

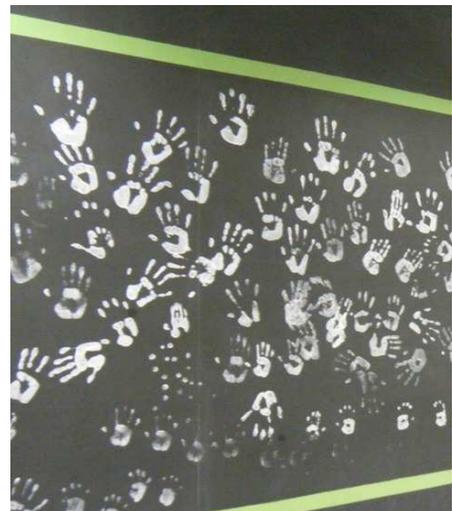
## D-shop Artist commission February 2011

A creative collaboration celebrating aspirations and ambitions of Dewsbury.



A team of five artists, all of whom have worked on the D-shop project during the past 12 months, were commissioned by Loca to celebrate its achievements and invite the public to reflect on what they take away from the shop. The d-shop has been a unique place in the centre of Dewsbury. A place where people have shared stories, reflected on their lives, and felt connected to their community.

A place of interaction, conversation and inspiration, that has welcomed over 11,000 visitors over the past year.



During 12 months of unique and innovative creative engagement, the d-shop has had an amazing impact on visitors, artists, staff and all who have been involved. The team of Artists first began their involvement with the shop during Encounters' residency which launched the shop as a place where people were able to see themselves differently, feel valued and meet new people. Part of this first phase was an Artist mentoring scheme led by Ruth Ben-Tovim which allowed artists working with Encounters to explore their own professional development in the context of socially engaged practices.

In the last month of the shop we invited people to reflect on how they will take the spirit of the shop with them, to move forward and build on what has been started.



We invited people to make a gift for a stranger to share their words of wisdom with someone else in Dewsbury. The 500 gifts made by visitors to the shop were passed on to others as part of the final celebration.



'Ripples of Change' set people the challenge of connecting to their community, asking them to notice their surroundings, take time to have a conversation or do something kind for someone else. Responses to the tasks were collected and displayed in the shop and everyone completing three challenges won a prize!



People planted seeds and took them home to nurture, thinking about the goals they wish to achieve.



Some brought their seedlings back to show us how well they were doing!

The final celebration of the shop took place on Spirit Night, an evening of street performance, lanterns and fireworks in Dewsbury town centre organised by Kirklees Council. The shop was transformed into an installation telling the story of the last 12 months. Visitors were invited to take one last journey around the space, to be inspired by other people's goals for the future, catch a glimpse of other people's stories and leave their own mark by making a handprint on the wall. As they left the shop for the last time they were given a wisdom gift made by someone else in Dewsbury.



The d-shop sadly closed its doors as a space for public engagement on 25<sup>th</sup> February due to a withdrawal of funding from Yorkshire Forward, although it will remain a centre for training and learning activities as part of the Dewsbury Ambition and Aspiration programme. For more information see the d-shop Facebook page.

## Links

The d-shop facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/dshopdewsbury>

Encounters <http://www.encounters-arts.org.uk/shops.htm>

Loca - the cultural development agency <http://www.loca.co.uk/>

## The Artists:

Amy Hirst, Elise Rohde, Karen Stansfield, Damian Clark and Waheeda Kothdiwala.

Amy Hirst [www.sensationprojects.net](http://www.sensationprojects.net)

Elise Rohde <http://www.threadneedletheatre.co.uk/>

Kaboodle design <http://kaboodledesign.co.uk/index.shtml>

Damian Clark <http://damianclark.co.uk/index.shtml>