



Understanding Facilitated Participation and Cultural Values

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‘Rational Recreation’ to ‘Wellbeing’

- Since the mid 19th century participation in certain cultural activities has been understood to provide benefit to the public at large.
- There are a number of value dimensions implicit in this discourse:
 - Some cultural forms or modes of cultural delivery are ‘better’ than others
 - Participation in such cultural forms/ modes of delivery is understood as ‘good for’ individuals
 - Some individuals are understood to be more amenable to benefit from the facilitation of their participation in these certain cultural forms and modes

Politics of Participation

- There is a politics to the construction of facilitated participation- what is counted and what is of 'positive value'
- It is on the basis of the facilitation of the *active agency* of the participants in cultural programs, that those participants are deemed to draw benefits which have resonance beyond the cultural sphere
- But what is the agency of participants in cultural schemes in contrast to schemes or services in which a broader valuing of everyday occupation is routinely enabled

Everyday Participation and Facilitated Participation

- Our aim in the ethnographic and qualitative work in Gateshead is to consider:
 - What is the nature of the participation that is facilitated and how does this complement or sit outside of care experienced young peoples' 'everyday participation'?
 - What are the cultural and social values at play in facilitators choices around what is deemed to be of 'positive value'?
 - How are the identities of these care experienced young people facilitated through different *acts* of participating and how do they value these different participation domains- 'facilitated' and 'everyday'?
- What can we learn about the relationality of cultural value and social stratification

Understanding Young Peoples Everyday Participation – why so ‘dangerous’?

‘Freud regarded **play** as the means by which the child accomplishes his first great cultural and psychological achievements; through play he expresses himself’ (Bettelheim 1987, p. 41).



Dartmoor



Youth Outreach on the Moor



But I would say the raves are definitely a big part of living around here, not everyone goes to them but a lot of people do. But I do think that although it's good for the community there are some people that I've seen who have kind of just got lost in it [...] And I don't mean in the terms of they sort of took a load of drugs and never came back, I mean as in like they're now selling loads of drugs and they're just really far too into it all and every time I've seen them they've just been completely off it, they don't have a job, they don't have a flat, they owe loads of money to really heavy drug dealers, the sort of people you don't want to piss off. And I think--, that's what I mean, there is kind of a darker side to it at times. But it's definitely an excitement and I think that for the majority of the time, generally the kind of smaller ones are the good ones 'cause everyone knows each other and everyone has a good time and everyone's just relaxed really. And yeah, **it's probably the staple of our culture around here.**

Adam, 19 Dartmoor

But I'd say, yeah, from about 14 I think things changed a little bit. Yeah, I started smoking, started smoking cannabis a bit when I was a bit younger, which was all right, it was kind of boring. But like I said, me and my friends did start doing that a bit, well quite a lot [...] But it was when I went to Totnes when I was 15 that me and my friends had been smoking cannabis here and there, but that was the first time I tried anything harder than that. And it was actually pretty amazing the first time

Adam, 19, Dartmoor

‘Cause we were trying to get hold of some LSD and we couldn’t ‘cause no one had it for some reason, loads of people did before that. But we ended up taking something called 2CE, you might have heard of 2CB and 2CI, which are of the same family of chemicals and they’re pretty strong. But this 2CE I found out was even stronger and we had two hits of it, not one, and it’s even stronger if you sniff it, which we did, it was like a little capsule. And that was pretty--, basically there aren’t really words to describe what that was like, pretty amazing for the first bit of it, certainly it taught me a hell of a lot about myself and about the world and I had the archetypal moment when a lot of these people realise--, I sat down looking at this valley and it suddenly just clicked and I realised that I was just as much a part of that valley as that valley is a part of me sort of thing, and just basically realised that everything is all sort of one, which is really cheesy to a lot of people. But you know, it was true and it was really refreshing. [...] It was beyond the realms of any normal thing you could ever--, it’s like your craziest dreams come to life but more. It sounds quite--, it was pretty full on and I was worried at points that I wasn’t going to come back [...] and I remember sort of crawling up these hay bales and seeing all the bits of hay all intertwined with each other and following little bits of patterns, sort of running up and down the walls and all that sort of thing. But at times it was really full on and quite sort of primal.

Cultural Participation on the Moor – MED Theatre



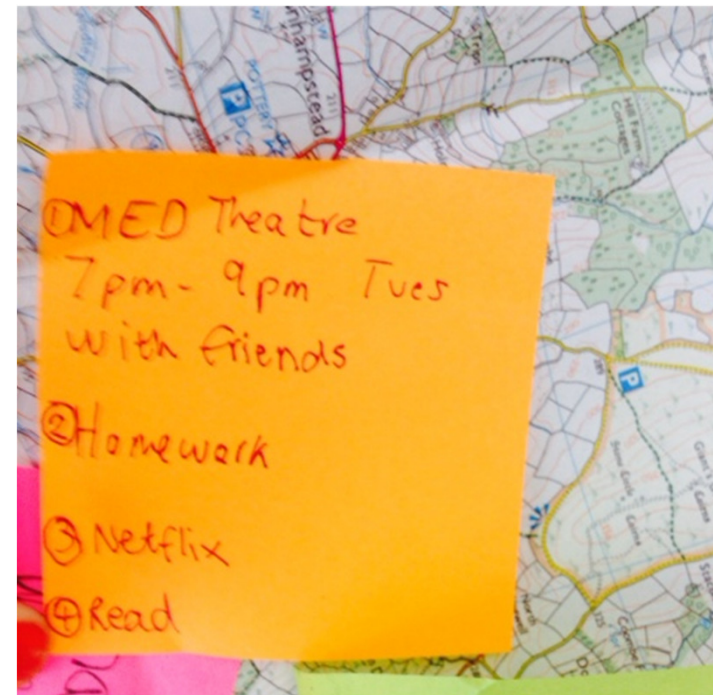
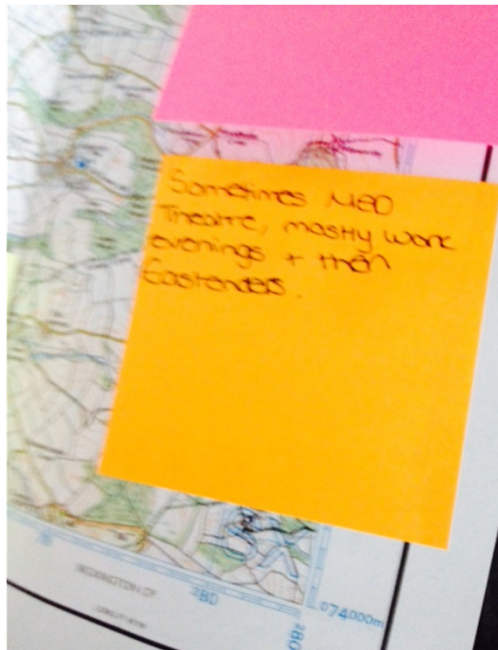
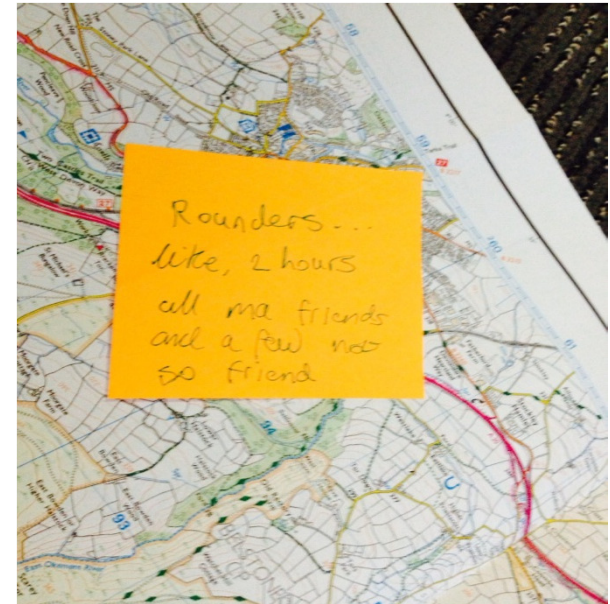
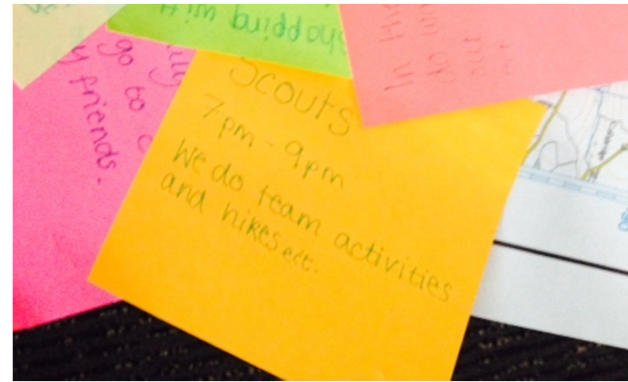
MED Community Theatre performing 'Brown Hare', a site-specific dance-drama piece, on the high moor (image credit: MED Community Theatre)

1. What other things have they thought of doing?
2. Parental involvement?
3. How do they hierarchise activities and value them ?
4. Where *exactly* is the value?
5. How do they manage their out of school time?
6. 6. Do you want to take community theatre somewhere in future?
7. How does it make you see yourself, the world, your future, your past, your present, your place, sense of belonging or (not)? And so on...

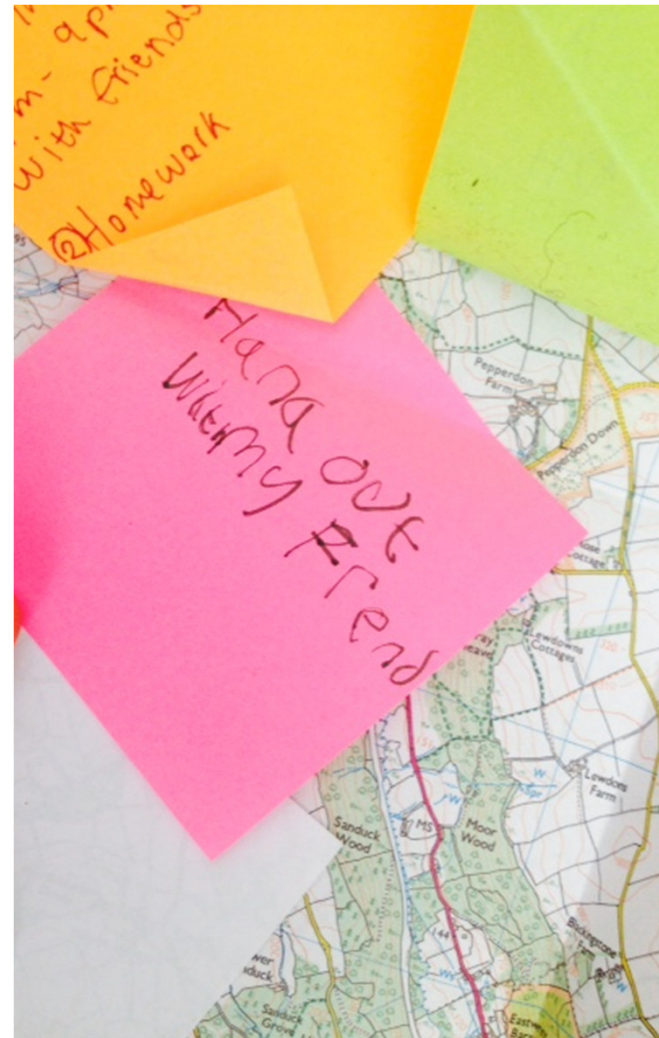
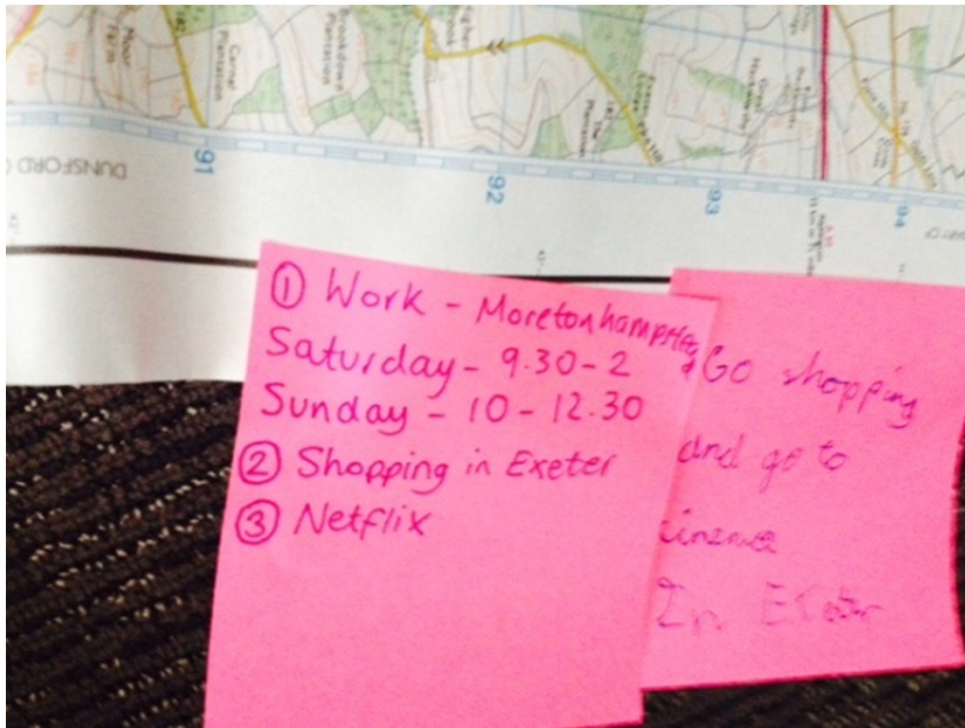
Everyday Participation on the Moor – MED Theatre



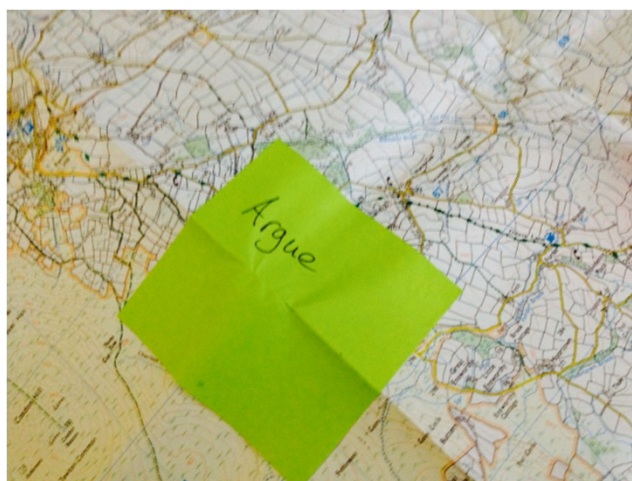
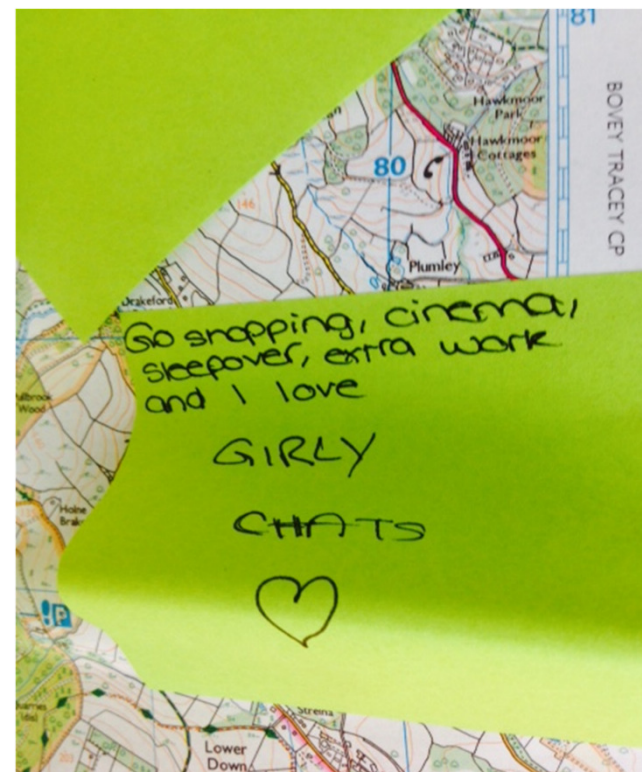
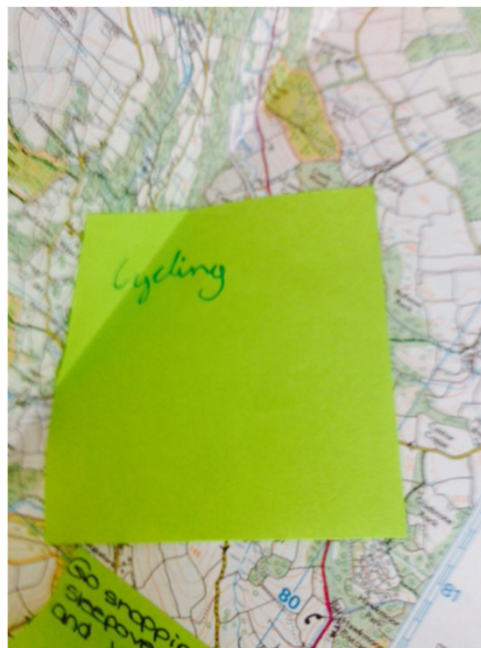
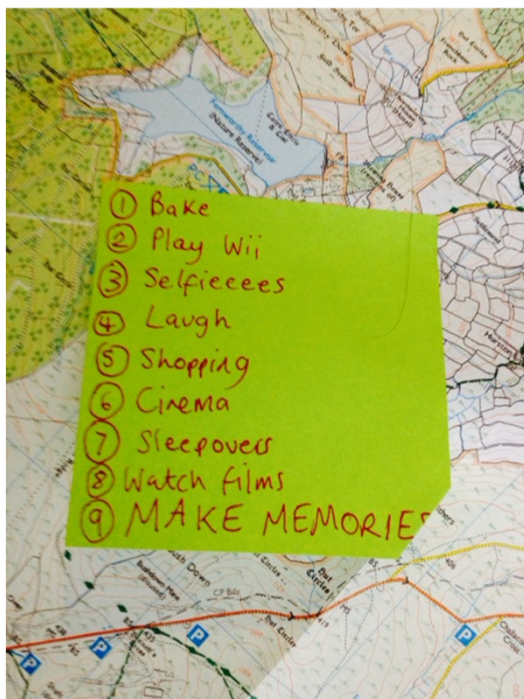
After School



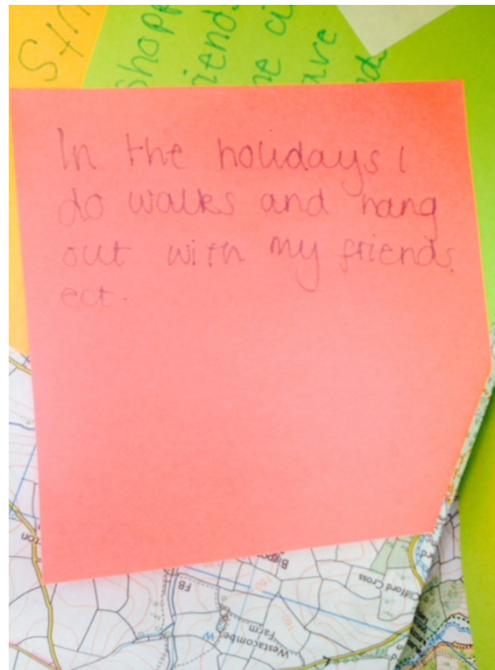
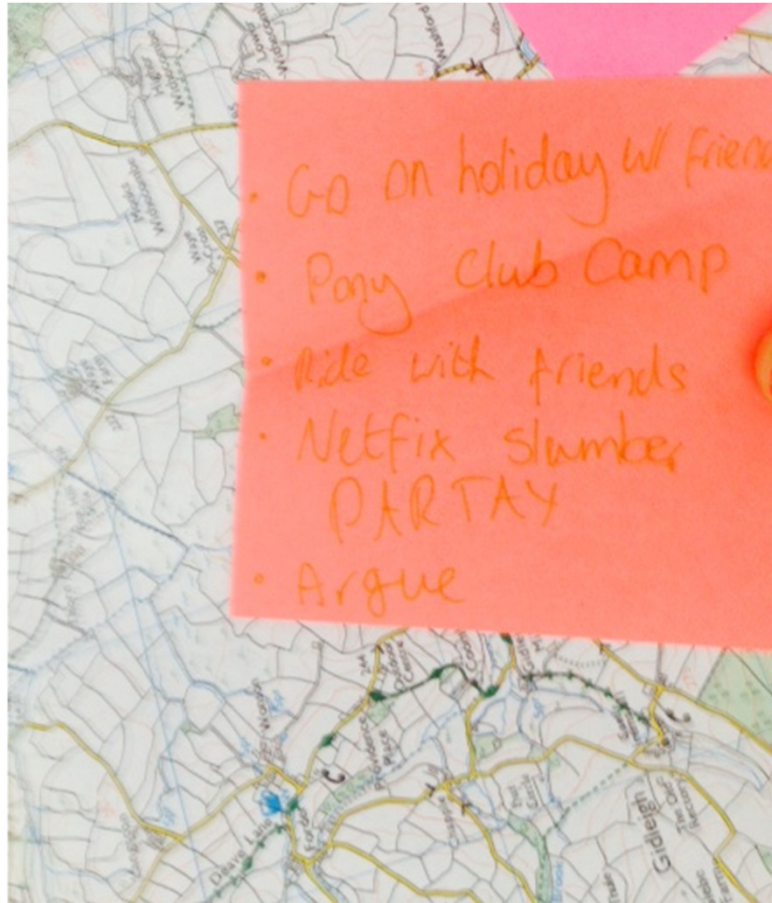
On the weekend



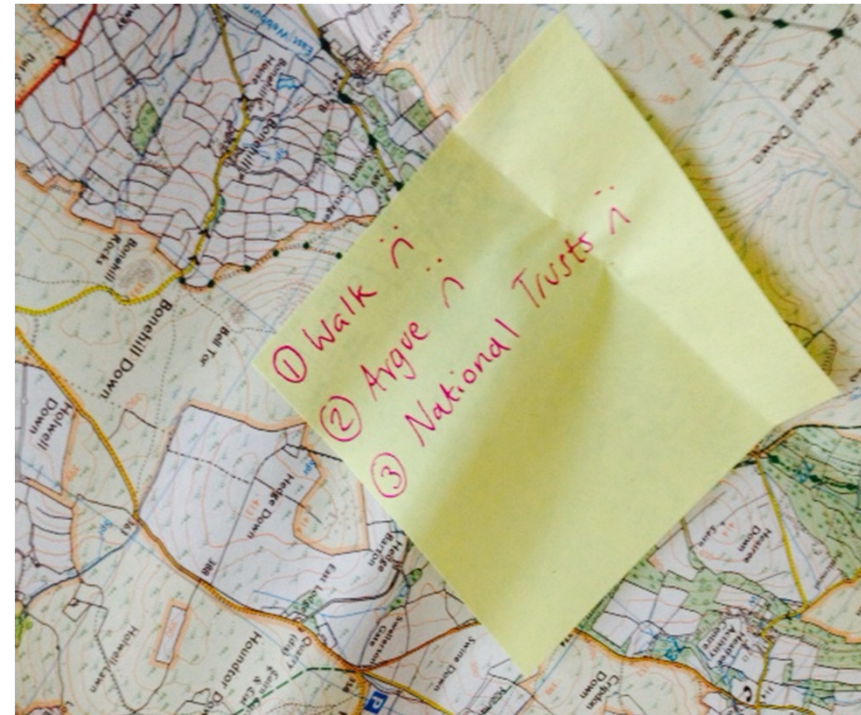
Participation with friends



School Holidays



Participation with parents



A photograph of a map of Dartmoor spread out on a wooden table. Numerous colorful sticky notes (orange, pink, green, yellow) are pinned to the map, mostly concentrated on the right side. Overlaid on the map are three white text boxes containing research questions. The map shows geographical features like Dartmoor Forest and various paths. A person's leg and a blue sneaker are visible at the bottom of the frame.

1. How is young peoples participation being facilitated and who are the facilitators?

2. How do young people value their different fields of participation?

3. What can arts and cultural organisations/venues learn from young peoples everyday participation? And how can they help support the everyday participation of young people?