

CONNECTIONS



*An exploration into where and how people come together in Stamford and how to get involved.
A project by Art Pop-Up and MindSpace.*

STAMFORD
Connections



Art Pop-Up



STAMFORD Connections

We asked “how do you connect in Stamford?” Because our connections with other people are important. It can make us

feel happier and more purposeful, and ultimately improve our mental health and wellbeing. We all recognise that after the last 18 months.

But do you know all the opportunities there are in Stamford to connect, to get involved and to have a go? We certainly didn't, as it turns out there are a lot!

During our inquiry we were privileged to have had over 150 people talk to us about more than 600 times they connect. So we made a list, which gave us over 200 opportunities for you to reach out, engage with other people and get involved. So hopefully there is something for everyone, from boxing to singing to volunteering.

And if you don't know where to start, stick your head in and say hello at one of MindSpace's Tea and Chat sessions - they're a friendly bunch and often have great cake to go with a cuppa! Or join us at a creative workshop or arts event, check our Facebook page for opportunities. And we're both always looking for volunteers to lend a hand, do get in touch.

So this booklet will tell you of our journey and what we discovered. Thank you to everyone who talked to us for sharing your knowledge of our community - it's been a privilege to get to know more.

Sam at Art Pop-Up



Supported by an investment from Lincolnshire's
Mental Health Promotion Fund

Cover image: *Hands* by Kelly Barfoot
Image (left): *Hand No.5* by a Stamford resident



What is Stamford Connections all about?

The *Stamford Connections* project is run by Art Pop-Up, in partnership with MindSpace, carrying out research into what brings our community together and makes it strong. We wanted to know where connections exist and how they happen and what they mean to the community.

Connections with other people are important for positive mental health, they are the strands that tie our community together. So this project asked the question “How do you connect in Stamford?”.

Why are connections important?

Beka Avery, chair of MindSpace says “I think everyone has to come to understand the importance of connection with isolation and loneliness on the increase. Understanding this is an important first step in helping make our community stronger. Connection is one of the 5 ways to wellbeing.”

The NHS 5 Ways to Wellbeing - Connect, Be Active, Take Notice, Learn and Give - embrace a focus on prevention; aiming to include all five, every day, is a simple strategy for those experiencing good mental health to learn how to maintain it and to flourish. There is strong evidence that indicates that feeling close to, and valued by, other people is a fundamental human need and one that contributes to functioning well in the world: connections are important.

Connections are critical for community cohesion. In essence, a more connected community with increased engagement and participation is stronger and more inclusive, with more positive mental health. Moreover, rather than look at what is missing in our community, we are starting with our community’s strengths. Art Pop-Up Director, Sam Roddan explains, “Imagine these connections as a net, instead of pointing out the holes,

we’ll try and draw the strands closer together. If we can understand where connections exist, how they happen and are maintained locally, then we can work out how to make them wider reaching, resilient and sustainable.” This approach is known as *Asset Based Community Development*.

Sam continues, “By making these connections visible and recognising their importance, we define their value so they become something we all invest in, encouraging participation, advocacy and further connections.”

What did we do?

The *Stamford Connections* project has 4 stages:

1. Research where people make connections in Stamford (May to July).
2. Host an Artist’s Residency with an exhibition of works inspired by the project to increase community understanding and engagement (June to early August).
3. Produce a publication about the project and signpost the discovered opportunities at our *Get involved!* events (September to October).

4. And then going forwards, bring key community connectors together to collaborate more effectively.

Local residents Lesley Gibson and Nicola Sandall led on the community engagement and spent six weeks conducting interviews and chatting with a broad range of people in the community about their experiences in Stamford. They talked with over 150 people conducting in depth interviews about their connections.

The team analysed the data from all these discussions, listing over 600 connections, and identified 233 different places or ways in which people make connections in Stamford. These range from walking around Stamford Meadows to shopping on the High Street and playing sport at Blackstones.

From the research, the team identified an initial 10 key connectors - places, activities and groups that people mentioned frequently during the interviews:

- The allotments
- The churches
- The Corn Exchange
- Stamford Library
- Mindspace Stamford
- The Recreation Ground and Skate Park
- Stamford Arts Centre
- Second Helpings
- #ShopStamford and independent retailers
- Stamford U3A

As the weeks progressed, the findings from the research became clear and the second part of the project started to take shape, the exhibition at the Arts Centre. By using art to engage people, we created a fun, interesting public platform to tell the stories of how connections are made - which further encouraged people to get involved with the project.

Following an open call, we commissioned local artist Kelly Barfoot to work with Stamford residents to make an imaginative display of 100 handprints,

demonstrating the many connections that are so integral to Stamford life. Using the historic cyanotype printing process which is the origin of the blueprint used by engineers and architects, locals were invited to make a cyanotype handprint in a number of workshops held by Kelly at the Arts Centre and MindSpace during the project. Kelly also held pop-up workshops with the Year 5 pupils at the Bluecoat School and a workshop at Second Helpings at Barn Hill Methodist Church.



The resulting artwork ‘100 Hands’ was exhibited at the Arts Centre from 15 July to 2 August with over 1000 people visiting.

Next steps

Now that we know the places, activities and groups where people make connections, we can work together to signpost the opportunities for connections.

“We’re encouraging all our local social and community groups and organisations to work with us in order to reach out further in to the community,” says Sam. “The project aims to develop collaboration and increased advocacy between groups and organisations. If we strengthen the networks in our community we will have increased participation and engagement: the more people involved, the stronger, more sustainable connections there are, creating an inclusive, cohesive community.”

Art Pop-Up & MindSpace

Art Pop-Up and MindSpace have worked together on a number of projects with the local community, including *Stamford Connections*, as the organisations have complementary aims.

Art Pop-Up

A local non-profit arts organisation producing inspiring, thought provoking creative opportunities to reach everyone in our community.

Art Pop-Up are a Stamford based collective of artists who organise projects to promote creative discovery, participation & enrichment for everyone in our community to take part in. We are cultural engineers & community builders.

We are also creative evangelists, everyone can be creative with some support and encouragement - you don't have to be "good at art". It can make a positive difference to mental health and wellbeing, whilst cultural engagement has an important part to play in cohesive communities.

We run all sorts of different projects from art festivals to workshops and artists' residencies, participation is usually free. Whilst our primary focus is visual art, we often work with poets, dancers, musicians and other creative practitioners. We also mentor local artists who are interested in community engagement and more non-traditional art concepts.

We work collaboratively with a wide range of partners and funders including Arts Council England, councils, wildlife trusts and local NHS teams.

"Art Pop-Up's COVID work is so sensitive and tear jerkingly spot on for the community, they have seen the divisions in the town and produced inclusive and thoughtful opportunities for the isolated and less privileged at an awful time."



A local charity committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole town, helping people to flourish.

MindSpace is a local charity committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of the residents of Stamford and its surrounds. We encourage conversations around mental health in our homes, businesses, and schools, and offer a range of activities that anyone can access (for free!) to encourage positive mental health and wellbeing.

With a community hub on Broad Street and a community garden at the Uffington Road allotments, MindSpace has made lots of progress since it was launched by Stamford GP Dr Dan Petrie and a team of like-minded Stamford residents in 2015. Our community-focused approach has won support from individuals and organisations within the town and beyond, with grants and donations helping to facilitate a range of initiatives.

Our activities have helped awareness and understanding of poor mental health and well-being, making it easier for people to reach out, to talk, and to connect with people and support services as a result, many people have been given a hand up and out of dark times.

"It's difficult to say how much MindSpace has meant to me over the past year. I'm not sure I would have gotten through it without the support and friends I've made at tea and chat."

"Over lockdown I've actually made new friends and developed new hobbies, thanks to activities offered by MindSpace."

Five Ways to Wellbeing

The NHS recommends five steps that can improve mental health and wellbeing...

Connect with others

Friendships help build a sense of belonging and self-worth, allowing shared positive experiences and mutual emotional support.

Be active

Activity has been proven to improve your mental health as well as your physical wellbeing.

Learn new skills

Learning boosts self-confidence and self-esteem, giving a sense of purpose as well as helping you connect with others.

Give to others

Whether it's a smile, a simple act of kindness, or lending a hand as a volunteer, giving does you good.

Pause and take notice

Being mindful can help you appreciate life, reduce stress and anxiety and helps you make positive choices.

"If you can aim to do all those things in your week then you're more likely to be able to achieve and maintain a sense of positive wellbeing" explains Dr Dan.

"MindSpace aims to ensure people understand the signs of poor mental well-being, advocate for

Wellbeing map of Stamford

Stamford residents were asked how they engage with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and Sam at Art Pop-Up, plotted favourite destinations on an illustrated map of the town. On the reverse is information on these places, along with local groups and activities to get involved in.

Pick up a copy from MindSpace on Broad Street or find the map on our websites.



"I was by myself all over lockdown and felt very alone, but MindSpace was a lifeline for me. I went along to tea and chat and met others who helped me keep it all in perspective and I realised that I wasn't alone all the time."

better access to mental well-being and support in the community as well as providing a range of weekly activities to enable people to get active, learn something new, and to simply connect with others. Our aim is to provide a space and resources to support the town to connect and deepen the strength of networks across the town that anyone can access, especially when they are facing personal challenges."



Come along

Activities run on weekdays and in the evenings and currently includes Tea & Chat, Men's Night, Boxing for Wellness, Walking, MindSpace Makers and Sketching. To find out more and to book into a session, go to www.MindSpace.com/joinin. All are open to anyone* and are free of charge. Although if you can afford to, we ask that you consider making a donation for taking part in our activities. *Aged 18+.

"When I was introduced to MindSpace, I felt like I fitted in straight away. There is a warm feeling about the place, and no judgement. Everyone is treated equally, and I feel part of a little family."

Getting help

For anyone in need of immediate help, the Support section at www.MindSpaceStamford.com provides links to a range of organisations.

STAMFORD Connections

Reflections from Lesley

One of our *Stamford Connections* Community Engagement Leads



Nicola

Lesley

I have lived in Stamford for thirty years and I have always known how lucky I am to do so. I have raised three children here. I have known that I am lucky to have access to the countryside which is incredibly close at hand, good weather, a beautiful townscape and good transport links. I know too that we love to celebrate life and that Stamford would celebrate the safe return of a supermarket trolley if we could fit it into the calendar!

Stamford would celebrate the safe return of a supermarket trolley

Then I began work on the *Stamford Connections* project and I realised that the community life is the richest part

The community life is the richest part of all

of all. Above all else, we are a group of people who care. Stamfordians like to bring about change and

we like to volunteer. Volunteering isn't all about the 'other', it is often about ourselves and our desire for purpose, to join in and to connect. It combats isolation but it also changes the landscape (often physical) that we live in.

Stamfordians like to bring about change and we like to volunteer

Volunteering and activism means we keep our green spaces, create and promote activity, look after our vulnerable and make a difference to our environment. This promotes wellbeing and sustainability for all.

We are also a town who values its river, for tourism, for recreation, for cooling dogs, for attracting water voles... for chatting to someone next to, for working together to preserve.

Someone will smile and say hello

Residents can rest safe in the knowledge that if they walk through town on their own, someone will smile

and say hello. Our relatively small population can happily make contact with strangers in St Michael's churchyard as we watch the world go by, or meet

someone accidentally and pop to Fine Foods for a coffee, or even end up at a stranger's wedding. Our independent shop and business owners welcome us in with a smile and a chat and make us feel that we are more than a just a sale. They give our town an identity, from the history wall at Harrison and Dunn to #ShopStamford.

We don't get it right all the time... but there is a will to change

As townsfolk, we have a desire to be even more community minded than we are currently - to

welcome in diversity, to provide things for our youngsters to do, to wrap our metaphorical arms around our vulnerable and to cherish them. The churches, MindSpace and Second Helpings are doing great things in this area and there is a desire to do even more. As in all communities, we don't get it right all the time, there is room for improvement when it comes to access for all, financially and in terms of perception but there is the will to change and we are really good at change when we come together.

We are really good at change when we come together

Last but not least we have organisation upon organisation upon organisation connecting with like-minded people. During the course of this project we may have only uncovered the tip of the iceberg. Suffice to say there are endless opportunities at Borderville, in each other's houses, in dance studios, craft cafes and the library, in church halls, at the Meadows, at college evening classes, Ryhall village hall, bridge clubs, bowls clubs and in the many, many arms of our U3A.

Not one person I have asked or who has been referred to me has refused to be interviewed about the connections they make. Everyone has been generous with their time and point of view. It is important that we listen to each and every one of them.

You are a friendly, community spirited bunch

I personally have made that final connection with the town I call home... the people of Stamford. You are a friendly, community spirited bunch and I know that you are grateful for the abundance of your luck.

My colleague Nicola and I have made well over a hundred new connections but also, just by talking for these past months, we have been at the birth of new initiatives, we have introduced people to each other, we have informed the town of the many services available.

The artworks developed by our marvellous artist in residence, Kelly Barfoot, with the community are a beautiful visual interpretation of our town and of all the connections we make on a daily basis. So with

We are joining up the dots to make a more cohesive community

Stamford Connections we have begin to join up the dots to make a more cohesive community.

What a treat. It's been a privilege getting to know you all and we couldn't have done it without our project volunteers.

Well done Stamford.

Lesley Gibson



Artist's residency

To explore the research produced for Stamford Connections, local artist Kelly Barfoot was invited to respond creatively to the project findings. She created a beautiful, fascinating exhibition of cyanotype prints, made collaboratively with the community, signifying the many connections that are so integral to Stamford life. Using the historic cyanotype printing process which is the origin of the blueprint used by engineers and architects, Kelly utilised a technique she has developed to double expose the works creating unique and expressive imagery which was exhibited at Stamford Arts Centre gallery from July 15th to August 2nd.

Kelly worked with the Stamford community to produce 100 cyanotype handprints in a number of workshops held at the Arts Centre during the project. Kelly also held pop-up workshops with the Year 5 pupils at the Bluecoat School and a workshop outside Second Helpings at Barn Hill Methodist Church.

Spanning 6 metres, the hand prints are a visual mapping of the research answering the question "how do we connect?", exploring the places Stamfordians go where interests are shared, connections made and support networks may be formed.

The artworks sit together side by side, up, down or across from the ninety-nine others connecting their audience with each other, an echo of the ethos of *Stamford Connections*: individuals linking with those they know and those they don't, reflecting on and celebrating the assets of our community.

As well as the *100 Hands*, Kelly worked with several of the key connectors to produce a series of large abstract cyanotype portraits, created in outdoor performative art experiences, bringing to life the stories of how many of our local connections are made.

We talked to Kelly about the inspiration behind the project and how she brought the idea of connectedness to life.

Why did you choose handprints as a symbol of connectedness?

Whether a wave or hand shake in greeting, or outreached, our hands are an initial point of connection. We use our hands to make our own individual marks. It's one of the first things we do with our kids, painting their hands to make a print so we can look back in years to come to reflect on how much they've grown.

Making a handprint is a very inclusive and accessible form of art. You don't need to be able to paint, or draw, you just need to lay your



About Kelly

Kelly's practice is informed by environmental awareness and exploring sustainability in photographic processes as well as the natural world and found objects. Blending science and art she experiments with the properties of natural materials, observing what emerges when they are used in different experimental or historical photography methods and printmaking. @barfootk_art



Cyanotype printed eggshells by Kelly Barfoot

hand on the paper. And there's no right or wrong way of doing it, I was so surprised to see just how different all our prints are, with hands in different positions on the paper.

A handprint is a very personal thing, as are the way we make connections, so it seemed such a natural fit for the *Stamford Connections* project to show just how connected we are.

What is cyanotype printing?

Cyanotype is a historic printing process and is the origin of the 'blueprint' used by engineers and architects, first discovered in 1842. The cyanotype is made by combining two iron-based chemicals - ferric ammonium citrate and potassium ferricyanide - in water, impregnating paper with the solution and then exposing it to UV light to create the Prussian blue photogram.

The UV light reacts with the paper and then you wash the chemical off with tap water to 'develop' the print. It can take 24 hours to completely develop, so it's a very organic process which fits really well with this project as how we make connections is often organic as well.

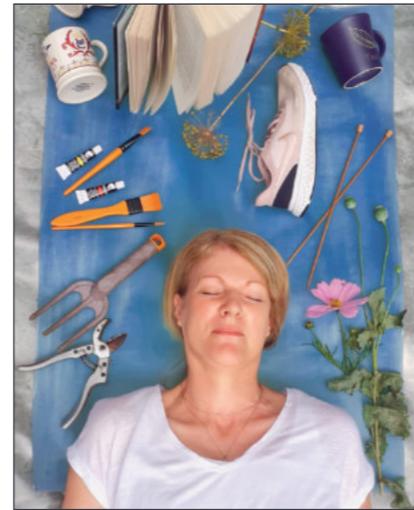
It can be a lengthy way of making a print as it completely relies on sunshine. If it's a very sunny day, the print can develop in minutes! But if it's overcast, it can take 15 minutes or longer. To speed things

up I made a number of base prints, which were A4 pieces of paper that I had already made an initial cyanotype pattern on. When people laid their hands over the base print, the sunshine turned the paper that was exposed to the sun blue, leaving the silhouette of the handprint unexposed.

Why did you choose cyanotype printing for this project?

I think it really is a magical type of art. You can see the paper changing colour before your eyes. The process is a real talking point and so many people who made the print wanted to know the science behind it. I had a 90-year-old taking very detailed notes as he wanted to tell his family exactly what he'd been doing. People really connected with the art. And you feel so connected to the print as you are such a part of it.

I think the other beautiful part of cyanotype print making is that it is not an instant process. You have to take your time. So much of our life nowadays is instant. We take photos with our phones all the time. You stop, pose and snap. It's over in seconds. But with cyanotype you have to invest the time. You have to stay still. When you look back at your print you will remember exactly where you were when you made it. You may remember the conversations you had on that day, you may remember the people you with. I



think it is a very special art form and a perfect fit for this project.

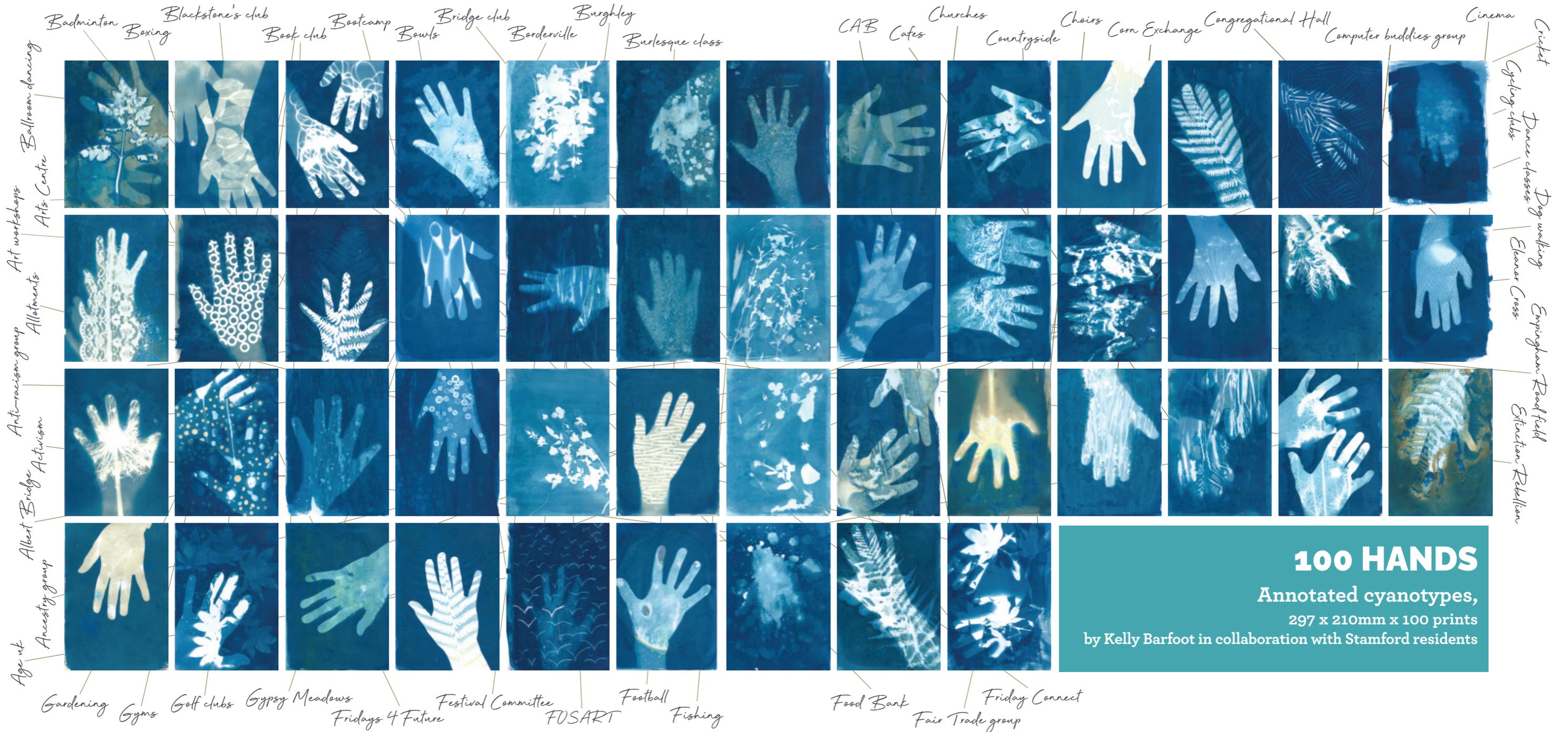
Tell us about making the large abstract prints with some of the community groups.

Oh, these were such a lot of fun! I asked each group to bring along some objects representing what they do and how they help people make connections. Some groups also used their hands, feet, even their whole bodies!

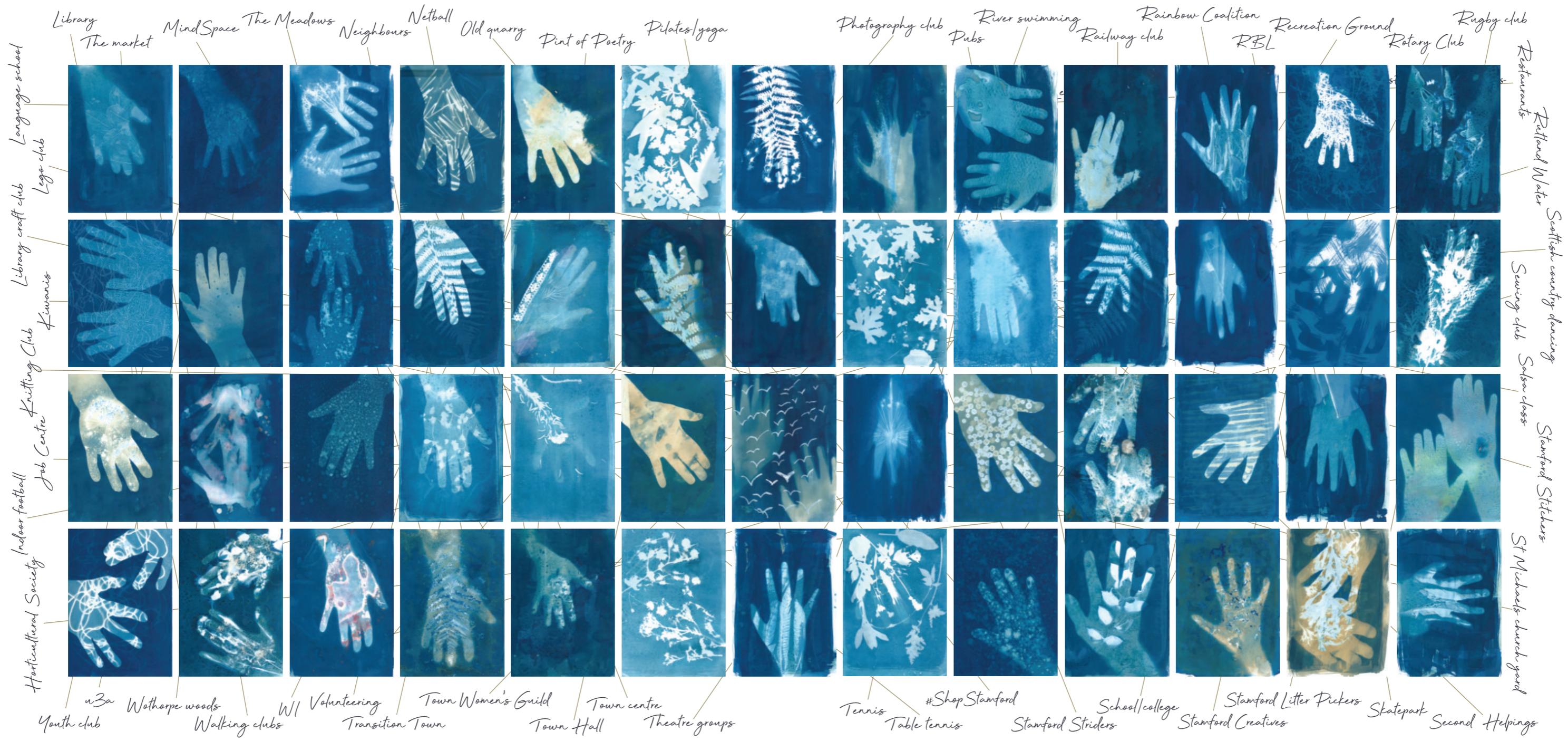
These prints were slightly more challenging than the handprints as once the chemicals have been exposed enough to the sunlight, you need to move everything off the paper very quickly. And some of the prints did have a lot of items! One of the the *MindSpace* ones springs to mind with plants, trainers, secateurs, paints, mugs and more!

Image:
Hand No. 29 by a Stamford resident





100 HANDS
 Annotated cyanotypes,
 297 x 210mm x 100 prints
 by Kelly Barfoot in collaboration with Stamford residents



Library
The market
MindSpace
The Meadows
Neighbours
Netball
Old quarry
Pint of Poetry
Pilates/yoga
Photography club
Pubs
River swimming
Railway club
Rainbow Coalition
RBL
Recreation Ground
Rotary Club
Rugby club

Language school
Lego club
Library craft club
Library school
Kwanis
Knitting Club
Job Centre
Indoor football
Horticultural Society

Restaurants
Portland Water
Scottish country dancing
Sewing club
Salsa class
Stamford Stickers
St Michael's church yard

u3a
Youth club
Wathorpe woods
Walking clubs
W1
Volunteering
Transition Town
Town Women's Guild
Town Hall
Town centre
Theatre groups
Tennis
Table tennis
#ShopStamford
Stamford Striders
School/college
Stamford Litter Pickers
Stamford Creatives
Skatepark
Second Helpings

Connecting with others is one of the NHS 5 Ways to Wellbeing because of the sense of belonging and self-worth that comes from having meaningful relationships with others. It is important for communities to identify where and how these connections happen so that everyone appreciates their value, people make more of them and reach out to everyone. This helps build a stronger community.

The purpose of the *Stamford Connections* project is to find out where and how people make connections with their community in Stamford. These connections are considered to be Stamford's *assets*, and although some of these assets are physical places (like the library or Arts Centre), others could be a group of people who meet for a dog walk or at the allotment.

The project research aims to:

- Define the assets that facilitate people in Stamford to connect with others
- Make these assets more visible and known, recognising their social value, improve signposting and facilitating further connection

- Encourage increased participation and advocacy, thereby make the assets wider reaching, resilient and sustainable.

This initial research supports an Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) approach to reducing social isolation and to sustainable community-driven development. Asset Based Community Development's premise is that communities can drive the development process themselves by identifying and mobilising existing, but often unrecognised assets. Thereby responding to challenges and creating local social improvement and economic development.

The process

The *Stamford Connections* research phase began in May 2021 when COVID restrictions were lifting and people were starting to meet up again face-to-face. The research team consisted of two community engagement leads and a team of three volunteers, recruited by the engagement leads.

The team conducted 122 semi-structured indepth interviews over a period of 6 weeks and a further 40 informal conversations provided anecdotal information and insight.

Where do people in Stamford make connections?

After all the interviews and conversations had taken the place, the community engagement leads logged the results under headings aligned to ABCD asset inventories: Places, Institutions, Individuals, Associations and Connections.

There were 233 assets/connections recorded across 670 citations. These assets/connections were further subdivided thematically:

- Physical activity/sport: 92 citations across 26 different activities
- Creative activity (including, arts, crafts, music, drama, dance): 97 citations across 34 different activities
- Other activity (including charities, churches, associations, education and community groups): 182 citations across 44 different activities
- Places to walk/visit: 64 citations across 24 different locations
- Places to eat/drink/shop: 75 citations across 29 different venues

The research successfully identified a multitude of social connections and several key connectors (assets) - defined by evaluating the number of times the activity/place/group was mentioned by individual participants.

Image:
Hand No. 31 by a Stamford resident

How do we make connections in Stamford?

Stamford Connections research findings



Stamford's key connectors

What did we find out?

One thing that stood out from the research was the sheer number of assets the community has – there were 233 individual places, activities or groups mentioned in the interviews. Stamford people are active people, with 92 mentions of sport or other physical activity and 64 mentions of places where people like to walk.

Stamfordians are also creative, with 97 mentions of creative activities. And they appreciate a nice drink or a bite to eat, with 75 mentions of cafes, restaurants and pubs.

There's also a strong sense of pride in the town and a willingness to help out with 49 people mentioning that they volunteer at places like Second Helpings, Mindspace, Age UK and Rotary.

As the community slowly gets back to the 'new normal' things will change and some activities or groups may not be the same. But now that we have identified the network of assets, we need to ensure that everybody knows about them and how to get involved. It's about joining up the dots to make a more cohesive community and overcoming perceived barriers to joining in.

What would you like to try?



In the interview analysis, the following came up as some of the mechanisms, or assets, through which people most frequently connect in Stamford

Walking

An hour's exercise a day during lockdown gave us all a renewed perspective on walking and exploring our local patch, nodding a hello or stopping for a remark as we pass others by. Popular green spots to explore that were mentioned during the interviews include Burghley, the Recreation Ground, Empingham Road field, the old quarry to the north and Rutland Water; a wander down Water Furlong, peeking at its allotments, then down on to the meadows, the 'second meadow' and heading out towards Easton-on-the-Hill. Also, Wothorpe Woods, Gypsy Meadows toward Ryhall and Uffington Meadows. MindSpace have a regular group walk you can join.

Within the town, as well as generally walking around the centre, where the architecture is much appreciated, people mentioned: the picturesque Melancholy Walk, Eleanor Cross, St Michael's church yard and the Poetry Stone, Albert Bridge and the sensory garden on Water Street, the Alms Houses and Browne's Hospital as well as the old graveyard of St. Martin's where Daniel Lambert (d. 1809) is buried, off Barnack Road.



Dog Walking

In Stamford it is apparent from the research that we love our dogs and dog walking is one of our favourite ways to meet other people. It gives us something to talk about, to focus on. We can simply stop for a quick chat, no need to commit to a full blown conversation - just shooting the breeze! All that fresh air and exercise promotes wellbeing and as the dog needs walking no matter what the weather, there is constant motivation to get out of the house when others might give in to the storm.

According to our research, you don't even need your own four legged friend to enjoy dog walking! Anywhere others are walking theirs, there is the opportunity to meet, connect and chat.

Dog owners found themselves less isolated than their neighbours during lockdown because they were lucky enough to stroll round the quarries, fields, and parks whilst having a brief chinwag, even if it was at a distance. When things eased a little, dog-less interviewees told tales of dropping into step with a stranger and accompanying them on long dog walks.

As you can imagine, popular destinations are the Meadows or the Recreation Ground, but Empingham Road Playing fields has a resident doggy-owning troupe who support each other through hard times, bringing treats enough for everyone's dogs. Their routine involves circuits of the field with owners and dogs 'arriving' and 'dropping off' at two key points on the perimeter. Theoretically, you could stay all day and have someone different to chat to every time you passed the bowls club. It may be unusual that they remember your name, but they'll know the name of your dog.

Man's best friend is also welcome in some of the town's hostleries such as Cosy Club and Tobie Norris... more chances to make a friend.

The Meadows

Stamford Meadows are located centrally, dissected by the River Welland and the Mill Stream and are a popular place for not only walking, but sharing a picnic and the variety of events hosted there. Talking with Welland Rivers Trust, they are keen to encourage more engagement with the river.

Three of those interviewed mentioned missing the old festival of 'Rock on the Meadows' (Watch this space, hopefully a live music event will be making a return to the town next summer). Other people mentioned the annual dog show, antique fairs, Rotary car show and Lent Fair which stretches across the town to here, as well as other one-off events.

Several people mentioned opportunities for improvements to the Meadows including more bins, a shelter by the water and a jetty.



The Recreation Ground

The Recreation Ground has a bandstand, tennis courts, playground and a skatepark. Several mentioned it as a great place to go with a diverse number of people and activities. Others mentioned chatting with other mums at the playground or while dog walking.

There is a community action plan afoot, fundraising to put an outdoor gym on the old bowling green - fingers crossed!

See the full profile on page 34.

Allotments

Interest in allotments has undergone a recent revival nationally, with more emphasis on local food growing, healthy eating and reduction in carbon footprint as well as the inherent benefits for wellbeing. Economics also lead us

to want new ways to access cheaper food. This interest is reflected in Stamford where six Stamford Town allotments sites are managed by the town council for cultivating vegetables, fruit and flowers. They are in Queens Walk, Water Furlong, Uffington Road and Priory Road. The Cecil Estate Family Trust also owns some private allotments for rent along Water Furlong.

See full profile on page 40.

Burghley

Burghley is a much loved local jewel whose parkland is free to visit. Originally constructed in 1754 over a twenty-five year period by Capability Brown, the park was 'modernised' at that time removing the formal avenues and gardens to provide a more natural style suitable for the newly favoured sport of shooting. The sweeping views and gently undulating landscape provide us today with an ideal space to meet, for contemplation and an active place to visit with acres of beautiful parkland to walk.

Eight people interviewed cited it as a place of connection and a source of town pride. MindSpace conducts weekly walks to Burghley.

MindSpace

MindSpace is a local charity committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole town, helping people to flourish. It offers a wide range of free activities around the 5 Ways to Wellbeing.

See full profile on page 28.

The Churches

The churches of St Georges, Barn Hill Methodist and Christchurch triangulate the town making meaningful connections with large portions of the population, often filling the gaps that other services can't reach.

See full profile on page 36.

These three along with United Reformed Church, the Free Church, All Saints, St Augustine's, St Mary's and St Martins, collaborate on a programme called 'Churches Together'. Each church has its own unique character and mix of activities as a place of welcome, community and social outreach. They offer men's groups, mother and baby sessions, tea and chats, youth clubs, crisis help and alpha courses to name but a few. As well as outreach, they are often venues for dance and fitness classes or clubs such as the choral society. Together their initiatives include Stamford Street Pastors, the Food Bank and Household Essentials Project.

Second Helpings

Second Helpings is mentioned extremely often in the interviews as a volunteering opportunity and an initiative to be proud of. Located at Barn Hill Methodist Church, people connect here, chat to like-minded people and see a friendly face when they gather to collect prepared meals or fresh fruit, vegetables and bread. The driver is 'feeding bellies, not



bins' so if you can't pay, then don't... you are helping to keep landfills free of food surplus.

See full profile on page 32.

Volunteering

Volunteering is popular in Stamford, with nearly half of all respondents mentioning that they volunteer. There are plenty of volunteering opportunities in Stamford across a wide range of activities, including MindSpace, Art Pop-Up, Second Helpings, Age UK, Welland Rivers Trust, Evergreen Care, Rotary, Lions and the Kiwanis as well as other charities. Two people mentioned a lack of a single local hub for volunteering activities and this is an opportunity that could be explored.

Stamford u3a

The u3a has hibernated largely during COVID but are back in September in full force with over 150 members attending the first monthly meeting at Barn Hill Methodist church. Organised by volunteers, the u3a offer a wide variety of activities for over 55s, with groups ranging from antiques and chess to dancing, languages, literature and wine. Several participants mentioned directly that they are members of various u3a groups.

See full profile on page 42.

Stamford Library

The library is cited many times in the interviews as a place to point people toward for information and making connections. Pre-COVID there were weekly 'Computer Buddy' sessions where visitors receive IT guidance, such as help setting up their mobile phones, as well as knit and natter, story time for parents and children, Lego club, author events and book clubs. The new schedule is being considered for their return to the High Street building after the roof works are completed.

See full profile on page 30.

Stamford Arts Centre

The Arts Centre emerged as the main hub for the town, with over thirty people mentioning it as a main connection point. Activities mentioned include: attending workshops, cinema, taking part in theatre, watching live theatre, visiting the cafe, tourist information centre and many more. Five people also cited the



Arts Centre as a source of information for what's on in the town, through brochures and via its website.

See full profile on page 26.

The Corn Exchange

Stamford Corn Exchange is a well known landmark in the town, situated next to MindSpace on Broad Street. Apart from the rolling programme of popular touring events and shows, the Corn Exchange hosts the productions of a large number of local amateur theatre groups for all ages with an enormous number of opportunities to get involved both on and offstage.

But it's more than just a theatre, in 2007 the Corn Exchange expanded its repertoire with the introduction of an assortment of independent shops and much appreciated cafe on the ground floor.

See full profile on page 38.



FOSART & Drama groups

Stamford is home to a prodigious number of amateur theatre groups which are well loved by the community for the opportunities they provide to connect, get involved and entertain. They come together under the banner of Friends of Stamford and Rutland Theatre, founded by our Community Engagement Lead Nicola Sandall. FOSART have an active Facebook page, organise events and meet ups and are involved in many community events including the Spooktacular on the Rec and carol singing. Along with FOSART, interviewees mentioned Gilbert & Sullivan, Pantomime Players, College Players, Stamford Shakespeare Company and Stamford Shoestring who are resident at the Arts Centre.

The market

Since Saxon times, traders have taken to the the streets of Stamford to sell their goods and livestock. This has evolved to our popular



Friday market on Broad Street and Ironmonger's Street, with about 90 traders, both casual and regular. A smaller market is also held every Saturday in Red Lion Square and High Street with around 16 traders.

Chatting to the stall holders was valued by interviewees, who also enjoyed the coffee stall where you can "sit and chat and watch the world go by".

#ShopStamford & the independents

The hashtag #ShopStamford emerged strongly throughout the interviews, with several participants referencing the warm, friendly welcomes from independent business as facilitating connections. The Stamford coffee shops and pubs were also mentioned frequently. Some interviewees patronise each business, doing a circuit throughout the week or meet friends on a rotation of venues: our town centre independent businesses are highly valued.

See full profile on page 44.



Blackstone's Sport and Social Club

It's been more than twenty years since funds were raised to save the club for the community and the venue on Lincoln Road grows ever more busy as it welcomes groups to use its facilities. The latest addition is the cycling club which departs from here on Thursdays. A myriad of local sports groups and league teams find a home here, from netball to bowls and football.

Interviewees mention the clubhouse is also a popular social venue for members to connect, with a warm, welcoming atmosphere hosted by Tony, the manager, who also organises the diary of events - everything from a meat raffle to the Macmillan Coffee Morning. There are currently over 600 members and anyone is welcome to join, membership costs £10 a year. Even on a quieter Monday or Tuesday evening you'll still find someone in the bar to chat to.

Borderville

A whole host of activities are cited in the research which run from the



Borderville sports centre. A partnership between Burghley, Stamford AFC and New College Stamford enabled the build of the £6m campus in 2014 with a further £2.2m expansion completed in June 2021.

The centre aims to provide the wider community with access to good value activities and sports facilities. It is home not only to the Daniels but Stamford Striders, BCKA Kick Boxing, Stamford Pick up Basketball, Walking Netball, Urban Arts Academy and Stamford Junior Knights as well.

Sports and sports teams

Stamford has many opportunities to get active, either as an individual or as part of a team. Along with Blackstones and Borderville as venues for socialising and sport, several participants mention the Rugby Club, Leisure Centre, Welland School of Dance and the bowls clubs as places where people connect with others.



Key Connector Portraits



Arts Centre manager Graham Burley poses for the cyanotype portrait (opposite) by Kelly Barfoot

Stamford Arts Centre
27 St Mary's St, Stamford PE9 2DL
01780 763 203

www.stamfordartscentre.com/whats-on
[@stamfordarts](https://www.instagram.com/stamfordarts)

The Arts Centre is the one place that almost everyone in town knows and prizes for a whole host of reasons. Its town centre location is key. The coffee shop is seen as intimate and relaxed, it has a noticeboard of community events, and the Arts Centre team are approachable and welcoming.

The amateur theatre company, Shoestring, is based here as well as Wildcats Theatre School and many touring productions visit. A number of art classes, workshops, clubs and lectures run their timetable from here and the gallery features a broad range of local work including Art Pop-Up's exhibitions and the Welland Valley Arts Society's programme. The Arts Centre Bar is affordable and runs events such as comedy evenings where you can connect with those on the same wavelength.

Many mentioned how excellent it was at sharing information on the cinema, theatre, Tolethorpe and workshops. The Arts Centre has regularly updated brochures, an e-newsletter and a website which are widely and regularly used.

According to Jo Dobbs, our SKDC cultural attaché, SKDC's Arts Centre has been "a hub for culture, creativity and community for over 30 years. Drawing on a rich heritage dating back to the Georgian era we entertain and engage. The venue's hugely successful cinema screenings and the diverse, year-round creative programme will ensure that Stamford Arts Centre continues to connect with residents and visitors, both young and old".

Stamford Arts Centre





MindSpace volunteers pose with their Tea and Chat mugs for the portrait by Kelly Barfoot (opposite).

MindSpace Stamford
39 Broad St, Stamford PE9 1PX
01780 437 330
www.MindSpaceStamford.com
@MindSpaceStamford

As its website says, “MindSpace is a local charity committed to improving the mental health and wellbeing of the whole town, helping people to flourish.” It certainly seems to be very successful in doing so. It offers a wide range of physical activities, both indoors and out - walking groups, sketching classes, yoga and boxing to name but a few. The founder is local GP Dan Petrie.

Like all good ideas, MindSpace works because of the simplicity of its aim and the obvious need. Volunteers and visitors mix within the space on Broad Street without distinction. The service it offers is based on a community approach to the 5 Ways to Wellbeing and not just for those who are struggling. Engaging with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing on a daily basis - Connect, Be active, Take Notice, Learn, Give - can help you feel more positive and able to get the most out of life.

It’s a levelling initiative because there are no financial barriers to accessing all that MindSpace offers. It is free for all at the point of use. This conquers the stigma of talking about mental health and equips the whole community to support each other in times of need.

Connections are made left, right and centre here - by volunteering, by popping in to the craft club or to tea and chat sessions, joining the Couch to 5K or boxing groups. There is always plenty of home baking on offer if you fancy a cuppa. The sheer variety of community activities on offer here on a daily basis means plenty of opportunities to connect. Stop in and say hello.

MindSpace Stamford





Library manager Lea Rickard with an array of items from the library for the portrait with Kelly (opposite).

Stamford Library
30 High Street, PE9 2BB
01522 782010
stamford.library@gll.org
@LincsLibraries

The library sits on the High Street, on its steps, people meet, chat or grab a snack. Inside, in ‘normal’ times, is a treasure trove of activities, information and classes that the community love to join.

The library is cited many times in our research as a place to point people toward for information and making connections. Lea Rickard, who heads up the library, says people find their way in from all walks of life. Pre-COVID, there was a weekly ‘Computer Buddy’ session where visitors could receive IT guidance, such as help setting up their mobile phones. Wifi and computers are free to use.

Knit and Natter saw friendships forged between people who would never have met otherwise. MacMillan held coffee mornings in the library and utilised it as a base of support, with more people drawing on the service than at Peterborough Hospital.

The Ancestry group was a need identified and filled as a result of meetings of the Historical Society. The Stamford Mercury is available on microfilm in the library all the way back to 1710 and the Discover Stamford centrepiece is the 20 foot long The Stamford Tapestry, depicting the history of the town since the time of the Danes to the present.

Apart from this there is story time for parents and children, Lego club, author events and book clubs. Lea noted “Many adults don’t know how to use a library and they think it isn’t for them, they may feel that their own reading level means that they can’t bring their children in, but we are delighted to see everyone here whatever their ability. It’s what we are here for.” The library is currently reviewing what it can offer post Covid and building works but we look forward to more of the same.

The Library





Second Helpings volunteers making their cyanotype portrait with Kelly (opposite).

Second Helpings
Stamford Methodist Church, 11 Barn Hill, PE9 2AE
[@stamfordsecondhelpings](#)

Second Helpings at Barn Hill Methodist Church is the brain-child of George Hetherington who was inspired by learning about Adam Smith's 'Junk Food' project in Leeds. The original concept when the volunteer-run community project launched in 2015 was environmental, looking to lower the carbon emissions created by food rotting in landfill.

The project has grown and grown with 'The Bunker' offering food five days a week. It is mentioned extremely often in our research as a volunteering opportunity and an initiative to be proud of.

The extremely popular Saturday cafe often serves over a hundred 3 course meals and the community fridge, located in the passageway between North Street and Barn Hill, is packed full of fresh fruit, veg, bakery and chilled items., redistributing rescued surplus food. There's a welcoming smile and plenty of food on offer.

Volunteers from all walks of life help with every aspect of Second Helpings - from the collection of food donations to cooking the tasty meals; running the cafe, clearing tables and washing up and updating the website. People connect here, chat to like-minded people and see a friendly face when they gather to collect the food. If you can't pay, then don't... you are helping to keep landfills free from food "Feeding bellies not bins", but there is the opportunity to 'Pay As You Feel' if you are able. This can be as excess fruit and veg grown in your allotment/garden, your time as a volunteer, or a donation.

With Second Helpings going from strength to strength, it is a proven path to integration in Stamford life, you can find more details on Facebook.

Second Helpings





Skate boarder holds the pose for the cyanotype print with Kelly (opposite).

The Recreation Ground and Skate Park
Off North Street, PE9 1AE

Queries should be directed to Stamford Town Council

dtc@stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

The 'Rec' connects north and south Stamford. It consists of meandering paths, a play park at the top, the field area at the bottom, with the skate park and tennis courts in between. Music lovers like the occasional weekend concerts on the bandstand and it is the venue for many a celebration and Stamford festival. Connections here are varied, as with the also popular Meadows; dog walkers find someone to wander with, grandparents, parents and children meet at the play park before falling into conversation with others, and others meet at the skate park. In fact, the skate park is a place of great civic pride and is used by many. Families can be found sitting around the outside, making a day of it.

The skate park was a result of a grass roots community campaign. Over 6 long years, support for the project was gained from the Town and District Councils, the police, local schools, churches, youth groups, businesses, charity groups and Stamford residents. Finally, sufficient funds were raised to build the concrete park which opened in 2014. There is always a steady flow of users of all age groups - it is particularly popular with scooter riders. The facility is managed by Stamford Town Council, who also manage the Recreation Ground, though the users are pretty autonomous.

21 year old Harry Alderman comes to the park most days. He says 'The pub is OK but I'd rather do this. Apart from the equipment, it's free and I get an adrenaline rush. I've been coming here since I was thirteen.' The users are a pretty proactive bunch - joining with the local community to clear out the debris left by others, and even unblocking the overflowing drain. The skate park has its challenges but it is home to a community to be proud of.



Recreation Ground



Congregation members reach out in support for their cyanotype with Kelly (opposite).

St George's Church Hub
27 -29 St George's Street, PE9 2BJ
01780 481800
www.stgeorgeschurch.net
@stgstam

Stamford Methodist
11 Barn Hill, PE9 2AE
01780 762282
www.stamfordmethodistchurch.org.uk
@stamfordmethodistchurch

Christchurch
Green Lane, PE9 1HE
01780 766446
www.christchurchstamford.com
@christchurchstamford

The churches of St Georges, Barn Hill Methodist and Christchurch triangulate the town making meaningful connections with large portions of the population, their outreach often filling the gaps that other services can't. Sometimes townsfolk are supported by all three. In fact the Stamford churches work together to provide the Foodbank in the Unity Centre on West Street. But more than that, they offer men's groups, mother and baby sessions, tea and chats, youth clubs, crisis help and alpha courses to name but a few. As well as outreach, their halls are often venues for dance and fitness classes or clubs such as the choral society .

Ben Topham, Associate Rector of St George's feels that their role in the community is to demonstrate the love of God in action through a wide range of services - reaching out offering hope and healing. This might come in the form of help with debt management and life skills through the CAP courses (Christians Against Poverty) or Fresh Hope which provides a range of services to the homeless, isolated or vulnerable including a weekly meeting group that gives guests the opportunity to 'connect'.

Barn Hill is the home of Second Helpings, Fair Trade and The Well and Christ Church is located "at the heart of its community" according to Rev Anthony Laotan, who says they aim "to create a safe place for everyone to connect and belong. We reach out to people in many different ways, always seeking to reflect the love and care of Jesus", their pop-up cafe is incredibly busy, they also run Startafresh and various youth and family activities.

Check the individual church websites for information about the wide variety of programmes and services they offer or call their friendly, helpful offices.



The Churches



Local thespians strike a pose for the cyanotype with Kelly (opposite).

The Corn Exchange
Broad St, PE9 1PX
01780 766455

info@stamfordcornexchange.co.uk
www.stamfordcornexchange.co.uk
@stamfordcornexchange

Friends of Stamford and Rutland Theatre
friendsofsandrtheatre@gmail.com
@FriendsofStamford&RutlandTheatre

With a history stretching back to the 1800s, Stamford Corn Exchange is a well known landmark in the town. Today it is a 399-seat theatre, which has been built within the shell of the original Corn Exchange Hall, refurbished almost entirely by volunteers. Unusually for a theatre, it is totally self funding and new volunteers are always welcome to keep it running.

Apart from the rolling programme of popular touring events and shows, the Corn Exchange hosts the productions of an astonishing number of local amateur dramatic societies for all ages. Stamford loves its theatre and there's no better way to connect than to join in with the town's favourite past-time on stage or backstage. It's the home of 'Showstoppers' and take your pick from Stamford Pantomime Players, Stamford Gilbert and Sullivan Society, College Players and Ink Contemporary Theatre who all perform here (though they may rehearse elsewhere, all group details available on Facebook). More details about opportunities to get involved can be found in the Friends of Rutland and Stamford Theatre newsletter which amalgamates the many groups under one friendly banner and on their Facebook page.

But the Corn Exchange is more than just a beloved theatre, in 2007 it expanded its repertoire with the introduction of an assortment of independent shops and a cafe on the ground floor. It is well loved as a place to connect with others - in a sewing class or over a cuppa for example. Staff offer a warm welcome and the cafe is a hospitable space with lively chat and those little touches that make each visit a treat. The 'shops' are really units, opening out towards the cafe and allowing you to peruse crafts, vinyl records, vintage items, fabric, fancy dress, ethical goods and toys. Well worth a visit.

The Corn Exchange





Plot holder with the tools of the gardening pastime posing for the cyanotype portrait with Kelly (opposite).

Allotments
C/o Stamford Town Council
01780 753808

Details at:
www.stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk/Allotments_18480.aspx
dtc@stamfordtowncouncil.gov.uk

Stamford local embrace all things green and growing with open arms and there are lots of opportunities to participate and connect. We are blessed with a community orchard and a large number of allotments in our town and which are proving a great way to give and receive support, as well as knowledge and produce. Allotments are also a way to commune with nature and be mindful in a space where you can connect and be sociable if you wish. They are home to a broad range of wildlife from kingfishers to visiting muntjac deer whilst the exasperating squirrels often help themselves to fruit and veg,

There are 271 plots across six sites managed by the town council for cultivating vegetables, fruit and flowers, with the helpful Sarah at the town hall doing the admin. They are to be found in Queens Walk, Water Furlong, Uffington Road and Priory Road. The Cecil Estate Family Trust also owns some private allotments for rent.

All allotments, private or council run, have a community ethos and the diverse plot holders of Stamford are, in general, a generous, community-minded bunch who happily stop to chat, swap stories and tips and support each other in times of need. MindSpace and Sustainable Stamford (formerly Transition Town) hold community allotments, all offer the chance to chat to those in the neighbouring plot, to borrow and lend tools and to offer up surplus produce. They see the start of many connections, and many strangers become friends at an allotment table.

The pandemic saw many recognise and appreciate the benefits of gardening and growing and the allotments are sought after spaces but as of September 2021, the council waiting list is down to 33! Good news.

The Allotments





Chairman Roland Higgins represents the u3a, upside down with text from the group's themes, for the cyanotype with Kelly (opposite).

u3a
07942 335 069
www.stamfordu3a.org.uk
membership@stamfordu3a.co.uk

u3a

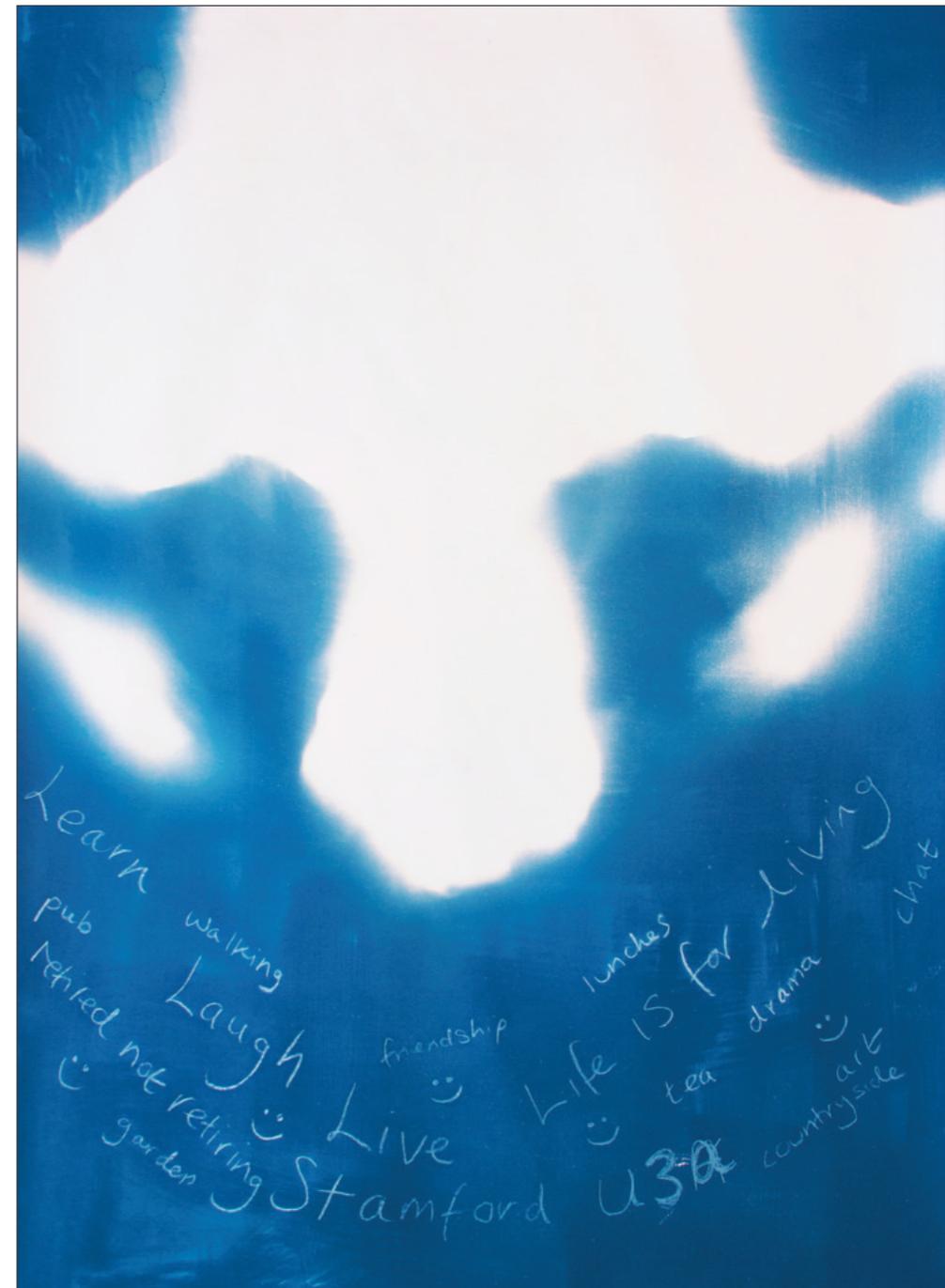
“You are never too old to have fun and learn” according to Roland Higgins, chair of the Stamford u3a and the voluntary organisation offers a huge amount of activities in a wide variety of venues to ensure this, as well as meeting up as a group once a month at Barn Hill Methodist Church. Luckily all six hundred members don't turn up at once!

The University of the Third Age is an organisation that caters for the over 55s and the vast majority of Stamford members are retired. All people in their “3rd age” are welcome and four themes run through all the activities:

- Learn, Laugh, Live
- Life is for living
- Retired but not Retiring
- You get out of life what you put into it.

Above all they believe in the benefits of building and maintaining friendships through shared interests. Pre-Covid there were weekly, monthly or fortnightly activities ranging from Scrabble to country dancing, from climate action to table tennis, all held in church halls, online, outdoors and in homes.

The Stamford U3A has more than 35 interest groups from chess to local history to walking and has thrown open its doors wide again post-COVID this September, contact Roland or the secretary for details of any interest groups. The U3A costs £10 for the year's membership. It's a very popular connection point. The best way to find out more is to go along to a monthly meeting - 10.30am first Monday every month - pop in and find out more.



Our town centre with its independent shops, cafes and bars is prized highly by Stamford residents, providing constant connection points as you wander down the street, smiling a hello, or venture into one of the establishments. And there's a real sense that these independents belong to us. Our research reveals that it is the welcoming smiles that greet you and the happy-to-chat attitude that root us firmly in a sense of place and we make connections that we could never do in large city chain stores.

We love our coffee shops and pubs as a place to meet with friends and chat, to look at cafe notice boards and gather information. We absolutely see the value of our independent baristas - we do not rest on our laurels, we know we must 'use it or lose it' and it is clear we don't want to do that! Some town residents feel it is important even to support each and every cafe, and frequent them all in rotation. We like shopping where we are known, where our choices are remembered, where we see friendly faces we know and we can gather and connect.

#ShopStamford



The independents are united under the #ShopStamford campaign originated with Sarah Sewell of Energy Clothing Store and now the hashtag logo is a household name in the town, while

Sarah frequently connects with us on social media. The community movement has been hugely successful and even resulted in the *Little Book of Stamford*, a who's who of the independent local retailers.

The town centre



Frothy's

Richard, Louise and their team at Frothy's Coffee Shop has been proudly serving Stamford since 2007. There's always a warm welcome. They serve freshly prepared food using quality, locally sourced produce whenever possible. There is plenty of space, a great vintage map on the wall and work from local artists taking pride of place. There's seating outside on Ironmongers Street and a roaring fire to suit all weathers.

Busiest days:

Market day, Saturday and Sunday

Quietest:

Thursday

What's your favourite menu item?

Breakfast is a big winner, although our toasted sandwiches are hard to beat!

When not working, we like to...

walk through Stamford and enjoy what our town has to offer.

What's your favourite thing about Stamford?

The huge collection of independent shops and the safe community feel Stamford has.



The King's Head

Steve and Annie took over ownership of the King's Head in Maiden Lane in May 2019 and run the pub along with manager, Alex. One, if not all of them, will always be in the pub to say hello.

When are you busiest?

Friday, Saturday and Sundays but we only ever book 40% of our tables out to ensure people can walk in whenever they choose, (Book via email only).

When are you quietest?

Wednesday

What's your favourite item that you sell?

Steve (while busy in the kitchen most days) is the chief beer tester, Annie's favourite food is the brie and Korean slaw burger (her own creation and one of the best sellers... much to Steve's annoyance!)

When we're not working we like to...

go on local walks with the kids in and around Stamford.

What's your favourite thing about Stamford?

The local community and high street.

Stamford's independent shops, cafes and pubs came up frequently in the research as places where people like to go to connect with others.

Meet some of the friendly favourites.



Stage 2

Mark opened Stage 2 Coffee House in 2016 when the 2600ft space under the Corn Exchange was transformed into the welcoming arcade it is today. Mark is passionate about the cafe which is well loved for its welcoming atmosphere, smiling staff - and for being dog friendly! They serve a wide variety of teas, coffee and homemade food.

When are you busiest? Fridays and Saturdays

When are you quietest? Mondays and Thursdays

Who will people meet when they walk through the door? Our lovely team Mark, Joyce, Sue and Charlotte.

What's their favourite menu item? The fantastic coffee.

When he's not working, Mark likes to... watch my son who is a Semi Professional Cyclist. And relax with a glass of wine.



Cakes & Co

Opened by Stewart and Jade in 2019, Cakes + Co is tucked away in Stamford Walk, just off the High Street. Stewart is the baker, having previously worked in Michelin-starred kitchens and he loves inventing new recipes, experimenting with flavours and recreating classic bakes with modern twists. Jade is the cake lover! As well as delicious cakes, drooled over by several research participants, they also serve light lunches.

When are you busiest? Saturdays and Sundays

When are you quietest? Friday afternoons

What's your favourite menu item? Stewart: brown butter and pistachio cake. Jade : basque cheesecake with salted caramel.

When we're not working we like to... cook a lovely meal and enjoy eating alfresco in the garden.

What's your favourite thing about Stamford? The interesting and friendly people and supportive community spirit.



Scandimania

Julia and Josh brought the Scandimania Coffee House to Stamford High Street in September 2019. The café serves authentic Scandinavian cuisine, baked fresh on the premises daily. The Stamford café is Josh and Julia's second. There is also a Scandimania in Uppingham.

When are you busiest? It can be busy most of the day.

When are you quietest? Afternoons can be quieter.

Who will people meet when they walk through the door? Our lovely manager Sarah and her team.

What's the most popular item that you sell? Cardamom buns and avocado toasts as well as fresh juices and of course, coffee.

When she's not working, Julia likes to... spend time with my family, paint and exercise.

What's your favourite thing about Stamford? The familiar and cosy feel.

A most beloved gem Harrison & Dunn

Mr Harrison and Mr Dunn set up shop in 1930, working together until Mr Harrison retired in 1955. It was not until 2004 however that Mr Dunn, aged 94, stopped working in the store which is now owned and run by his son Richard and two grandsons David and John.

David Dunn was the driving force behind the Mallory Lane picture gallery put together with the Civic Society in March 2018. The gallery runs the length of the alley and begins with Harrison & Dunn's story, then features a range of pre-World War II images including local streets, pubs, churches and prestigious buildings.

When are you busiest?
9am – 11am and 3pm – 4pm

When are you quietest?
7.30am – 9am

Who will people meet when they walk through the door?

Christine Burrows, she's worked at the shop since she was 15.

What's Christine's favourite item that you sell? Le Creuset pots and pans - she loves to cook a tagine.

Christine said "I love it the same as when I started, the customers, the management and staff. I lost my husband and the connections I have working here helped enormously."



Knead Pubs: The Crown Hotel, Paten & Co and The Tobie Norris

The Knead Pubs are owned by Mick Thurlby, who is a well-known figure around town, we found him happy to chat whilst watering the plants in the beautiful Crown garden. Big supporters of local producers and suppliers, they even have their own farm in Tallington, which rears the lamb and beef you'll find on the menu.

The Danish Invader

The Danish Invader in Empingham Road is a family-friendly pub with the community at its heart. Landlord, Chris Needham, is renowned locally for his community actions. During lockdown, he was busy keeping people together, even though the pub was closed. He set up a Facebook group so locals could stay in touch, handed out Easter eggs to children and helped people celebrate events.

The Green Man

The Green Man in Scotgate is a stone built former coaching inn that is well-known as a real ale heaven. An old style 'local' where stories are swapped, it is full of a wide variety of people, "useful people who can mend a rook"! It holds a popular beer festival on the patio every year. Reportedly it is the only pub that has never changed its name.

The Stamford Post

The Wetherspoon pub opened in 2014 in the old offices of The Stamford Mercury. The Stamford Post was the newspaper's original name when it was founded in around 1710. The pub reflects the history of the building with old photos, signs and a typewriter on the walls. Project participants talked about its popular weekly pub quiz.

Mama Liz's

Co-owners Michael and Liz describe Mama Liz's as a slice of New Orleans in the middle of Stamford. It is spread across three levels, with a bar, an upstairs restaurant, and in the Victorian wine bottling cellar, the Voodoo Lounge. People felt it was a fabulous place to meet others, for a mix of ages and activities, often with several things happening at the venue at the same time.

STAMFORD Connections

We will be publishing more information from our research about the opportunities to get involved, check our Facebook page @ArtPopUpUK for more details or sign up to our newsletter - email community@artpopup.co.uk

Art Pop-Up run a number of creative community projects throughout the year, our Facebook page has details of current opportunities to get involved.

2021 is Art Pop-Up's tenth anniversary, to date we have worked with nearly 80 000 people locally. To learn more about us and what we do, take a look at our website www.artpopup.co.uk and if you would be interested in volunteering with us, please email community@artpopup.co.uk and we can chat more about it.

Programme Director:
Sam Roddan, Art Pop-Up
*Freelance Community
Engagement Leads (research
phase):*
Lesley Gibson & Nicola Sandall
Artist in residence:
Kelly Barfoot

#ShopStamford photographs
kindly provided by Shutterbox
Photography

www.artpopup.co.uk

Show your support

MindSpace has been supported by the National Lottery and received donations from groups and individuals, and through local fundraising efforts, however

ongoing funding is vital for the work to continue and for additional services to be offered. If you would like to donate please head to our website for details. We would be very grateful.

MindSpace, 39 Broad Street,
Stamford PE9 1PX
01780 437330

Find MindSpace on Facebook,
Twitter, Instagram, YouTube and
LinkedIn
www.MindSpaceStamford.com

Stamford Connections is a community engagement programme produced by Art Pop-Up in partnership with MindSpace Stamford to discover how Stamford citizens connect.

Connection is important for positive mental health and wellbeing. It promotes a cohesive, inclusive community. By understanding where connections are made locally, we can recognise the important community assets that facilitate them and work together with

the community to make them more widespread, increasing participation and advocacy. This in turn makes the connectors more sustainable and resilient, building a stronger, more supportive community for everyone.

The project is supported by an investment from Lincolnshire's Mental Health Promotion Fund (Lincolnshire Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Lincolnshire County Council).



Art Pop-Up