

NEW PUBLIC ARTWORK CONSULTATION FEEDBACK



BLETCHLEYPARK

CONSULTATION APPROACH

Our approach for this community consultation included three phases of delivery:

1. **OUTREACH:** Extensive connections across the community to ensure a broad range of people who live, work, study and play in Bletchley & Fenny Stratford felt engaged and centred in the process.
2. **ENIGMA DAY:** An in person gathering with cultural practitioners and the community to develop ideas around the brief. This was followed by a further online feedback session.
3. **REPORT & RECOMMENDATIONS:** A summary of the outcomes of all the sessions with the local community to support the creation of an artists brief, and to act as a resource for the selected artist.

OUTREACH & RECRUITMENT

We undertook extensive outreach to invite people to nominate 'Community Codebreakers', members of the community who are making a difference in Bletchley. This included:

- Working with a young designer to create graphics, imagery and assets to build an exciting visual identity for the promotion of the consultation.
- 1200 flyers delivered by Your Local Flyer (Milton Keynes) to all residential addresses on Duncombe Street, Water Eaton Road, Pinewood Drive, Eaton Avenue and Lakes Estate - Grassmere Way and in West Bletchley to Whaddon Way and Whalley Drive.
- 400 flyers + 110 posters distributed to shops and key locations (including the library, local shops, leisure centre and cafes) along Queensway and central Bletchley, including flyer hand out at the Christmas lights event.
- 500 flyers + 25 posters distributed to community centres, schools and key locations locally by Louise Izod from the Council Culture Team.
- A large banner installed on the bandstand in Bletchley high street.
- Posts on social media via the Milton Keynes Council's Culture Twitter and Facebook.
- An online information session outlining the role and responding to questions.
- Direct approach to over 80 individuals, groups and voluntary societies via email, phone or Facebook posts.

COMMUNITY CODEBREAKERS & ENIGMA DAY

Due to the success of the nominations call-out we engaged 15 paid (UK living wage) Community Codebreakers.

Through an online session we invited the Community Codebreakers to input into the shape of the day and asked them to invite a minimum of one additional person from the wider community to diversify and increase the range of voices and experiences in the room.

The four hour session delivered at Bletchley Library on Monday 16th January established the background context for the commission and gave an insight into the commissioning process, it provided best practice case studies and facilitated a discussion around Themes and Aspirations.

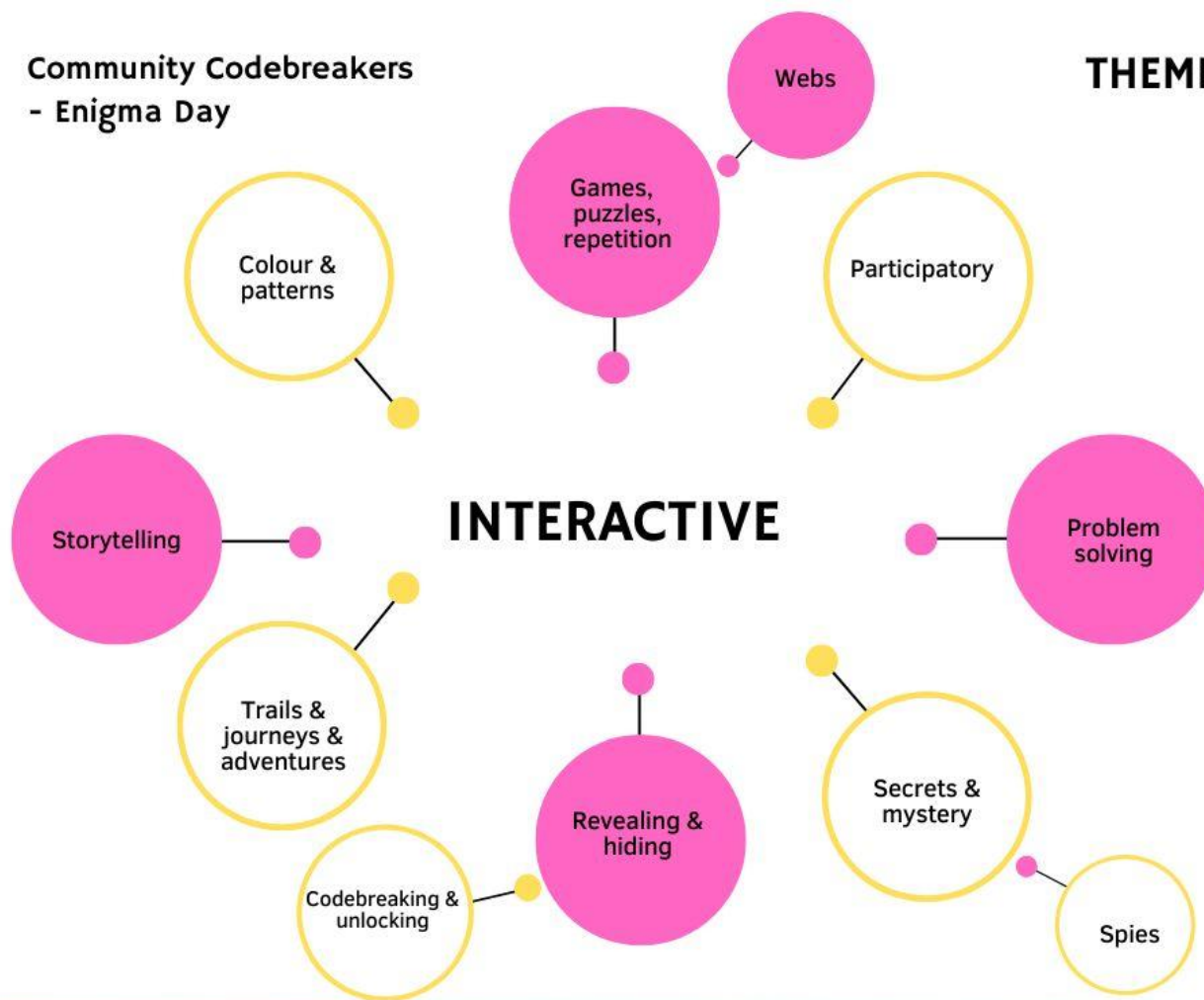
Speakers: Beki Bateson, Jon Davis, Helen Galliano (the consultants who are producers/curators/artists), Tony Guillan (Digital Curator specialising in visual and performing arts, film and new media) and Cara Pickering (Visual Arts Curator specialising in place-based participatory practice and Young People), Fiona Boundy and Louise Izod (Milton Keynes Culture Team)

Aims of the day:

- Connect with individuals across Bletchley
- Introduce plans for the commissioning of a new public artwork to be created as part of the Bletchley and Fenny Stratford Towns Deal
- Insight into public art commissioning
- Collectively exploring imaginative ideas and responses for a contemporary and future facing artwork honouring Alan Turing and Bletchley Park. These ideas will inform an 'Artistic Brief' to be shared publicly.
- Create a resource for commissioned artist

THEMES

**Community Codebreakers
- Enigma Day**



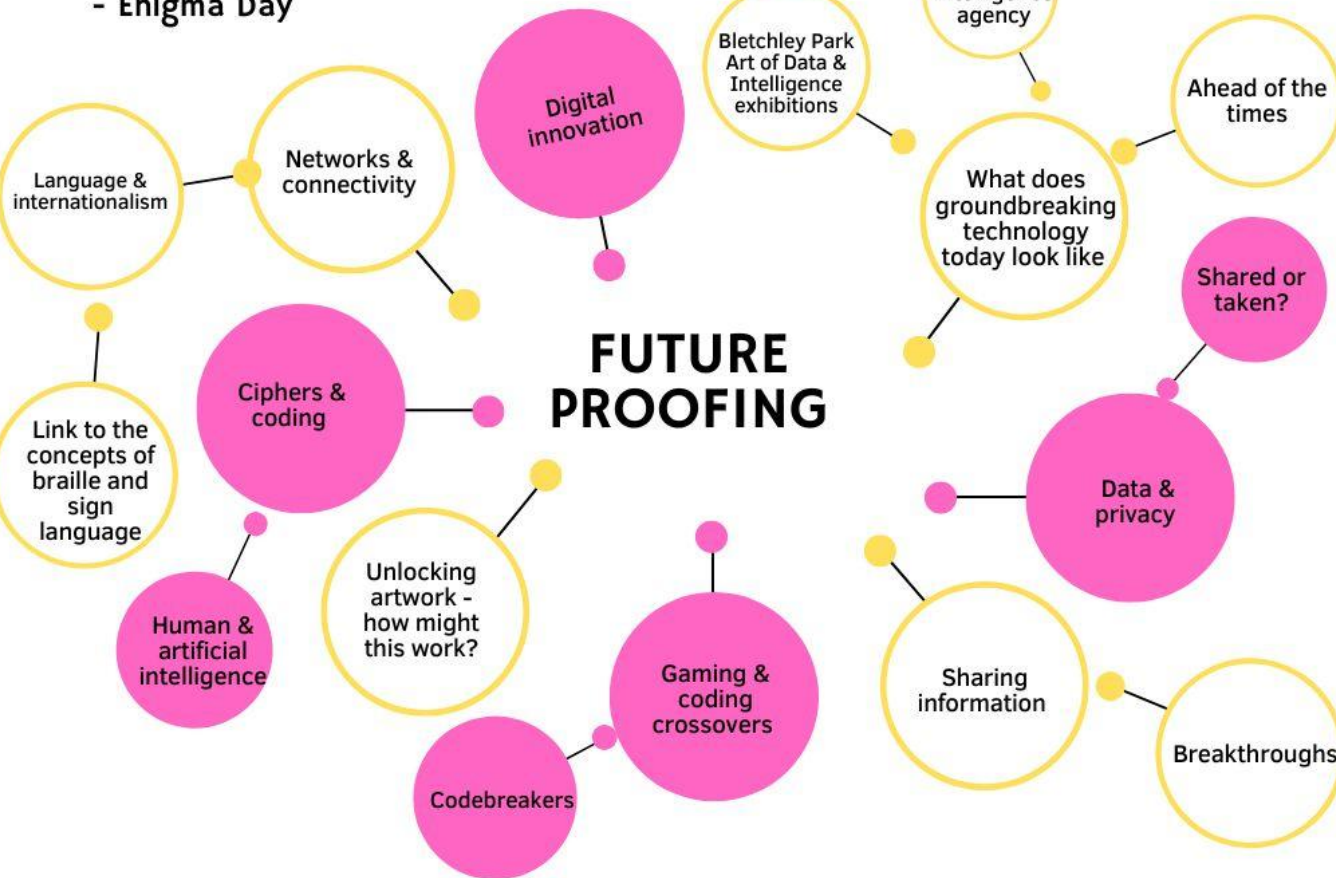
The consultation showed that the group was keen to see an artwork that was interactive and mirrored, in some form, the codebreaking that happened at Bletchley Park during the war. There was a strong emphasis on puzzles, games, patterns, problem-solving, participation and the idea of 'unlocking' an artwork.

Community Codebreakers - Enigma Day

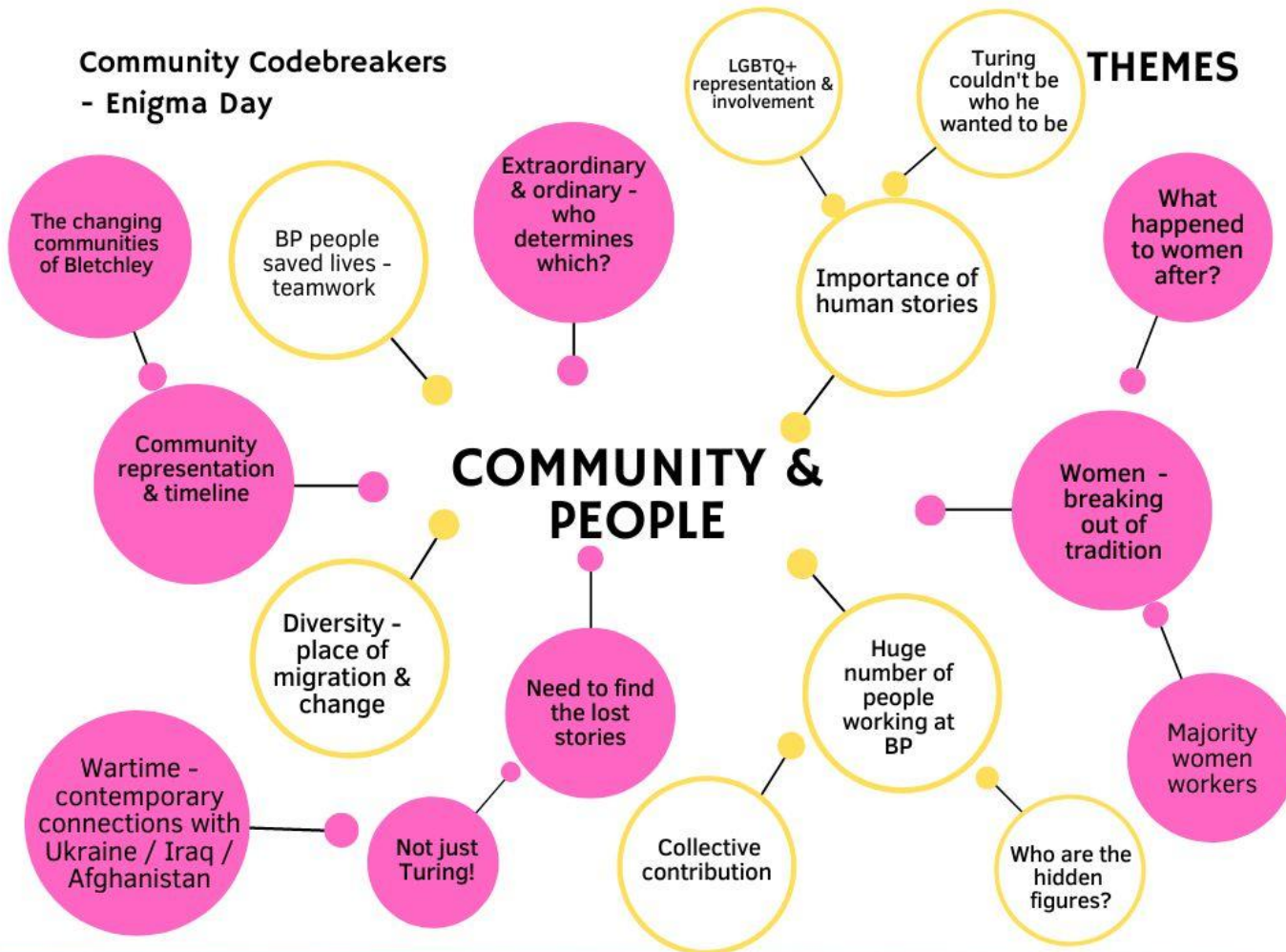
THEMES

FUTURE PROOFING

The theme of 'future proofing' was widely used during the consultation, with a focus on a digital artwork that considers the groundbreaking technology used at Bletchley Park and what that kind of technology might look like today and in the future. Comparisons were also made with online gaming and the importance of language and innovation. There was also discussion regarding a changing, adaptable or modular artwork which might be 'updated' overtime.

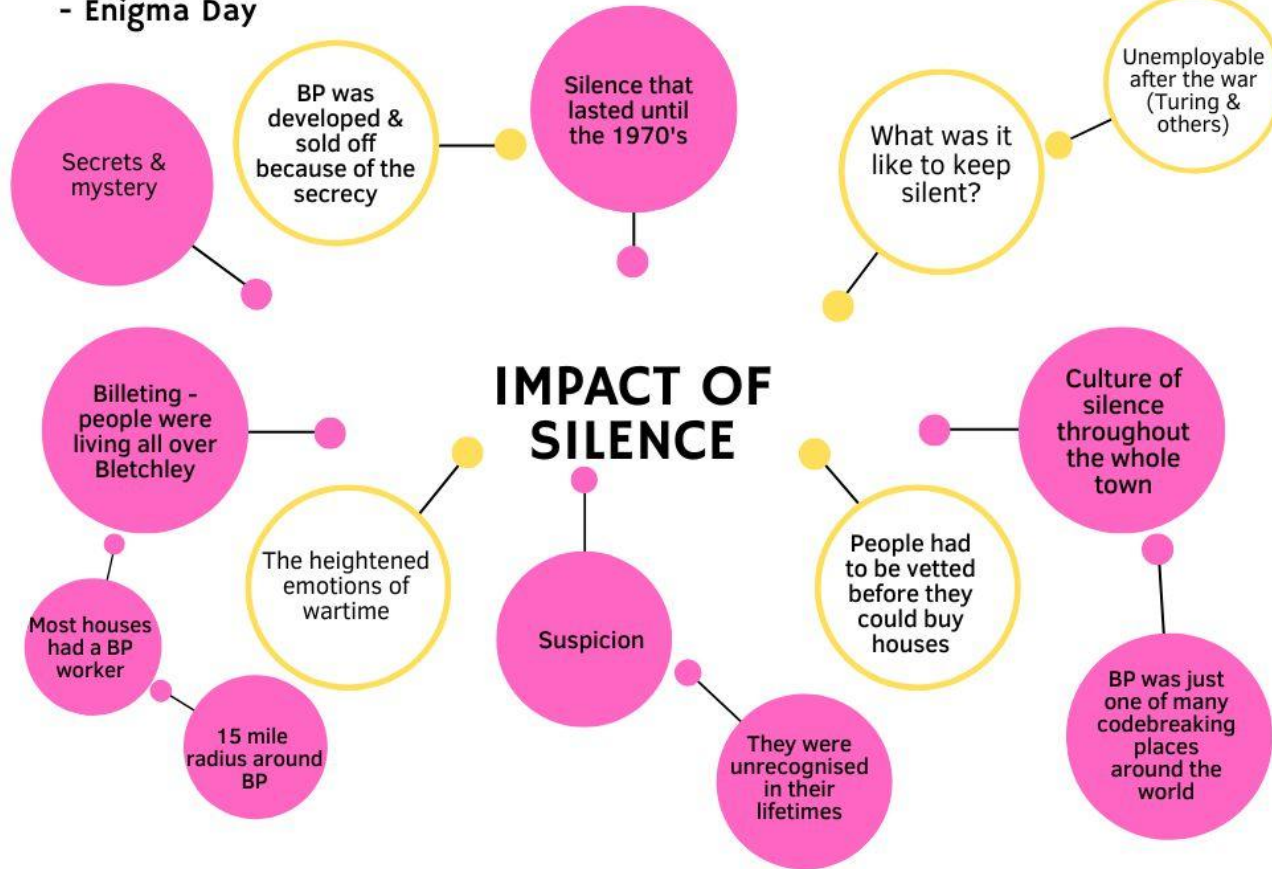


Community Codebreakers - Enigma Day



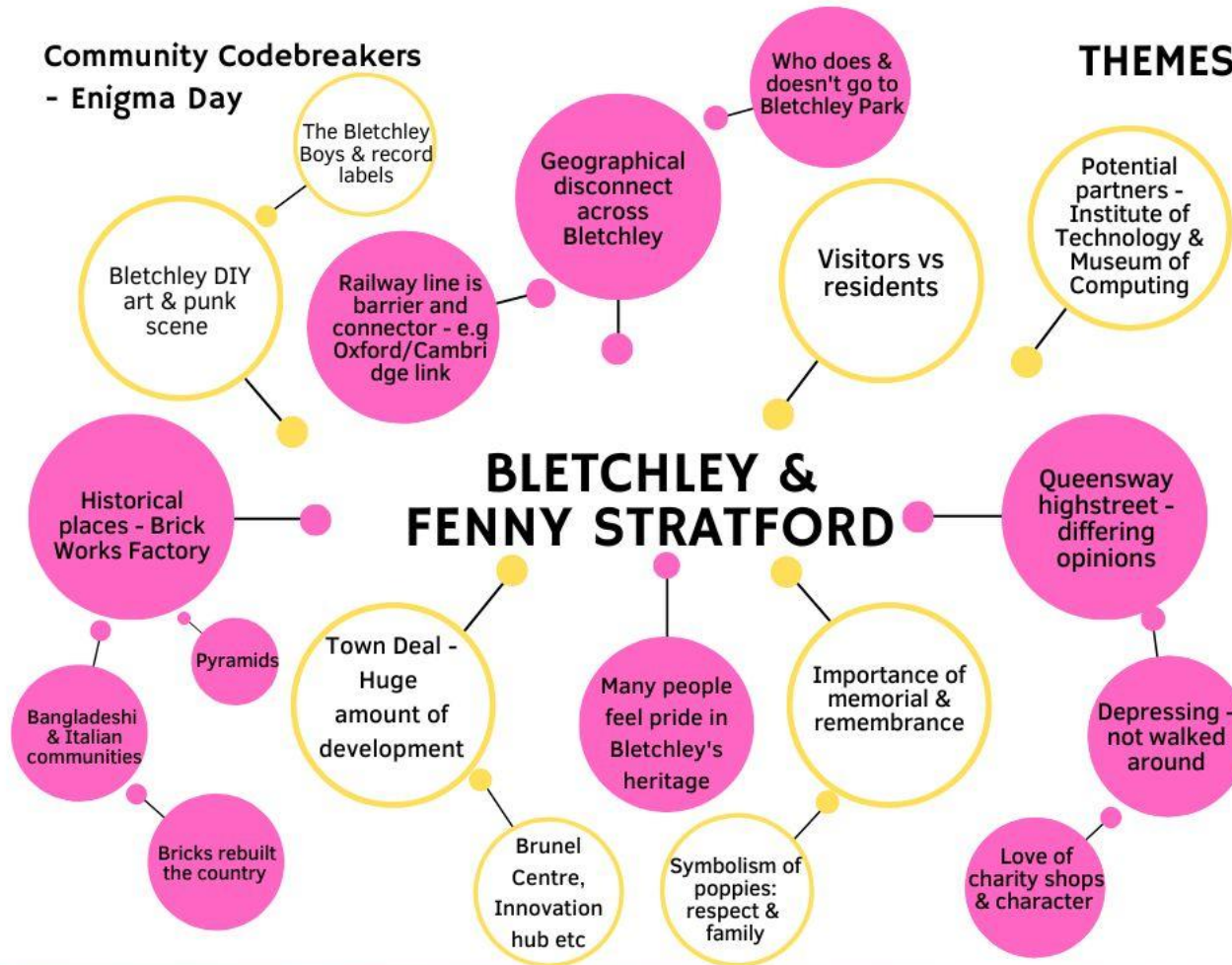
A focus on human stories was a key theme that came out of the consultation. Particular emphasis was made on the collective contribution & teamwork made by all the workers at BP - and the wider community in the area. People felt it was important to recognise & represent the diversity & changing communities of Bletchley over the years, and to try to discover the people & stories that are less known.

Community Codebreakers - Enigma Day



All workers at Bletchley Park had to sign the Official Secrets Act and keep their vow of silence, until the story of what was achieved began to emerge in the 1970's. The group were interested on what the impact of this silence was like for people - and Bletchley - during the war and in the many years after. Particular focus was made on the fact that 9000 workers were living in civilian homes all around BP.

Community Codebreakers - Enigma Day



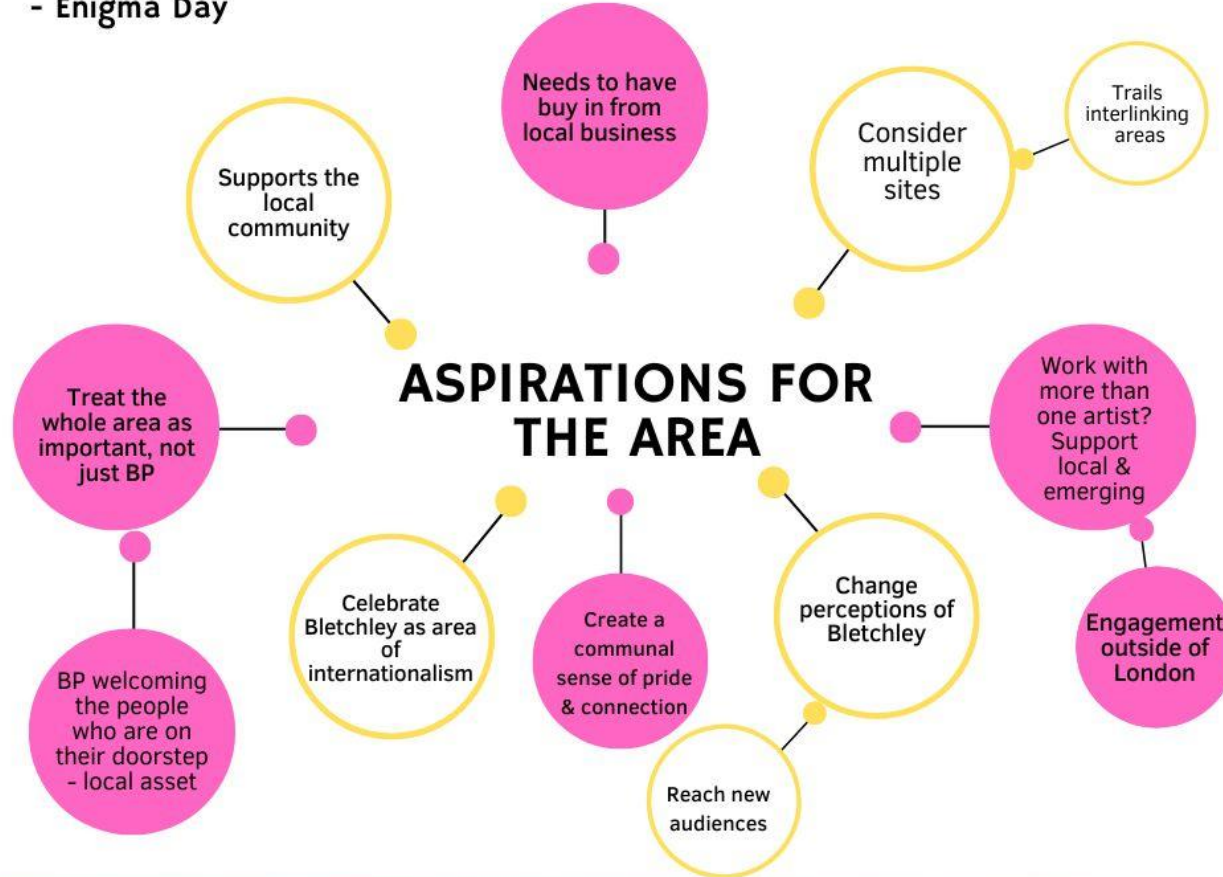
THEMES

The group explored specific themes related to their local areas - repeated feedback was made about the large amount of development and change happening - a source of both excitement and concern - as well as the importance of recognising the impact of historical local places other than BP - such as The Brick Factory. The group had different opinions on the railway line as something that connects or disconnects. There was real interest in the creation of an artwork which would be located in multiple sites, creating pathways/trails across the public realm. This idea tied into the emphasis on puzzles and games.

ASPIRATIONS

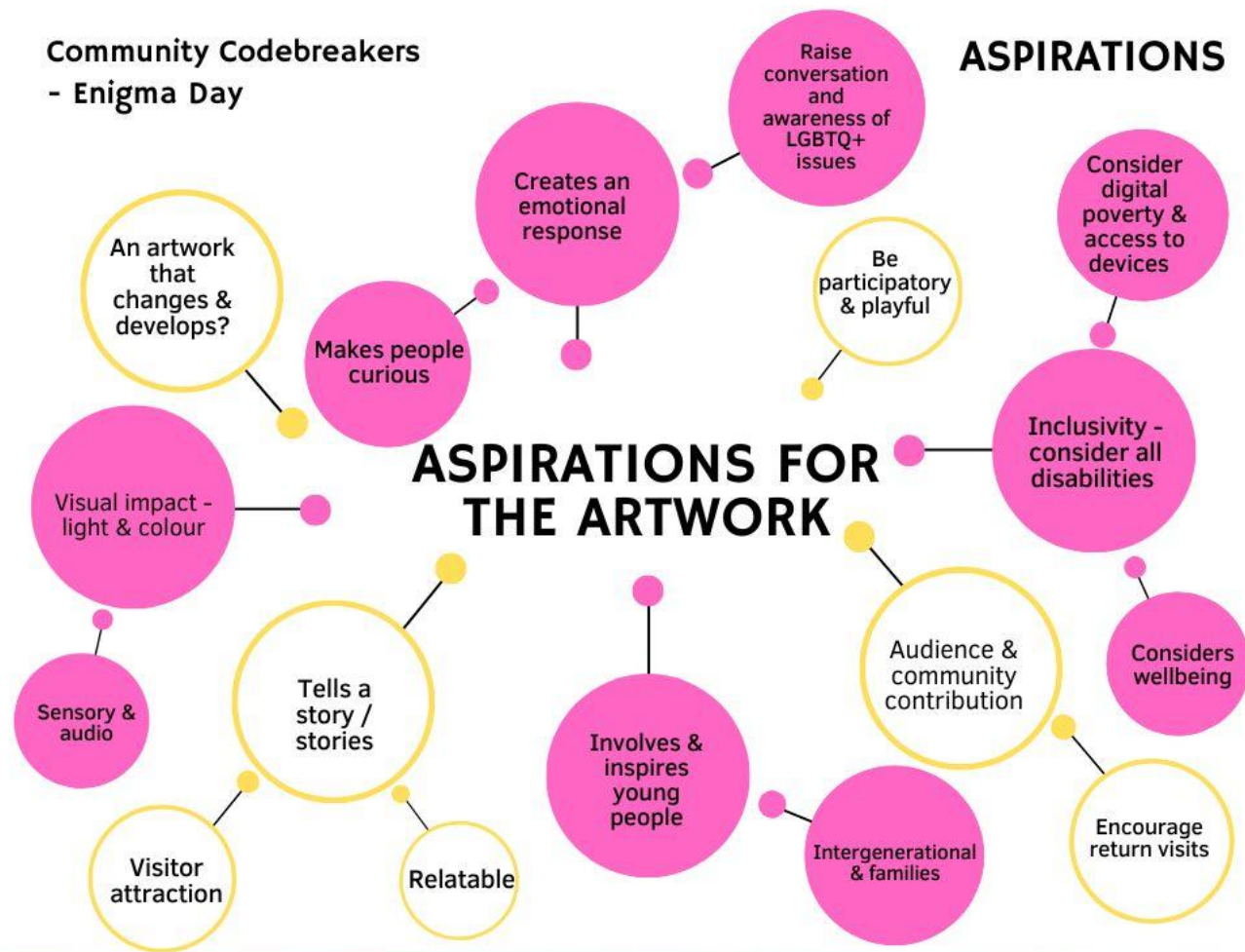
Community Codebreakers
- Enigma Day

ASPIRATIONS



We discussed and shared opinions on people's aspirations on what the artwork could do for the area - with repeat ideas including an artwork that uses multiple sites to link and connect, that celebrates the area as a place of diversity and internationalism, that recognises the importance of heritage while looking to the future and that supports a sense of pride, connection and community.

Community Codebreakers
- Enigma Day



ASPIRATIONS

Further aspirations included a consideration of what impact it could have on the local community and visitors. Focus points included an artwork that inspired curiosity and an emotional response - looking at audience & community contribution. The group were keen to see an artwork that involves and inspires young people and appeals to older generations and families.

HIGHLIGHTED CASE STUDIES

We shared several examples of public artworks with the group to help them visualise what might be possible - from ambitious one day wonders that pop up and surprise audiences, to temporary and permanent installations and digital artworks that told stories from history and of communities. Some of them resonated more with the group than others - a few highlights are outlined below.

PLUNGE

MICHAEL PINSKY



The group were struck by the simple visual language of the artwork and its ability to communicate a complex message. They liked the way it was installed across three different sites, inviting audiences to discover its meaning as they noticed the repetition of the neon rings and their different relationships/heights to the three monuments.

PEOPLE WE LOVE

KIT MONKMAN



The physical form of this artwork and its emotional weight was highlighted by the group. The video screens were felt to be a suitable way of portraying human stories which could be updated on a regular basis. The emotive nature of the artwork promoted discussions around the power of art to move us as well as informing us about historical contexts.

SONIC BLOOM

YURI SUZUKI



The group enjoyed the colour and playful design of the installation. They liked the way it related directly to the themes of the potential commission whilst being abstract and fun. It was a good example of an artwork which invited audiences to interact and play, creating new connections.

NESPOON

STREET ARTE EN BAIE



The group commented on the simple but effective nature of this artwork, and discussed the accessible nature of street art. It was felt that there was the opportunity to use the buildings as canvases in Bletchley, potentially across the public realm. In addition digital interactivity could extend the life of the mural.

FINDINGS

ARTWORK RECOMMENDATIONS

FORM

Be interactive, inviting audiences to engage, play and discover
Should connect with the senses and have an emotional resonance

LOCATION

Multi-sited, encouraging audiences to journey and discover
Create connections across East and West Bletchley (location and/or thematic)
Encourage national and international visitors, extending the duration of a visit to Bletchley Park and increasing spend in the town

DIGITAL / FUTURE

Digital activation used to extend the life and storytelling of a physical artwork creating further opportunity for play, game and future proofing

BLETCHLEY PARK & TURING

Enable multiple narratives and interpretations of history - from marathon runner and mathematician and Magnolia trees - but also include contemporary resonance, relevance and meaning

COMMUNITY

Directly engage with the Bletchley community in the creative development and delivery

FURTHER CONSIDERATIONS & OPPORTUNITIES

- The lack of connectivity between East and West Bletchley was raised on countless occasions during the consultation. There is a real desire for the artwork to serve both a visiting and local audience - enabling connections across the two distinct areas.
- Whilst there was a strong preconceived understanding of Alan Turing and Bletchley Park there was a commitment for the artwork to represent the contemporary and future focusing context of Bletchley and not to be merely 'commemorative' in nature.
- There was a real openness to artform, as well as the potential of digital interaction
- The group was excited by oblique and contemporary responses - moving away from the idea of a 'human-form' sculpture.
- Whilst further community consultation related to the project can build on the involvement of the Community Connectors and outreach undertaken we recommend further active engagement on the ground in East Bletchley.
- Suggestions have been made for a need for further ongoing work with the economic development and local businesses - there are opportunities to share the opportunity at upcoming local business events
- We suggest building a strong foundation of local partners - both educational and technological