



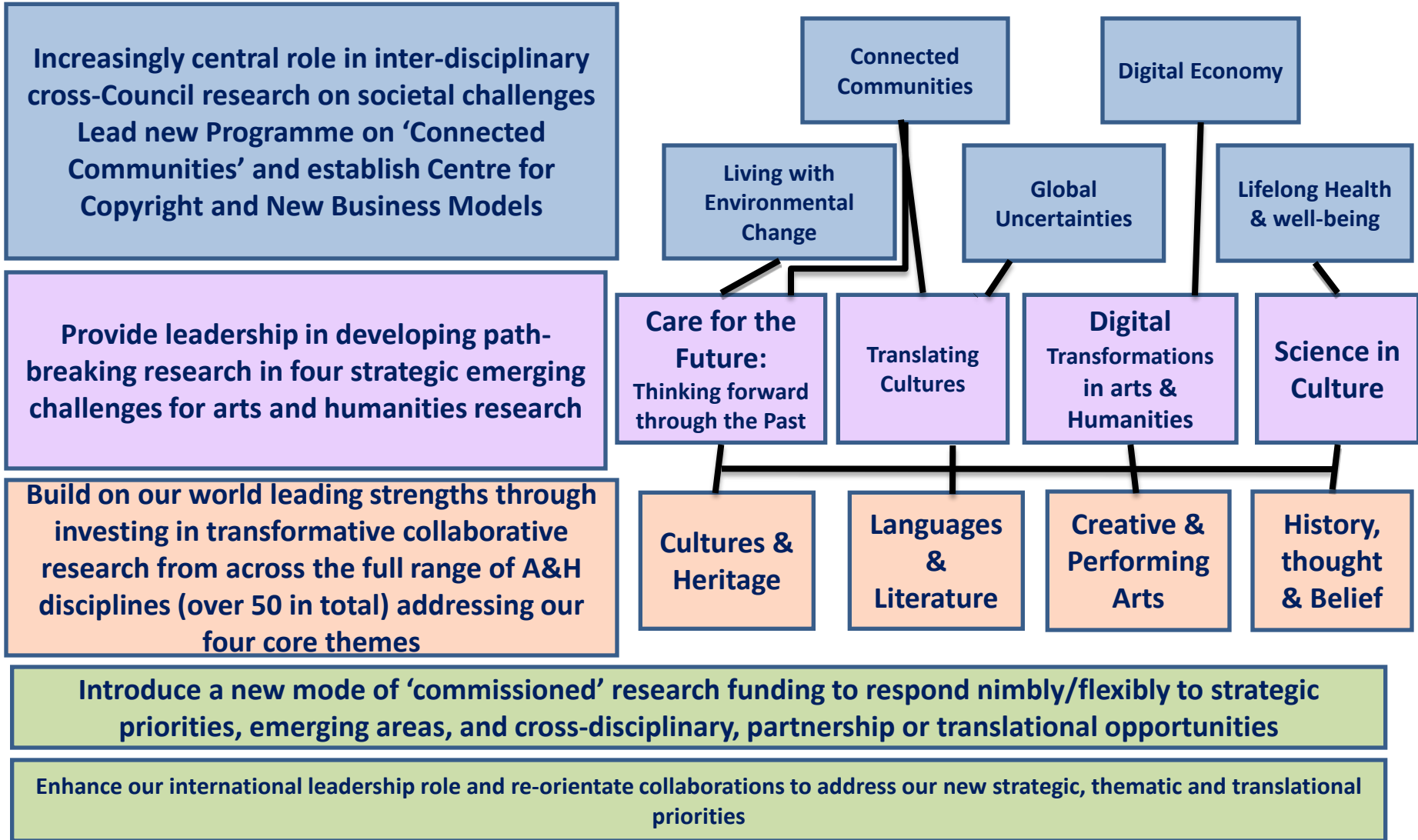
AHRC's Emerging Themes & Connected Communities

Gary Grubb

Associate Director of Programmes
AHRC, England



Overview of AHRC's Future Research Strategy and Themes



CONNECTED COMMUNITIES

Connecting Research for Flourishing Communities

RCUK Partners AHRC (lead), EPSRC, ESRC, MRC & NERC)



RSA

Removing barriers to social progress

Home Office



Business in the Community



Background

- RCUK review of current cross-Council themes, gaps & emerging areas for the next Spending Review period in 2008/9, informed by Councils' own emerging strategies & consultations
- Further consultations (e.g. AHRC Future Directions & Advisory Board, cross-Council expert workshop in June 2009, discussions with a range of stakeholders) in 2009/10
- In parallel growing policy timeliness (e.g. current debates on localism, 'Big Society' etc)

Programme Vision



To mobilise the potential for increasingly inter-connected communities to enhance self-reliance, prosperity, sustainability, health & well-being by better connecting research, stakeholders and communities.

Aims



To contribute to:

- community self-reliance
- community resilience
- active citizenship
- flourishing diverse & cohesive communities
- health & well-being
- regeneration
- cultural vibrancy
- sustainable development

What do we mean by ‘Community’?

- For the purposes of this Programme, and subject to further consultation, we are currently thinking of ‘communities’ as:
“cooperative or interactive groups sharing a virtual or physical environment and aspects of identity (such as location, race, ethnicity, age, history, occupation), culture, belief or other common bonds and/or a shared interest in particular issues or outcomes”.
- We recognise that such communities are nested and overlap and are interested both in the relationships within these communities and the interactions between communities and their outcomes for broader society and economy.

Why Connected?

In terms of the research:

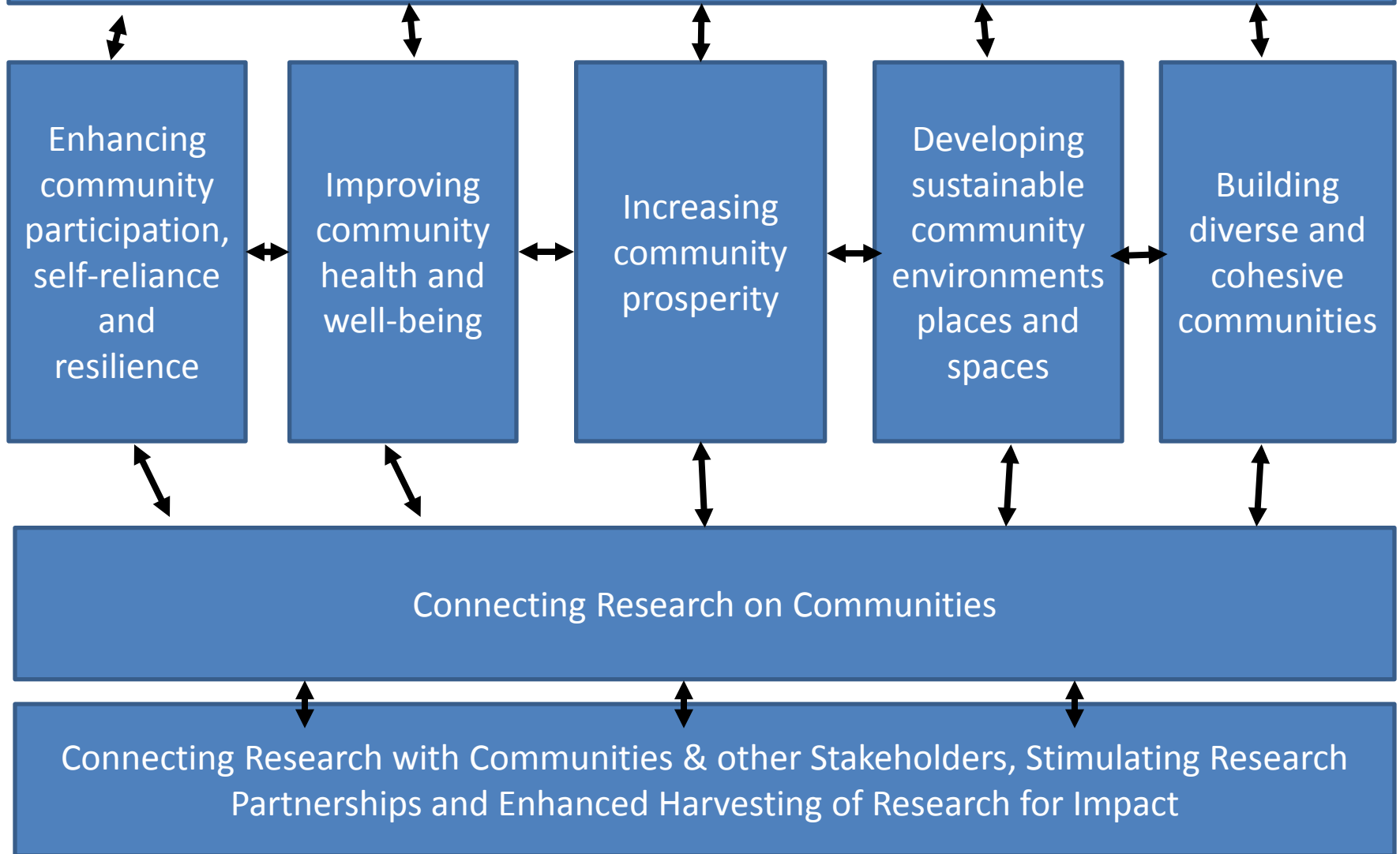
- Improve understanding of both the changing connections between individuals and groups within communities and the connections between different communities – communities as complex webs of inter-connections - and their implications for future society.
- Examine the connections between communities and their broader environments – spaces, places and institutions – and how this can help inform future community-based approaches
- Explore connections between research issues often considered in isolation to deliver more integrated understanding of the roles of, and impacts on, communities.

Why Connected?

In terms of how the Programme will achieve its objectives:

- Connect researchers, knowledge and data from across disciplines to deliver more integrated understanding
- Connect UK and international research
- Connect researchers, stakeholders and communities in the co-production of knowledge and knowledge exchange.
- Connect research funders to enhance co-ordination and alignment of activities and promote partnerships and collaboration to maximise added value from the currently highly fragmented research field and address strategic gaps

Understanding Changing Community Cultures and Patterns of Connectivity within & between Communities



Activities in 2010/11

- Connected Communities ‘Summit’ Birmingham held in June & 19 follow-up development activities now being supported
- Civility project (AHRC, ESRC, Young Foundation)
- Collaboration with CABE on ‘Beauty’ (AHRC)
- BIS SIN US network event on communitarianism
- Workshop on ‘crime & communities’, 27 July 2010 & 9 follow-up projects to start shortly
- Workshop on ‘Design & Communities’ with Design Council in early 2011
- AHRC Museums & Galleries Programme event in September 2010

Current Opportunities

- Call to apply to attend a research development workshop on role of the cultural & creative economy in creating prosperous communities in December 2010 (closing date 5 November 2010)
- Fellowship in collaboration with RSA Citizen Power in Peterborough Programme (closing date 26 November 2010)
- Scoping studies and Research reviews, closing date 26 November 2010
- Highlight notice in AHRC's research networking and fellowships schemes (Open deadlines)
- Highlight notice AHRC's collaborative doctoral awards scheme (closing date 4 November 2010)

AHRC Emerging Themes: Background

- 'Future Directions' consultation (Feb-May 2009)
- Advisory Board analysis of outcomes
- Further consultation e.g. with key partners & Subject Associations
- Development by Advisory Board & Council
- Themes still being developed through consultation, with a small working group being established for each theme to advise on further development

Emerging Themes: Development

- Emerging Themes not the same as current AHRC strategic programmes – seen as collection of strategic activities contributing to the theme
- Consideration of international, knowledge exchange, capacity building and public policy implications & activities, will be built in as appropriate from the outset
- Budget for new themes built into AHRC future funding scenarios as a high priority in order to maintain strategic investments as current AHRC programmes end
- Emphasis on using current funding mechanisms and on targeted activities building larger consortia grants and partnership activities, rather than new research programmes

Care for the Future

- How the past can inform future thinking
- Visions of the future (philosophy, religions, art & literature, foresight, etc)
- Custodianship of cultural heritage for future generations
- Processes and lived experiences of change
- Future ethical, moral, cultural & social landscapes
- Changing civic values, perceptions of trust, intergenerational equity, notions of 'care' and 'caring', philanthropy, etc
- Potentially covers a wide range of domains e.g. constitutional change, crime & law, sustainable development, role

Care for the Future

Builds upon:

AHRC Programmes such as:

- Science & Heritage
- Landscape & Environment
- Museums & Galleries

Contributes to:

- LWEC
- Connected Communities

Opportunities:

- Cultural Heritage European JPI
- Possible LWEC collaborations

Digital Transformations

- How digital technologies can transform arts & humanities research e.g. through new opportunities for analysing and interpreting cultural artefacts, new creative opportunities, potential for an 'infinite archive', & managing, organising and exchanging knowledge & understanding
- How it can transform access and engagement between arts & humanities research and different publics
- What does it mean to be human in a digital age? Raises complex issues such as responsibility, privacy, intellectual property, security, identity etc
- How it is transforming some of the objects/foci of arts and humanities , e.g. changing cultures, language & communication, performance etc

Digital Transformations

Builds upon:

- ICT Programme
- DEDEFI
- Beyond Text

Contributes to:

- Digital Economy Programme

Opportunities:

- Digging into data with US & Canada
- Collaboration with British Library in India
- Possible 'ideas collision' event / consortia development workshop in 2011
- Proposed copyright centre

Translating Cultures

- Need for diverse cultures to understand & communicate better with each other
- Role of 'translation' & cultural interactions in ensuring that languages, values, beliefs, histories & narratives can be mutually shared and comprehended
- Role of cultural understanding in a globalised economy and society – crucial to successful diplomacy, peacekeeping, cultural interactions, business growth and flourishing community relationships in diverse societies
- Translation not just from one language to another, but from one medium to another, e.g. from verbal to non-verbal art forms
- Need for strategic approach to developing experts in specialist non-European languages and in language-based area studies.'

Translating Cultures

Builds upon:

- Language Based Area Studies Centres (LBAS)
- Diasporas, Migration & Identities Programme
- Religion & Society Programme

Contributes to:

- Global Uncertainties
- Connected Communities

Opportunities:

- European ERANET plus 'Cultural Encounters'
- Follow-up to LBAS Centres
- Recent CRT call on languages

Science in Culture

- Understanding the interactions between science and arts & humanities
- Historical evolution of science; creativity, discovery & argumentation in science; science as a system of knowledge
- Impact on values, beliefs & ‘world views’; cultural, religious, ethical and legal dimensions; representation of science in language, literature, art, imagery, museums etc;
- Anticipating & influencing future controversies and enhancing public debates & engagement
- Emerging areas such as medical humanities

Science in Culture

Builds on:

- Centres e.g. Evolution of cultural diversity
- Current cross-Council Programmes

Contributes to:

- All cross Council Programmes including LLHWB

Opportunities:

- Cross-Council sand-pits / retreats e.g. robotics
- Royal Society Neuroscience workshop

Initial Steps

- Highlight notices in research networking and Fellowships schemes announced in August
- Establish small working groups to advise on each theme
- Possible workshops as a part of institutional visits
- Take advantage of emerging opportunities e.g. for partnership funding, commissioned activities, as appropriate.
- Looking at what comes through other schemes such as grants, new follow-on fund etc of relevance to themes

Initial Steps:

Highlight Notice Networking Scheme

- 4 AHRC Themes plus Connected Communities
- Based on current, broad, theme descriptions (on website)
- Intended to be open and encourage bottom-up ideas from the research community
- Scheme remains fully open to applications outside themes
- Applications addressing themes are not prioritised & considered in competition with other applications

Initial Steps:

Highlight Notice Networking Scheme

- However, if there is a strong response we may supplement networking budget from theme development budgets to support additional highly ranked projects and / or reduce the impact on applications outside themes.
- We will monitor response relevant to themes and consider how to maximise value from them and if any changes to the highlight are needed.

Initial Steps: Highlight Notice Fellowship Scheme

- 4 AHRC Emerging Themes plus Connected Communities
- As with networking highlight aim to encourage 'bottom-up' ideas; scheme remains fully open to applications outside themes & applications addressing themes are not prioritised & considered in competition with other applications
- Applies to both standard and early career routes

Initial Steps:

Highlight Notice Fellowship Scheme

- However, a particular focus in this highlight is on what the new more flexible fellowship scheme can enable / bring to the themes, particularly in terms of giving people time to work collaboratively in different places / settings / contexts and/or to develop collaborative partnerships
- Fellowships under highlight notice can be more ‘developmental’ in terms of exploring new research areas than normal
- Guidance for peer reviewers & panels being developed

Initial Steps:

Highlight Notice Fellowship Scheme

- ***Connected Communities*** – e.g. Enabling researchers to spend time doing research embedded in communities and working in collaboration with community organisations, policy-makers and practitioners
- ***Science in Culture*** – e.g. Enabling arts and humanities researchers time to work collaboratively with teams of scientists or as a part of cross-Council Programmes

Initial Steps:

Highlight Notice Fellowship Scheme

- ***Translating Cultures*** – e.g. Time spent working overseas or with overseas collaborators or institutions involved in promoting cultural interaction to conduct research developing understanding of different cultures
- ***Care for the Future*** – e.g. Time spent working with an environmental organisation or on public engagement relating to environmental issues or with a heritage organisation on custodianship or working with a partner organisation to develop more culturally informed ‘horizon scanning’

Initial Steps:

Highlight Notice Fellowship Scheme

- ***Digital Transformations:*** e.g. Time for A&H researchers to spend embedded in a Hub, Doctoral Training Centre or other team funded under the Digital Economy Programme, or in partnership with creative industries or for a digital expert to spend embedded with an arts and humanities team to explore the transformative research potential of digital technologies.

And finally one other recent development and new funding opportunity:

AHRC's new Follow-on Fund

AHRC new follow-on fund

- Supplementary funding for innovative activities in support of knowledge exchange, public engagement, active dissemination or commercialisation activities that arise unforeseeably during the lifespan of, or following, an AHRC-funded project
- Up to £120k (fec), open deadline, any topic (not restricted to themes)