



ANNA FRANCIS

ABOUT ME:

Stoke on Trent based artist and Associate Professor of Fine Art and Social Practice at Staffordshire University

**Director of The Portland Inn Project,
An artist and Community led creative organization for one of Stoke-on-Trent's most deprived neighbourhoods.**

www.theportlandinnproject.com

www.airspacegallery.org/

- Interested in Housing Renewal in Cities (since 2006), and in understanding the role that artists can have in the places where they live and work

Indefinable City Exhibition at AirSpace Gallery, 2007 (My role artist led Curator)



NEWS

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Stoke-on-Trent 'betrayed' over homes scheme

🕒 31 October 2010



An MP says the government has "betrayed" Stoke-on-Trent over the end of a housing regeneration programme.

The nationwide £1bn Pathfinder Housing Market Renewal scheme has paid for the demolition of hundreds of Stoke-on-Trent and Newcastle-under-Lyme homes.

Labour MP for Stoke-on-Trent Central, Tristram Hunt, said: "We're going to have to think very creatively."

The Department for Communities and Local Government said it was "committed to supporting local councils".

A spokesman has said all projects which had funding until the end of the financial year would be completed.

'Knock down'

The government is to end the programme in England four years earlier than



The role of the artist in society:

Buying a £1 house: but what does a community need to thrive?





**Loud and clear message from the community: we need a space to come together, and a space to start to tell our own stories – our community has been described variously in the media over the years as
not fit for purpose, hard-to-reach, deprived, underprivileged, underserved and left behind**

The Portland Inn Project has become more than a building development project:

It is a catalyst to repair a sense of community – to build skills, agency and long term sustainability

But importantly from the start to build confidence and trust





Raising The Roof, 2018: Asset Transfer Agreed and a process to continue to build confidence in the Community around what we can achieve together – Community Co-Build tested

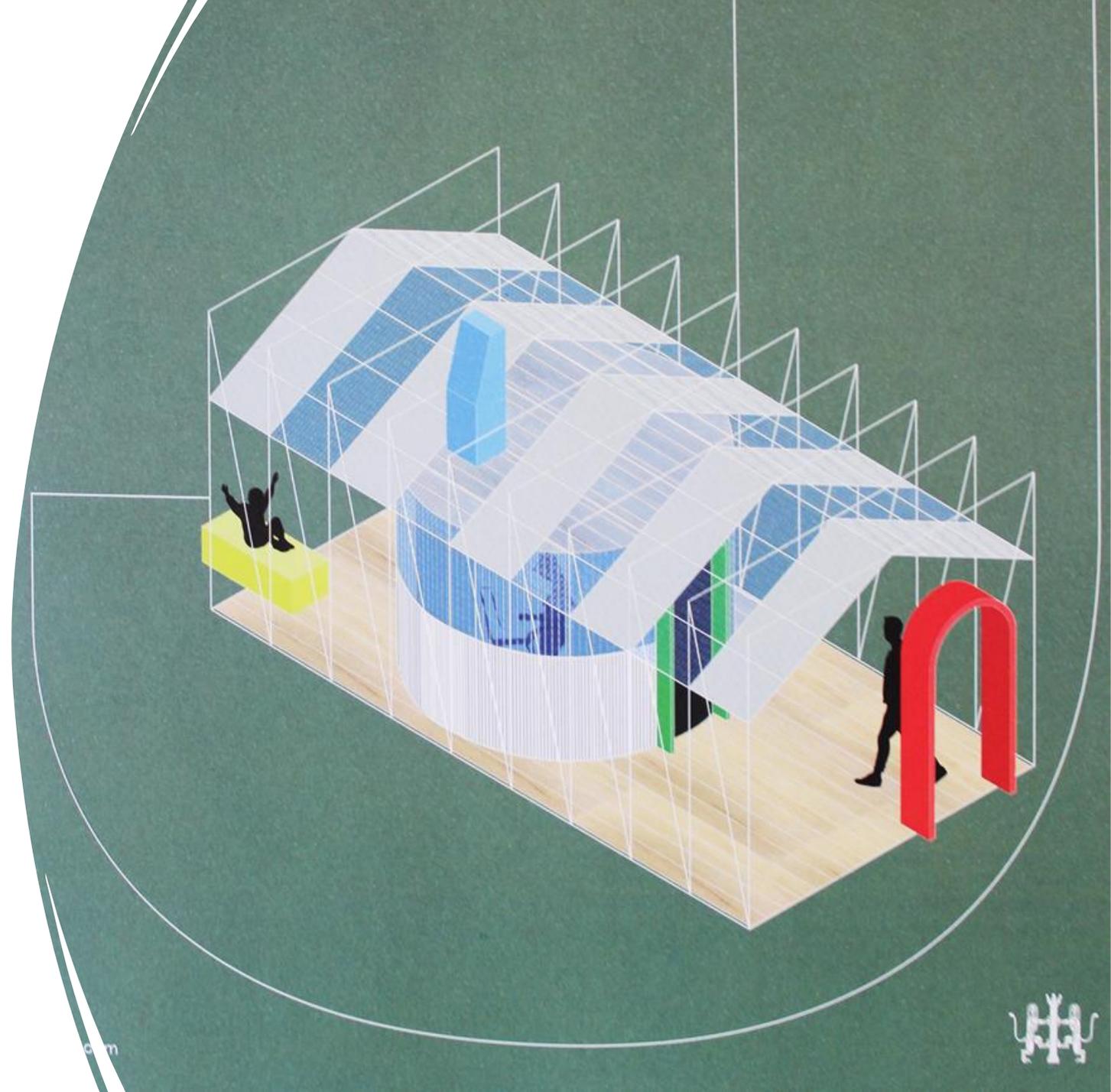


Summer 2018, we set up an
Architecture School and redesigned
the Building



Raising The Roof Architectural Structure on the Front Cover of The RIBA Journal, Feb. 2019.

- The *Raising The Roof* temporary structure designed by Baxendale Architects, and Co-Built with the Community of Portland St. Stoke-on-Trent was shortlisted for the RIBA MacEwen Award.
- Changing the rhetoric, starting to tell our story ourselves



STRENGTHENING THE ORGANISATION

To ensure we are able to be here to do what is needed:

We have set up a Community Decision Making Panel for the Portland Inn Project. The Panel is made up of a majority of residents from the local area, plus representatives from the key partners in the project. The Decision Making Panel will support the setting of priorities, and will work together on what is needed in terms of deciding on community activity and events and taking a role in advocating for the project locally. We have also developed a wider Governance Structure to support the project as a whole. Throughout the first of the three years, we will allow for reflection in this new structure to allow for change and development as we progress.

SECURING A TEMPORARY SPACE FOR COMMUNITY ACTIVITY

So we can deliver our programme while the pub is being built:

We need a temporary, weatherproof space to run activity from where we will host workshops and meetings with and for residents. Key themes for our programme will include self representation (using methods such as film, animation, design, radio programming). Learning and exchanging transferable skills is another area we would like to develop with community members; something we believe will happen through the development of our Portland Pigeon Ridge Tile. We will explore and deliver community based skills with community members. We anticipate this will include learning and sharing skills needed for the project to thrive (social organising, cooking, gardening).

THE PORTLAND INN PROJECT'S PRIORITIES OVER THE NEXT 3 YEARS...

DEVELOPING SKILLS IN THE COMMUNITY

Which can support activity and events:

This part of our project is about long term sustainability, development of core and embedded skills for the future of the project and the community. Our aim is to take a focused group of people through skills development, using The Portland Pigeon as a platform for learning skills by developing this product.

FOCUSING ON SAFETY AND SECURITY

Through everything we do, by developing a community safety and security plan alongside our activity:

We need time and support to examine our Risk Assessment processes and develop policies for any event that threatens the safety and security of our residents and participants when we are leading activity. This includes strategies for community safety, child safety and vulnerable adult safety. Stoke City Council and My Community Matters have offered guidance and support for these much needed protocols and procedures.

Photographs by Glen Stoker

- Creative Civic Change Programme, proposal in 2018 and then initially 3 years of funding from 2019 - 2022

A game changer for us, enabling us to go from being project based to establishing ourselves as an organisation, building stability and focusing on the longer term, and equipping us to apply to become an Arts Council NPO

Becoming more resilient to forces which impact on our community fastest: This work is part of our 100 Year Plan to improve the Neighbourhood; Billboard Campaign October 2023: and Now winner of Portrait of Britain January 2024.

How do we get there?
I'll show you how we get there.

theonehundredyearplan.com



How do people get involved in decision making?



The Portland Inn Project Community Decision Making Panel meal meetings, 2018 to present

This sits alongside our Bi-monthly Services Meetings running from 2017 to present

PORTLAND STREET



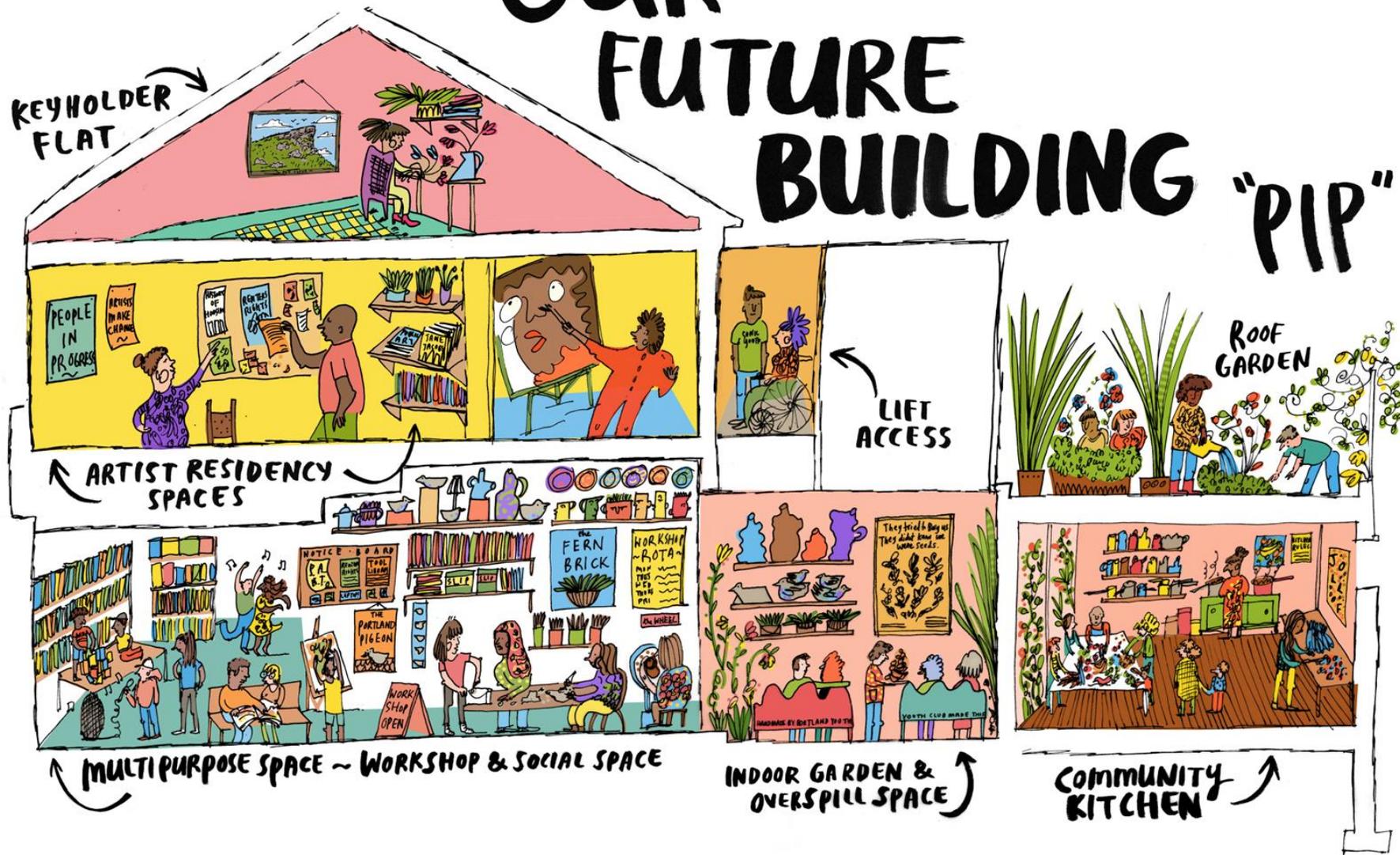
BY PORTLAND YOUTH CLUB

Our Youth Club – learning from a young age about governance and agency, making our own rules, keeping them, and making our own plans and decisions, often using creative methods to tell our own story and think and prioritise together

- Planning permission granted in December 2020 building on the process since 2016 to ensure the work is properly embedded and community led.
- Capital project started in October 2023 and is phased to enable us to get started with funding which has a time limit
- CCC and NPO have equipped us to have the capacity to be able to apply for UKSPF and COF, but the timeframes are a real challenge for Communities



OUR FUTURE BUILDING "PIP"



In order to see long term change for our neighbourhood we have needed to be able to plan and think longer term, and so my plea is to recognise that funding and support should be longer term too – to ensure the work being done in neighbourhoods is meaningful

"THE ABILITY TO SELF-ORGANISE IS THE STRONGEST FORM OF SYSTEM RESILIENCE."



— Donella Meadows

Image from: Ecological Health in Neighbourhoods programme with Civic Square and Centric Lab:

The development of The Neighbourhood Workshop. A programme of Community learning alongside the capital project.

THE PORTLAND ~ INN ~ PROJECT



Thank you
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