

RSA Student Design Awards

Emily Campbell, Director of Design, RSA Projects
Experimenta Action for Age Tutors' workshop
Lisbon, Tuesday 13 July 2010

Background and origins

- **1754:** “the training of young people for the pursuit of the Industrial Arts”
- **1846:** “the encouragement of Art for practical purposes”.
“To wed mechanical skill with high art is a task worthy of the Society of Arts and directly in its path of duty”
- **1876:** prizes to students of schools of art for the best designs for: household furniture; wallpaper and hangings; damasks, chintzes etc.

Development and growth

- **1924:** First 'Competition of Industrial Designs' (textiles; furniture; book production; pottery and glass etc) 553 candidates
- **1946:** Competition re-established as the 'Industrial Art Bursaries Competition', 3 categories – Carpets; Furniture; Pressed Glass. 12 Entries; awards of £500
- **1970:** 31 briefs; 1700 entries; £11k awards
- **1980:** 28 briefs; 1900 entries; £45k awards
- **1990:** 15 briefs; 2300 entries; £160k awards
- **2000:** 28 briefs; 2300 entries; 220k awards

Summary 1924 - 2003

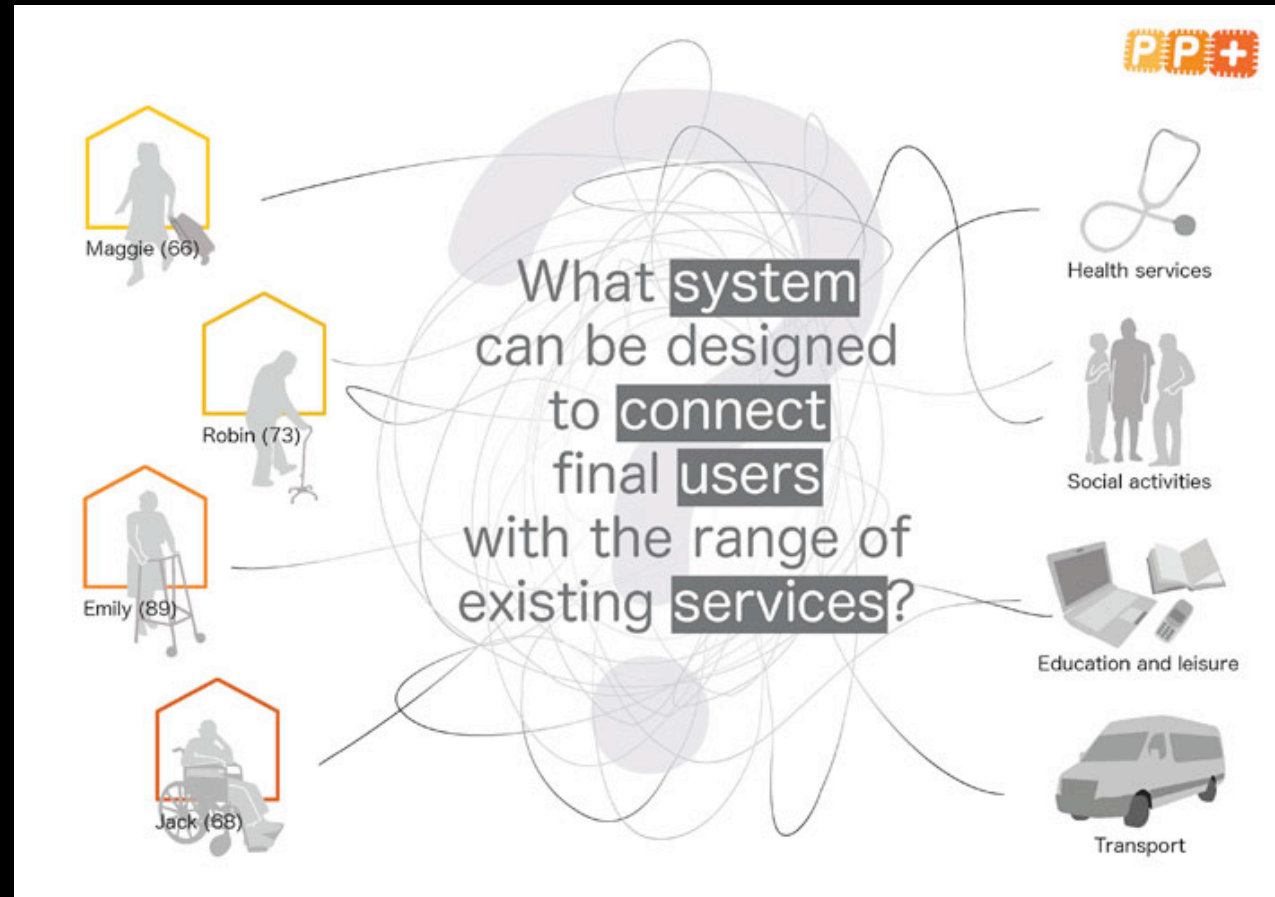
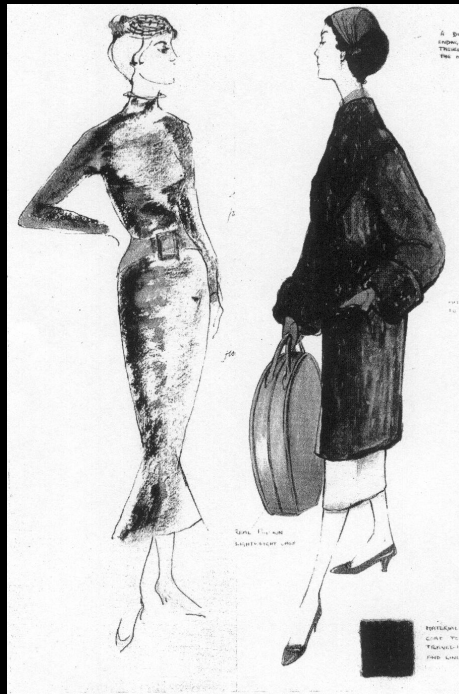
The RSA Student Design Awards:

- linked industry with education
- provided a well-respected annual framework of projects based on discipline-based teaching in universities, relevant to needs and interests of manufacturing industry
- offered pre-professional training
- showcased young design talent to manufacturers

2003: Design Directions

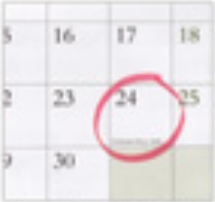
2003: launch of Design Directions to promote and encourage:

- student engagement with social, cultural and ethical issues
- using design in new ways
- a sustainable approach
- inclusive process
- cross-disciplinary team working
- research
- reflection of the RSA's Manifesto Challenges: resilient communities, zero waste, capable population, enterprise, global citizenship





Voter engagement

The Concept




1. Election Day is to become a new bank holiday. Citizens Day, a day for the people! This will not only free up a day for citizens to vote, but also give our bank holiday started country a new day to celebrate the community that would surely be welcomed by all.





citizens day




2. Amidst all the fun, the importance of voting and civic responsibility will always be stressed and an area dedicated specifically for this is available. A ballot box will also be situated here, one of many throughout the constituency. Postal voting will also be an option for those who are not attending the main celebration.

3. Each constituency would have its own celebration and this may include a theme specific to that city or town. The idea would be to encourage as many people as possible to come along, have a good time and ultimately to vote, so the main centre of the celebrations would be situated in a convenient place e.g. the village square or town hall.

Events to encourage people to come could include:

- A stage with live acts. These could include local bands to add to the regional theme.
- Games, prizes and giveaways
- A food parade
- A fireworks display
- Entertainment, clowns, magicians, ice cream vans and everything else!

4. As people vote across the country they are added to a database, which calculates the percentage of citizens who have voted in each constituency. The town or city with the highest percentage by the end of Citizens Day gets a cash reward from the government.



Reducing energy consumption



Disaster relief

Context:

What if parachutes were more than just a method of delivery?

Parachutes can deliver aid to nearly anywhere almost immediately.

What if they could provide:

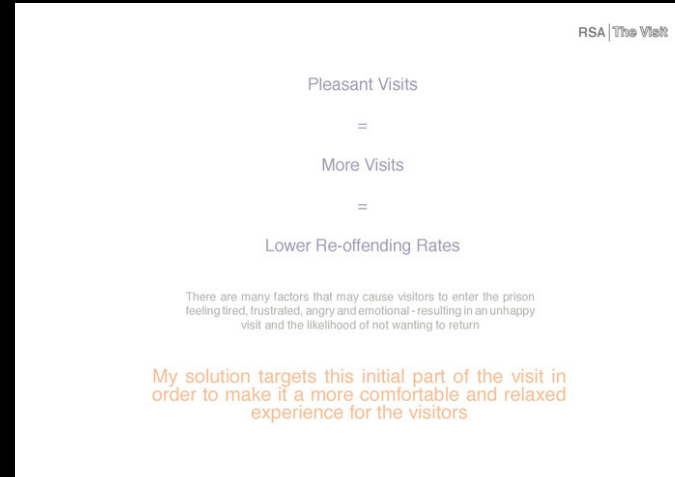
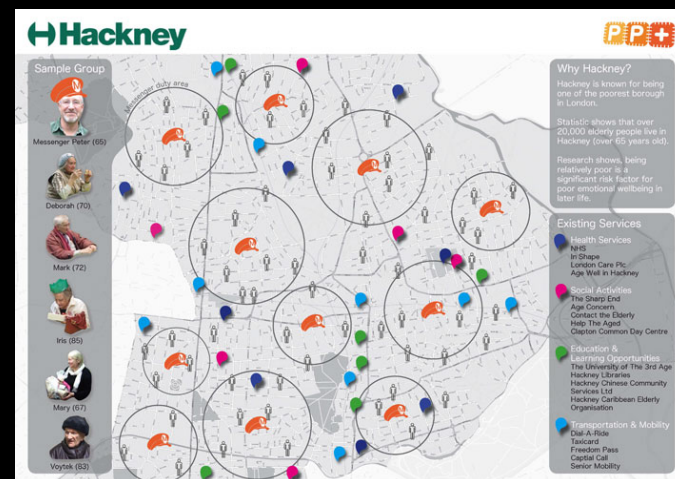
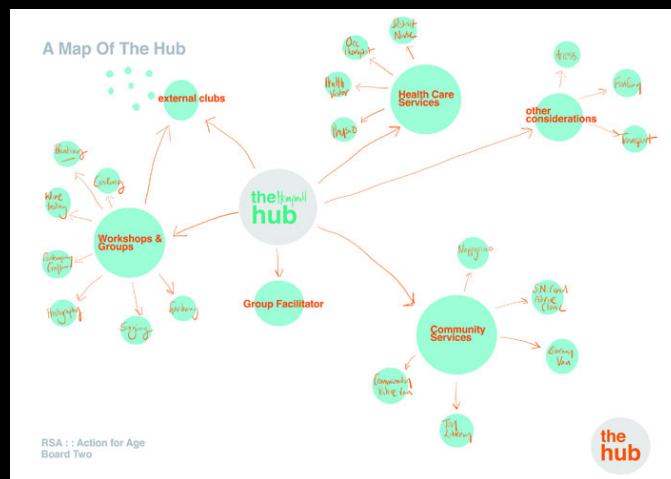
Shelter
Medical aid
Food
Water
Warmth

A place to live, for people who have potentially lost everything.

Made from materials which have a valuable secondary use.



Network maps and customer journeys

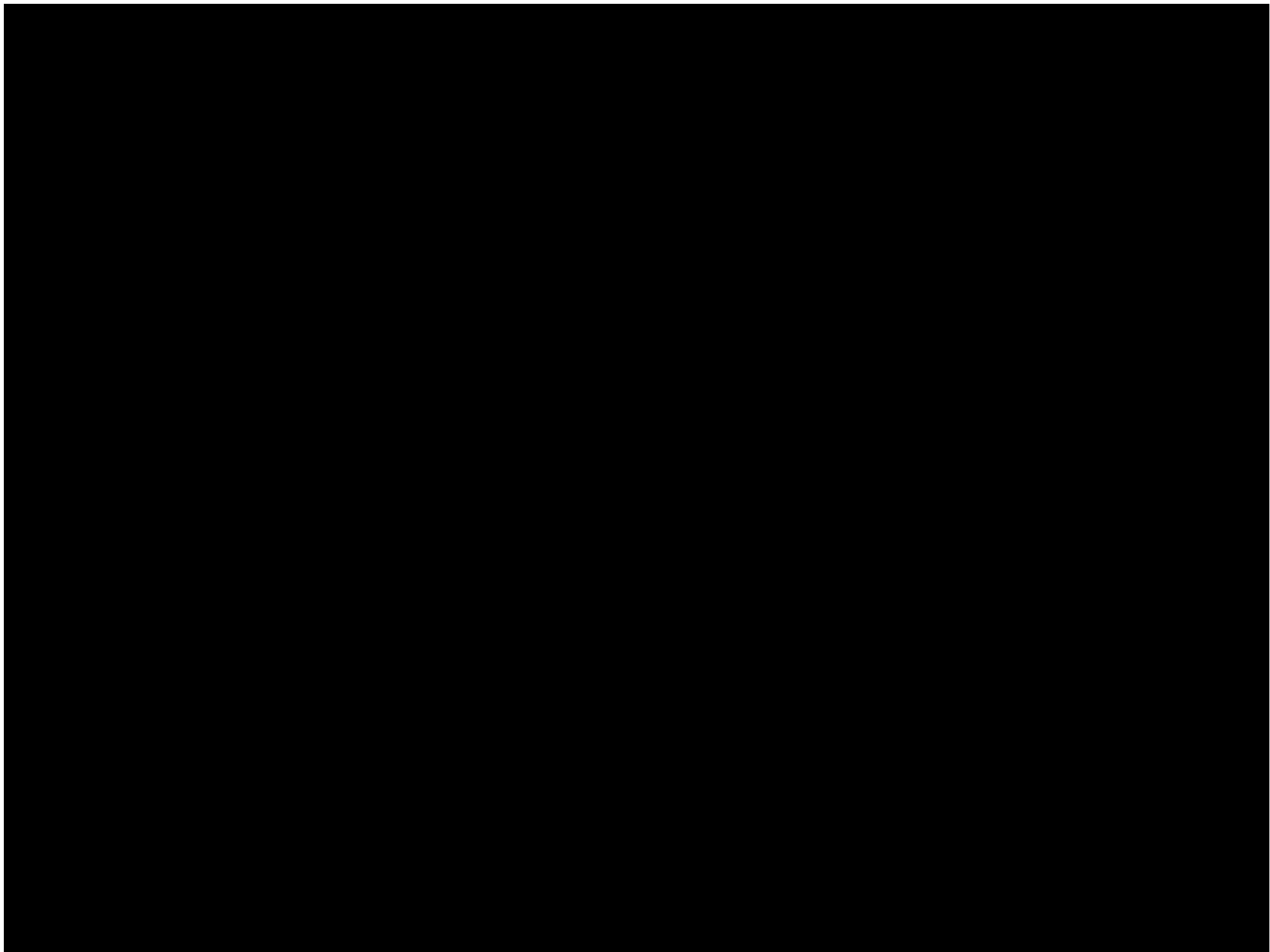


2009 The Visit

Design a service or other solution around the experience of the prison visit and the challenges of maintaining meaningful family relationships with partners and children.

Examine the value of a prison visit remembering that a bad visit can be worse than no visit at all, leaving both the visitor and the visited feeling frustrated, angry and stressed with the negative impacts transferred to the home or within the prison.

Consider the visitor 'journey' through the current prison visit system. Consider how design can support the idea that better contact between prisoners and their families reduces damaging behaviour by prisoners and rates of re-offending on release.



Challenges of the 'social' agenda

- Decline in participation:
2002: 20 briefs; 2200 entries; c200k awards
2003: 15 briefs; 1600 entries; 100k awards
2010: 13 briefs; 619 entries; 58k awards
- Non-discipline specific briefs deter participation
- From 100+ participating institutions to 62
- Less relevant to commercial sponsors
- Decline in design quality/change in design students?

Advantages of the 'social' agenda

- Clear and articulate support from key institutions for the unique challenges set by the RSA for design students; definitive 'brand'
- Clear alignment with RSA mission and multidisciplinary approach
- Pathfinding for design in a post-industrial society
- Support from new areas of government – Home Office, Work & Pensions, etc. – charities, trusts & foundations, corporations with strong CSR/research

The future of the Awards

- Re-emphasise design 'craft' and ingenuity as judging criteria, alongside research and communication
- Simplify language of briefs; make it clear what is to be designed
- Take lead in debate around Higher Education in design
- Distinguish between briefs for undergraduate and postgraduate designers

2010 Action for Age 2

Mind the Gap

Using social networks as a route to positive intergenerational relationships

- Fundação Calouste Gulbenkian focus on intergenerational relationships
- RSA focus on social network analysis: Connected Communities
- Experimenta focus on social design

Brief

Identify a context, your local neighbourhood for instance, and design something that encourages intergenerational connections.

Scope

The solution could be a service or an activity; an environment or an event; a club or association; a shop or facility; a role or enterprise. It could be a product as long as it is supported by a service or system that connects generations. It could be something entirely different from the above.

Research

- the experiences and needs of older and younger people
- what social capital means and how it is created
- social networks and how they are formed and fostered

Intergenerational practice

“Intergenerational practice is a way of thinking about policy and community development which is **participative, inclusive, assets-based, coherent, sustainable**”.

“It is an opportunity rather than a crisis”.

Julie Melville, Beth Johnson Foundation, 2010

Social network analysis

Dr Jonathan Rowson, RSA Projects

Thank you