmsford & Chelmsford Civic Society

Chelmsford Update

RSA Chelmsford now meets jointly with the Chelmsford Civic Society. Our next meeting will be held on **Monday 31st October** at 6.30pm for 6.00pm in room 001 of the Sawyers Building, Anglia Ruskin University. We will be following up on the *Changing Chelmsford* autumn programme. There were 30 attendees at our meeting on Monday 11th July, all contributing ideas for events planned for September and October.

Changing Chelmsford is set to become a **Community Interest Company**. The aim is to 'engage diverse sectors of the wider community in shaping Chelmsford's future by holding events, providing forums for collaboration and by establishing Trusts'. The Board will comprise members of the RSA and the Academy of Urbanism, together with individuals from Essex County and Chelmsford Borough Councils. Stephanie Mills, FRSA, our project manager, is making plans for a **Festival of Ideas** running from Friday 21st to Monday 24th October. On the Friday, there will be forum on the **Civic Economy: lessons from other places**. The Saturday and Sunday will see a range of community events taking place at venues across the town centre. On the Monday there will be a **Town Commons on public places: the heritage triangle of the Anne Knight building, Marconi factory and the Shire Hall**.

Changing Chelmsford supports initiatives launched during our 2010 summer programme, including:

- The Transition Group has secured official Transition Town status for Chelmsford;
- Annabel Brown, FRSA, has secured second stage RSA Catalyst funding for our Young Explorer Group;
- The Chelmsford Voices competition, aimed at young people between the ages of 13 – 19, will run between 25th July and 5th September, involving interviews with townspeople conducted by mobile phone or digital camera, designed to show how different generations view their town;
- Film festival and symposium on the public realm in September.

Fellows interested in the activities of RSA Chelmsford and the Civic Society can contact Malcolm Noble at mnoble3211@yahoo.com

RSA Colchester

Regular meetings are in full swing at Slack Space in Colchester. The next meeting is scheduled for

Wednesday 17 August 7.00 for 7.30 p.m. (following meetings are 21 Sept. 19 Oct. 16 Nov. & 21 Dec.)

On 17th the meeting will focus on the subjects chosen by the two action groups formed in June. Those developing a mentoring programme are progressing well, lead by William Starling who will provide an update and way ahead. Several Fellows have now joined this group and it is hoped to begin the mentoring programme in mid-September.

Local issues within the community is the general focus of the second group. This offers a challenge to define ways in which the wide variety of possible topics could be developed. A summary of the group discussion is copied below. If you would be interested to explore any of these ideas and/or contribute to discussion do come along on 17th. Please register your wish to attend with colchester Slackers@gmail.com

A first set of suggestions for potential RSA activities.

It was felt important for the group to focus on a few small areas in order to demonstrate value to the community and gain the positive feedback that comes from successful delivery. The following was a brief summary of some hot topics within the town that might be considered later: -

firstsite – new gallery opens in September and public opinion of the arts is currently quite low;

Rapid expansion of the town – which is in some ways out of balance with the provision of services & infrastructure;

Heritage – how to identify what is valuable & worth preserving, and how to put protection in place without inflicting problems on the town;

Unrealised potential of young artists – how to provide opportunities for them to showcase their work and build a deep appreciation from a young age;

Unclear vision for the future of Colchester – how to provide a forum and facilitate the debate over the changes that will be needed in a town with such a significant past.

It was felt important to base the RSA contribution on actual current perspectives and thereby gain traction in the wider community by engaging early with other groups and role-holders within organisations including the council.

Examples groups mentioned included: -

Archaeological trust; Town planners; Service / infrastructure provision teams; Civic Society;

Destination Colchester; Colchester2020 Local Strategic Partnership;

These encounters would provide an opportunity to RSA Fellows for continuing professional development plus offer a platform or sounding board for the other groups involved through the presentation & follow-on discussion format.

Expected outputs and approaches to realising a vision for the town were focused around making an “environment” or model which could potentially range from a virtual model to a tangible exhibition space.

Regardless of the way in which a model was created it was anticipated that the untapped young people in the town (mentored by their teachers and RSA Fellows) could be the providers of the main content.

The artefacts that might be incorporated could include: -

Documents, paintings, drawings etc; Computer generated imagery; Engineering designs; Photography, video and mixed media; Modern internet-based real-time techniques.

Through this approach we could explore the various aspects of what it was / is / will be like to live in Colchester, if : -

We were living during some time in history; Colchester were imagined as a pure virtual space removing some physical constraints; We lived at some future time under the premise of some new constraint or challenge, such as ...Petrol runs out; Population of the town reaches 500,000 Family size increases to Victorian levels; etc.

Next steps: -

These ideas need to be further refined and distributed; Funding routes need to be sought; External groups need to be contacted for their availability; A plan for subsequent activities needs to be created. Come along and contribute ideas.

RSA Herts & West

The first meeting of the new lecture series held at The Paper Trail on July 27th was hailed as a success. The talk was very informative and much appreciated by the audience. Jim Patterson gave not only factual information about paper, but also a useful potted history, with many anecdotes from his long career in the industry. The tour of the paper mill was very popular and participants saw the 1902 machine making flower petal paper and had a demonstration of commercial handmade paper. Jim's company Two Rivers is the only remaining handmade paper company in the UK.

The core group has gained two new members, which is great, but we still need more Fellows to contribute on a regular basis and share their expertise.

Make a note of these dates for future meetings in the series. 28 Sept. 30 Nov. 5 Jan. 28 March. 30 May bimonthly, last Wednesday in the month.

Next meeting Wednesday 28 September at <http://www.thepapertrail.org.uk/>

Also, join us at the Autumn Fayre 25 September either as a visitor or volunteer your time to support fundraising for all the community activities the charity provides. A real 'big society' venture.

RSA Norwich

I would like to confirm that the next gathering of the RSA Education Forum will be

Wednesday 28th September at 6.30 for 7pm. Room 0.1 in the Thomas Paine Study Centre, UEA

RSA Suffolk

Wednesday 12 October 5.30 for 6.00 p.m. University Campus Suffolk

Discussion lead by Ivan Cutting FRSA Eastern Angles' Artistic Director

based upon the RSA publication -

'Arts Funding, Austerity and the Big Society'

Remaking the case for the arts John Knell and Matthew Taylor

Arts Council England and RSA 21st century enlightenment, essay 4 February 2011 available at -

<http://www.thersa.org/about-us/rsa-pamphlets/arts-funding,-austerity-and-the-big-society>

We have suspended the bi-monthly meetings at UCS for the time being and are working to achieve RSA involvement in the locality. UCS is also hosting the Matthew Taylor meeting on 12th November 10 a.m.

More news of these activities in the next Newsletter.

In addition RSA Fellows Stephen Aguilar Millan and Esmee Wilcox continue to explore issues, which have bearing on the current and future life of the people in Suffolk. Read on Page 6

St Albans?

Is anyone out there interested in developing a project in St Albans similar to the one organised in Chelmsford? Or, building on the focus achieved by St Albans Fellows at the RSA meeting in 2009 when the BigV and Transition St Albans caught the imagination of a good gathering of Fellows and local people interested in furthering developments in the area? If you would like to gather a group of Fellows together to look at the possibilities let me know.

Email gladys.jones@virgin.net

Saturday 10 September 10.30 a.m. for 11.00 a.m.

East of England Region AGM at firstsite Colchester

'Visions and Values of firstsite'

Presentation and conducted Tour by Commercial Director Wayne Warner,

Buffet Lunch £15. Afternoon Heritage option.



Over the past decade, firstsite has literally out grown their former home at the Minories. Their visitor numbers increased from 12,500 to over 80,000. They were seeking a new building that would be fully accessible to all, and include a range of facilities that would help to create the first public building to open in Colchester in more than 100 years.

Be some of the first to view this iconic building, designed by award-winning architect Rafael Viñoly. firstsite's new home will reinvent the traditional art gallery as an innovative cultural and social space with contemporary art at its heart. The town's new public building will include spaces for art, learning and education, socialising, community activities, relaxing, eating, shopping and business. The new building will not only provide outstanding facilities for the community, but will become a visitor attraction that appeals to national and international audiences. Tourism on this scale will stimulate the local economy by bringing in money for local businesses. The project is also important for Colchester because it will radically change the way people think about the way St Botolph's will look and feel in the future. www.firstsite.uk.net

Programme for the day -

Tea & Coffee on arrival 10.30 for 11.00 a.m.

AGM 11.00 - 11.45 a.m.

Presentation and Tour 11.45 - 12.30 p.m.

Lunch

Times approximate

After Lunch - you are free to independently explore **Heritage Open Day in Colchester** as many as **32 Buildings** not usually open, are open to the public, **Free, together with Tours and Talks**. A Leaflet Guide will provide you with all the choices from the Castle, across the road from firstsite, to the Town Hall, Historic Buildings, Churches and other sites around Colchester. See www.colchestermuseums.org.uk for details.

To book please use the booking form on the last page, deadline Thursday 25th August.

While you are in Colchester Visit -

Slack Folk 2pm – 4pm

Free and accessible afternoon folk club. This month featuring traditional Japanese folk music from Shamisen player Hibiki Ichikawa and singer Arika Mochida.

At Slack Space, Ground Floor, St James House, Queen St, Colchester CO1 2PQ theslackdiaries.tumblr.com
the [RSA Colchester meeting Venue](#) just round the corner from Firstsite, on the corner by the bus station.

COMMUNITIES OF THE FUTURE

Last year, we undertook a project that examined the likely shape of this coming decade. This year, we plan to continue the story by examining how the decade after that (2020 to 2030) might take shape. Within this time frame, we can reasonably expect Peak Oil – along with a number of other resource scarcities - to become a dominant feature of our lives. We can also expect climate change to start to have an impact on our water usage and food production. The aim of this programme is to consider how these impacts might be felt by a number of key communities and how they can be mitigated to provide us with hope rather than fear for the future.

When looking this far into the future, it is less appropriate to rely on an examination of current trends and more appropriate to rely upon causal models of the future. The first session will consider the key components of this time frame - population pressure; scarcities of food, energy, and water; the impact of climate change and the shifting pattern of the water cycle - to put them into a causal model. The following five sessions will consider how that model could play out in five key communities - the creative community, the entrepreneurial community, the caring community, the coastal community, and the food community. We would like to discuss the impacts upon those communities in terms of both opportunities (a future to work towards) and threats (the futures to avoid), and what we can do now to encourage the opportunities and to mitigate the threats. As an output from each session, we shall write a short summary (500 words or so) outlining the positive and negative impacts on each of these communities. It is our plan to use these summaries as briefing papers for a team of writers who have been invited to fictionalise these scenarios. If all goes to plan, we hope to be able to combine them into a single volume and to offer them as a contribution to the Ip-Art Festival in 2012.

We are currently in the process of finalising the dates of the sessions, which we aim to hold every five weeks or so over the autumn and winter. Once the dates have been set, we shall circulate their details. The sessions will be held at Endeavour House, Russell Road, Ipswich, and we need to thank Suffolk County Council for their generous support in hosting the events.

If any Fellow would like to be added to our mailing list for the project, or if any Fellow would like further details, perhaps they could e-mail me at stephena@eufo.org. I would be more than happy to respond to any queries that any Fellows might have.

Stephen Aguilar-Millan

Director of Research

The European Futures Observatory

Following the successful **RSA and UCS seminar : The Future of Ageing in Suffolk** which was organised and lead by Fellow Esmee Wilcox on 25 July 4.30 - 6.30 p.m. at University Campus Suffolk Ipswich Esmee has these reflections -

A number of things particularly struck me both during our forum and reflecting with a few people afterwards, covering both the way we think about ageing, and how we make public policy decisions, and ideas for what we actually do.

As someone that's not been thinking for very long about ageing and ageing policy, I was really struck by some of the things that older people were saying in the Demos report around the attitudes of society and service providers towards older people. Someone said on the day "being old is not being a failed young person".

But other people tell me this isn't new. So what's got to be different this time? That in our public policy decisions we are able to listen to and respond to older people's aspirations and needs? Is it just going to be through the baby boomers 'coming-of-age' with their greater expectations and influence?

This all seem to be tied into one of my questions which is 'what would make us want to plan for old-age'? Can we get to a point where we really look forward to old age because we have options, including in thinking about death, not being fearful of being older, and because society is positive about elders?

There also seemed to be lots of conversations about creating thriving social networks across all ages, and thinking about how we connect needs and assets in our communities to meet our aspirations. For example older people mentoring younger people. How can we help demonstrate more community and less individualistic values?

Finally I thought we didn't really get to the big issues of poverty as a determinant of ill-health across the whole life course: so if we really want to prevent people being miserable in old-age we need better education and employment. I would be really interested in how we could tap into the wealth and skills of older people to develop educational and employment opportunities for younger people.

You might like to look again at -

Louise Bazalgette recently published research report for Demos,

"Coming of Age: Ageing is not a policy problem to be solved."

<http://www.demos.co.uk/publications/comingofage>

Esmee is planning to hold further meetings to explore this topic, so watch out for the adverts.

Saturday 10 September 10.30 a.m. for 11.00 a.m.

East of England Region AGM at firstsite Colchester

Complete and send to: Gladys Jones, Clare Cottage, 16 The Sounds, Dalham, Newmarket, Suffolk CB8 8TJ

Enquiries to Gladys Jones at gladys.jones@virgin.net or 01638 500404

Please reserve place/s for the AGM with lunch at £15 per person

I enclose a cheque for £ payable to **RSA East of England Region** and **e-mail address** for confirmation of booking and further details **OR** - a **stamped addressed envelope** if you require confirmation of booking and further details by post.

Name/s of Fellow/s:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Name/s of Guest/s:

Do you or any of your guests have special dietary requirements? Please specify:

Please state if you and/or your guest/s are wheelchair users/have impaired mobility: