

Inhabit United Kingdom: Practice, Presence, Place

Four of the stories included here were first shared at the *Inhabit UK* [1] conference in Birmingham UK, in October 2014. This conference has become an annual event in Seattle, the result of a partnership between the Parish Collective and the Seattle School of Psychology and Theology. It was a first for Birmingham though, and we were grateful for the presence of Parish Collective friends who came over to partner with us, with Springdale College and TMN, and launch *Inhabit UK*.

The venue was Rowheath Pavilion, a community centre, scruffy, but in beautiful parkland, and inhabited by *Pavilion Christian Community* [2] who run the building on behalf of the community. Hospitality was in Birmingham style, with samosas during the day, Cadbury's chocolate and large pots of Balti curry to share in the evening. There were 170 of us, with more than 28 people involved in speaking and leading at some point during the two days.

Parish Collective leaders Paul Sparks and Tim Soerens presented keynotes and, with Dwight Friesen, have already contributed to the journal. [3] The journal's lead editors Martin Robinson and Alan Roxburgh were both speakers, and Anne Morisy, Kate Coleman, Juliet Kilpin and others shared wisdom about neighbourhood renewal. But stories were the thing.

'What if God is up to something big and global but it can only be discovered through the small and local.' [4] *Inhabit UK* was an attempt to drill down to the 'small and local' in the UK. We wanted to catch news of neighbourhood experiments in relationship and connectedness, in justice and generosity. What are we learning? How do we participate with a most surprising God who will grow life through the cracks in the pavement if we are willing to stay and watch? These four stories from *Inhabit* add to our growing pool of experiences of mission in the places where we live.

[1] The conference website is <http://www.inhabitconference.com/uk/>

[2] <http://www.pavilionchurch.org.uk/>

[3] Paul Sparks, Tim Soerens and Dwight J. Friesen, "Dislocated: Naming the Crisis we all Create", *Journal of Missional Practice*, Issue 4, 2014.

<http://www.journalofmissionalpractice.com/index.php/issue-4/dislocated-naming-the-crisis-we-all-create>

[4] <http://www.inhabitconference.com/uk/about/>