

HEPE – REACH Report May 2022

Background

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) is a network of people with an interest in the complex interactions between environments and human health. The network has provided a pool of critical friends from Plymouth and Cornwall who engage with the University of Exeter Centre for Environment and Human Health (the Centre), supporting community engaged research prioritisation, planning and dissemination. This model of networked engagement has also been helping to inform embedding engagement in the work of the newly founded National Institute for Health Research (NIHR) School for Public Health Environments Research Exeter (SPHERE).

REACH is a Natural Environments Research Council funded project, designed to look at issues of inclusion and decolonisation in research about health and environments. It is based in the Centre but includes advisors from across the University of Exeter as well as partners from external organisations.

As part of their contributions to SPHERE and their work with medical students, online HEPE network meetings during the Covid 19 lockdowns have frequently discussed of the role of racism and gender bias in health inequalities as well as diversity and inclusivity in health environments research. The application for what became the REACH project provided a vehicle to further develop these discussions and explore how a public engagement network can help to address biases in research that are the legacy of colonialism, misogyny and other historical injustices.

Professor Lora Fleming joined the November 2021 meeting and discussed the developing opportunities for HEPE members to contribute to the REACH project. Plans for some short videos and a one day workshop were developed at a series of 4 online and one face to face meeting between January and March 2022 (see annex 1). At the February online meeting, Professor Fleming and Dr Olivia Barnett-Naghshineh provided an overview of REACH work being undertaken with Centre staff and outlined key aims, methods and planned outputs.

All of this fed into the coproduction of a one day workshop, held on April 28th. This was the first face to face HEPE workshop since March 2020. Thirteen participants signed up for this event although three were unable to attend on the day. Including researchers and facilitators 15 people took part.

Reaching-out



The workshop was titled “Reaching out: making research about health and place more accessible and inclusive in Cornwall”. It was designed as a day of discussion and hands-on activities, exploring how people are already contributing and what can be done to support others to take part. As well as inviting existing network members the workshop was advertised on social media and local websites, although numbers were limited due to continuing Covid precautions. Contributors had out of pocket expenses reimburse and were offered a small payment in acknowledgement of their contributions.

The day began with a discussion of intersectionality and identity. This was followed by small group discussions about the communities people in the room have connected to over the past two years, since the beginning of the Covid-19 emergency. These were mapped on a chart showing local, national and international; connections (see annex 2)

Beresford Lee, CEO of Rice and Peas CIC, a local Community Interest Company focusing on antiracism and decolonisation, presented and facilitated an interactive discussion about the continuing legacy of the Atlantic slave trade and the importance of countering both explicit and unconscious racism.

The REACH Advisory board had recorded a video about decolonisation which was played over lunch, and this was followed by 3 short opinion pieces from Lora Fleming, the Principal Investigator on the REACH project, Monika Walia, an international PhD candidate at the Centre, and Emma, a community activist and occasional contributor to research projects through the HEPE group (see annex 2).

In the afternoon two researchers from the Centre joined the group. Mike Tresidder from the Radical Learning Cooperative presented and facilitated a discussion highlighting the need for people to find a historical narrative which includes them, rather than erases them.



Then people worked as individuals or small groups, using Lego and dough to model or draw what inclusive and decolonised health environments research would look like.



People then described their creations. These included:

- A tower with many windows and doors so people could move in and out easily, inside was a large map to help them navigate.

- A seesaw represented the imbalance of power, made more difficult to adjust because there was a screen across the middle hiding the riders from one another – this related to an earlier discussion about how easy it is to be unaware of people who are excluded.
- Tables were a frequently used metaphor – bringing people to the table, creating a round table where all voices are attended to.
- Vehicles too were used to represent the need to facilitate access, supporting people to contribute, but also taking research out into communities.
- Reaching out was frequently discussed – like the rays of the sun or like the tentacles of an octopus.
- There was also a rainbow person, reflecting many colours and aspects of the communities they work with.

Outputs and outcomes

Immediate results from this work include:

- 3 video shorts reflecting different visions for inclusive and decolonising health environments research (with more currently underway)
- Planning for further partnership work with Rice and Peas CIC, the Radical Learning Cooperative Lanivet Parish Council and Cornwall Pride
- 3 new HEPE network members

It has also been agreed to co-design a proposal with School for Public Health Research public engagement partners nationally to look at the different challenges to inclusion and decolonisation in public health environments, initially comparing engagement challenges and opportunities in urban and rural/costal settings.

It is our intention that this approach will be embedded in our public engagement work.

annex 1 meetings

Online meetings

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) Agenda

Online Meeting Thursday October 7th 2021 10.30-11.30

1. **Welcome and introductions**
2. **Lora Fleming:**
 - Future of the Centre
 - Blue Health/SOPHIE/Blue Communities update
 - School for Public Health Environments Research Exeter
 - **Natural Environment Research Council project supporting activities to tackle inequalities – HEPE's contributions.**
3. Jo Garrett – Expo engage citizen science project on air pollution monitoring
4. AOB

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) Agenda

Online Meeting Thursday December 2nd 2021 10.30-12.00

1. Welcome and introductions
2. **NERC Inclusion project – Project Lora introduced in October is now underway, how do we contribute? Practical planning – what/where/when?**
3. Student abstracts for feedback
 - Barriers to Youth Involvement and Engagement in Mental Health Research
 - Lessons from theory: how will we hear the seldom heard?
 - Value that patient and public involvement (PPI) can add to HIV/AIDS research
 - How well reported are children and young people's involvement in health research?
 - What lessons about the involvement of young people in research can we learn from BRIGHTLIGHT?
4. School for Public Health Research update
5. AOB

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) Agenda

Online Meeting Thursday January 13th 2022 10.30-11.30

1. Welcome and introductions
2. **How do we make the most of the opportunities from the short term NERC Inclusion project – and create a lasting difference that we can build on to enrich the next 5 years work about health environments with the School for Public Health Research (SPHR)?**
3. AOB

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) Agenda

Online Meeting Thursday February 10th 2022 10.30-11.30

1. Welcome and introductions

2. **Making Environment and health equal, diverse and inclusive: reflections from a Centre of Environment and Human Health (REACH)** Olivia Barnett-Naghshineh and Lora Fleming
Discuss work with within the Centre.
3. AOB

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) Agenda

Online Meeting Thursday March 10th 2022 10.30-12.00

1. Welcome and introductions
2. CHEC update
3. Students to share drafts posters for feedback on colour, graphics, layout, etc.
4. **Final planning for REACH April event**
5. Any other business

Face to face meetings

Health and Environment Public Engagement (HEPE) – Rural inclusion meeting Carol Miller, Jo Poland, Kath Maguire, including presentation to Lanivet Parish Council

17th February 2022 Lanivet Bodmin. 16.30-19.30

1. Review/discuss local inclusion in HEPE engagement activities to date.
2. Review proposal for work with Parish Council/school/community centre – how will this make a difference?
3. Prepare proposal presentation
4. 19.00-19.15 present to Lanivet Parish Council
5. 19.15-19.30 Feedback and next steps.

Workshops session plan: REACHing Further in Public Health Environments Research

Time: 10.-30-16.00

Date: 28/04/2022

Venue: Gyllyngvase HWIC Treliske

Aims: To explore how the aims of the REACH project can be taken forward in our future public engagement in public health and environments research and SPHR

Objectives: Participants will:

- map our current networks
- be able to identify practical issues in equality and diversity practice
- be able to describe the relevance of decolonisation in research
- envision decolonised and inclusive public health and environment research

Time	Activity (what)	Mode (how)	Facilitation/lead (who)	Resources
10.00-10.40	Meet and Greet	Informal	Kath	Tea/Coffee and Biscuits Badge maker/pens/stickers etc
10.40-11.05	Introduction: Purpose and plan for the day. Introducing intersectionality.	Presentation	Kath	PowerPoint
11.05-11.40	Individual/Network Mapping	Individual/small group work	Kath	Pens, paper, stickers, etc.

	Who do we connect with?			
11.40-12.20	Equality diversity and decolonisation in practice. An experience from Cornwall	Presentation/ Q&A	Beresford	PowerPoint
12.20-13.00	How does that connect with our work and what do we need to do to address this?	Whole group discussion	Beresford/Kath	
13.00-14.00	Lunch (Advisory group video)			
13.45-14.00	Community Health and Environment Cornwall discussion planning next steps			
14.00-14.15	Public health and environment research	Presentation	Kath	Video shorts – Monika/Lora/Emma
14.15-14.40	What does decolonisation mean for Cornwall?	Presentation	Mike Tresidder	PowerPoint
14.40-15.10	What does decolonised public health and environment research look like?	Serious play – individual/small group model building activities	Dispersed table by table	Lego/Playdough/paper/pens etc.
15.10-15.20	Coffee			
15.20-15.40	Feedback and discussion	People describe their models and the ideas behind them	Kath	
15.40-16.00	Summing up and next steps		Kath	
16.00	End			

annex 2 – communities connected – from post-it notes – number is how many times each community/group appeared

Local	National	International
5 Family/Friends	2 Family	2 Students/Language teaching
3 Villagers/Neighbours	2 Online communities (Facebook/Zoom/Whatsapp)	4 Wildlife/environmental/organic food groups
2 The Shop/local shops	4 Wildlife/environmental/organic food groups	1 Physical activity/Sports
1 Pub	3 Physical activity/Sports	1 European communities
2 Local events	2 Students/Language teaching	2 Science/academic organisations
5 Local Facebook groups	1 National gardening groups	1 Black community

4 Village Hall/Community Centre/Community Hub	2 Political party/activists	1 Business Community
2 Social Housing Groups/Residents' Associations	2 Health/patient groups	1 Online communities (discord/twitch)
2 Town/Parish Councils	1 Arts/artists	1 International members' organisation
1 Cornwall Council	1 Boom Radio	1 Sky at Night Facebook
5 Church/Chapel/Christian		
3 Wildlife/environmental		
4 Gardening Club/Community Garden		
7 Physical activities/Sports		
3 Arts/Artists		
2 Singing groups/choirs		
Book Groups		
2 Local/Mining History		
2 Cornish language		
University of the 3 rd Age		
5 Health/patient groups		
1 Autistic Community		
1 Kernow Credit Union		
1 Federation of Small Businesses		
1 Work		
2 Cornwall Pride/LGBTQ+		
1 Knit and Natter		
1 Children's Clothes Bank		
2 Schools		
1 Parent and Toddler		
1 Local Astronomy group		
2 Political party/activists		
2 Local Radio		
1 Bereavement group		

annex 3 Video links:

- Professor Fleming: <https://youtu.be/5dzuqrRu-zY>
- Emma: <https://youtu.be/Tc-X6nTjFkQ>
- Monika Walia: https://youtu.be/2f0s_QL2UMo