



welcome home
an Art Project
for
Chantry Road



With sincere & grateful thanks
to the residents of
Chantry Road
who so warmly and willingly
contributed to *welcome Home*.



The ache for home
lies in all of us,
the safe place
where we can go
as we are
and not be
questioned.
Maya Angelou



A Welcome Introduction

This booklet marks the culmination of an adventure.

The design and production of the Ottomans was an intrinsic part of a process and the result of a collaboration between myself, a furniture maker and an upholsterer. However, alongside their realisation I also roamed the streets, observed transformation and documented the emergence of Chantry Villas as well as gently engaging the existing residents of your street.

This booklet therefore seeks to articulate the breadth of *Welcome Home*. It brings together some of my research findings and places them adjacent to a selection of wonderful comments about Chantry Road from those that already live there. It also juxtaposes striking images of the construction of your new homes with photographs of our own endeavour.

Like the Ottomans the booklet is special. They complement one another. Herein you will discover contextual narrative and visual insight into the manifestation of your piece of furniture and its 'grand and adventurous past'. This booklet is the means by which I have attempted to combine and present the many threads of thought and conversation, exploration and discovery and making, testing and re-making.

The content herein is thus a mere snapshot of a rich and enriching process. It is a brief synopsis of a creative and multifaceted journey that began with the idea of a gift.

Welcome Home.

Scott Farlow
Lead Artist
July 2014.



*"The artist is nothing without the gift,
but the gift is nothing without work."
Emile Zola*


*"The work of an enquiring and sensitive Artist,
by engaging empathetically with the site and its
surroundings as well as with the client and
stakeholders, potentially acts as a catalyst for
innovative creative outcomes.*

*Artistic practice and inclusive delivery can assist in
reinforcing pride in a local area by meaningfully
engaging with local communities to celebrate cultural
identity and increase a sense of ownership and respect.*

*What emerges from the artistic activity may be
unfamiliar and unexpected but it will, in some way,
give value to local distinctiveness, highlight social or
historic points of reference and reflect community
aspiration."*

Extract from the Public Art Plan
May 2013

written by
Scott Farlow
Lead Artist
Welcome Home



The Project

Fundamentally, *Welcome Home* is based upon the idea of the 'gift'.

Chantry Villas comprises twelve new homes and no notable public space either within or in close proximity to the houses. The artistic rationale thus sought alternative possibilities for the provision of a meaningful art work for the development.

The creative process, led by artist Scott Farlow, emphasized the desire for a socially-engaged approach firmly posited on the future occupiers of the new homes rather than the physical buildings or spaces.

The project involved the creation of a suite of specially made Ottomans which have been created for and gifted to, each of the 12 new households.

Each Ottoman is a unique work made as the result of a collaboration between the artist, a furniture maker and an upholsterer.

With the occupation of Chantry Villas the local community will grow. It is hoped that the Ottomans might become a talking point between the new residents and with their neighbours across the street, the immediate locality and beyond.



*"We think too much and feel too little.
More than machinery, we need humanity.
More than cleverness, we need kindness
and gentleness."
Charlie Chaplin*

The collaboration

In collaborating we took the basic premise of a gift and combined it with the idea of creating a piece of furniture that is both beautiful and functional.

We adopted a successful model for the Ottoman and re-imagined it, adapted it, augmented it and re-articulated it specifically for **Welcome Home**.

We collectively embraced the philosophy of the project.

We shared the experience of design and decision-making and explored the possibilities. In so doing we introduced one another to alternative options, discarded many and retained those with integrity.

We gently invited the client and the residents to participate and contribute to the process. Their suggestions, thoughts, preferences and words enriched our approach and gave greater depth to the project.

In recognising, respecting and valuing each other's skills and judgement we have produced thoughtful work of the highest quality and craftsmanship.

Scott Farlow, Karen Shields & Sam Mond
July 2014

*"When a work lifts your spirits
and inspires bold and noble thoughts in you,
do not look for any other standard
to judge by: the work is good,
the product of a master craftsman"*
Jean de la Bruyere



*"Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it.
Boldness has genius, power and magic in it!"*
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe



*"It's not how much we give
but how much love we put into giving."*
Mother Teresa





I have really enjoyed the journey that we have all made with the *welcome Home* project.

From the beginning, the project has been interesting and inspiring. I have been making curved-sided Ottoman boxes for 14 years, since I discovered the carcasses being made by a carpenter in Wales. I loved their unusual and elegant shape, inherent solidity and practicality immediately, and have covered them in many different styles of fabric.

When bringing them into *welcome Home*, we adapted and modified the design to suit the project. For example, we have left the internal legs exposed to reveal and appreciate the beautiful grain in the London Plane. The timber, by way of further narrative, was sourced from the mature trees that were felled to make way for Cabot Circus in Bristol. We have also incorporated different hidden compartments into each box. This thoughtful and quirky feature introduces a special touch to each Ottoman that still leaves the inside of each box free for use.

Each Ottoman has been hand finished and each is unique. I am proud of all of them and hope that they are loved by you as much as I have loved helping to make them.

Karen Shields
Upholsterer
July 2014



So, what is an Ottoman?

The Ottoman today is usually described as a squat upholstered stool of unassuming stumpiness. Although there are acute lack of sources as to its history this is a somewhat derisory definition for a piece of furniture that has a grand and adventurous past.

The Ottoman originated in the Middle East as a couch for sitting or lying on. It was all cushion and thus, traditionally, exuded exotic and unbridled luxury and reflected the decadence of the Orient.

It spread throughout the 18th Century at a time when Europeans coveted luxury and became a symbol of the two-way cultural exchange between East and West. In those years of glory it was a much more lavish piece of furniture in representing an 'entire aesthetic of Oriental repose'.

Initially it was very long, wide and fully upholstered; a sofa imitating the Turkish mode of sitting that subsequently became the European norm. As the Ottoman Empire declined in stature and influence, so the Ottoman shrank in size and grandeur; ultimately, according to the 1911 Encyclopaedia Britannica definition, becoming merely 'a small footstool covered with a carpet'. However, in so doing this smaller contemporary Ottoman had duly entered every household.

It is rare to find anyone sitting on an Ottoman these days. In being liberated from the oriental gaze and after fulfilling their critical role in the Western seatscape, Ottomans are now largely reduced to a prop for a pair of tired socks resting undetected in the glow of a 40" television screen.



*"Kindness in words creates confidence.
Kindness in thinking creates profoundness.
Kindness in giving creates love."
Lao Tzu*

Chantry Road

Chantry Road has the sort of neighbours who go out of their way to put a cover on your bike when it is raining and leave you cake on your doorstep as a welcome gift.

Derivation of Chantry Road

This ecclesiastical name may have its origin in the nearby St. Johns Road and the church of the same name, built in 1841 and enlarged in 1864. Chantry Road was developed c.1880, as was St. Johns Road. It is possible that Chantry is a place name as there is a village of this name near Frome in Somerset. The derivation is religious.

Indeed, the word "Chantry" derives, via Old French chanter, from the Latin cantare (to sing) and its mediaeval derivative, cantaria (meaning "licence to sing mass").

The French term for this commemorative institution is chapellenie (chaplaincy).

The Latin word "oblit", used in English as a noun with the same meaning as a chantry, means literally "he is dead" from the verb obo, from the verb eo "to go" plus the preposition ob "away", thus to die.

Chantry Road is a hidden oasis of tranquility hidden, but a stones throw away from the bustle of Whiteladies Road.



Chantry Road is a quiet tree-lined residential street off Whiteladies Road.

It is characterised by mature London Plane trees and large, predominantly stone, houses set back from the road; many of which are under multiple occupation.

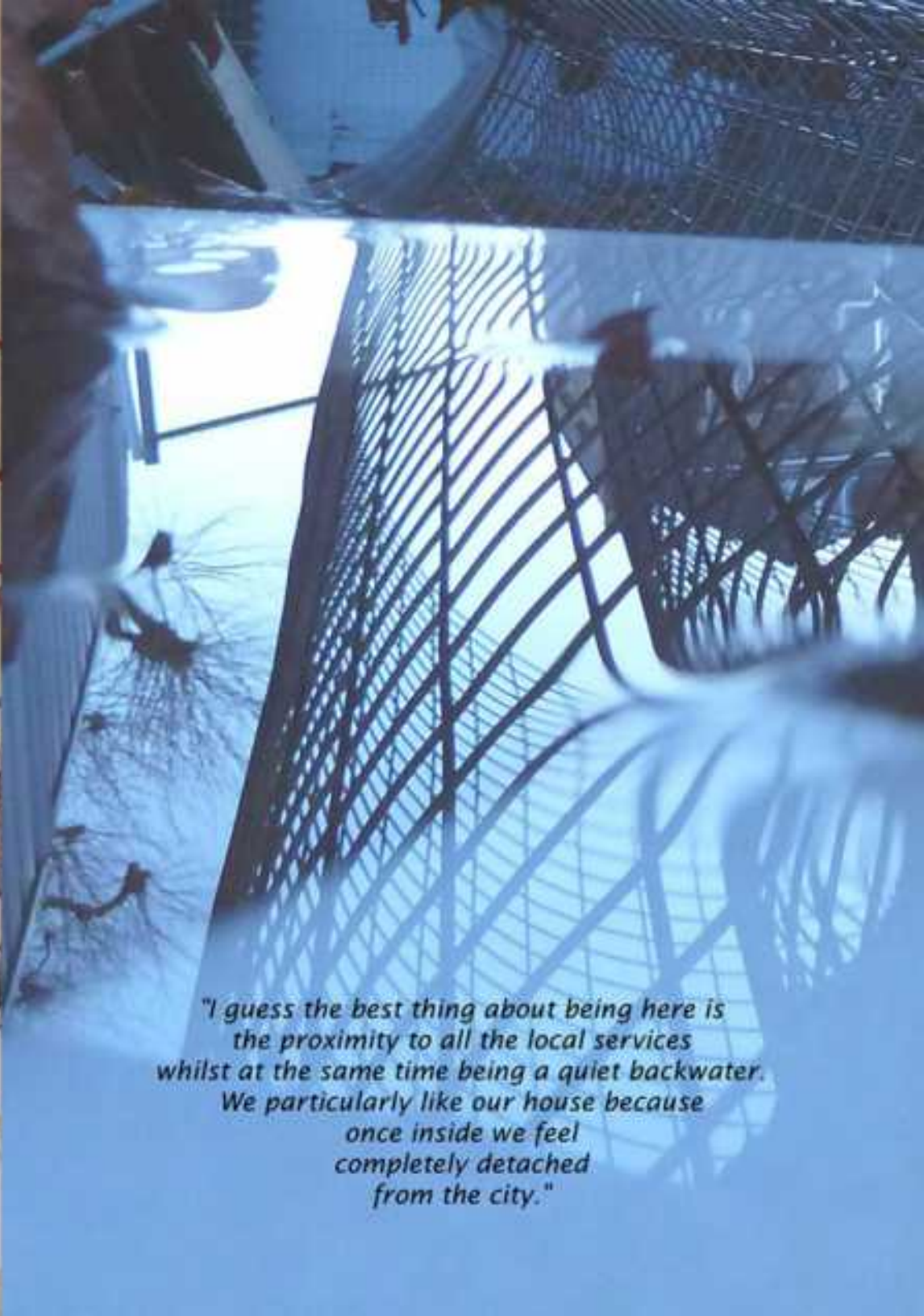
The trees are pollarded every few years; an act of perceived brutality as afterwards they have the naked appearance of huge gnarled hands.

Prior to the development of Chantry Villas the site was a garden centre called Garraways. Dating back to the 18th Century, Garraways allegedly supplied all the trees for Bristol Zoo, Victoria Square and many other public spaces in the region. It is also thought that the nursery even supplied trees to the Gibbs family at Tyntesfield.

In fact, as the maps here indicate (dating back to 1828), the immediate locality of Chantry Road has a long history of productivity, grazing and market gardening. As Bristol grew in influence and prominence throughout the 19th Century so the increased middle classes continued to settle in Clifton on the hill. The fields, which were once market gardens and grazing land soon became covered in Victorian villas and semi-detached properties and Gallows Acre Lane, at the end of which once stood the gibbet, was re-christened Pembroke Road.

Between 1801 and 1851 the population of Clifton grew from about 4,500 to 17,500. This more permanent population also established schools and twelve non-conformist chapels including the aforementioned St John the Evangelist Church.





"I guess the best thing about being here is the proximity to all the local services whilst at the same time being a quiet backwater. We particularly like our house because once inside we feel completely detached from the city."



Neighbourliness

In March 2014 Welcome Home invited all existing residents of Chantry Road to contribute to the project by providing personal reflections of what it is like to live on the street, in the locality and in Bristol. Each household was presented with a special set of postcards and asked to consider the best things about living on Chantry Road.

The completed original postcards from each participant have been equally distributed to all of the new residents of Chantry Villas. Some of their responses, advice, anecdotes and experiences are included here.

"The Wisteria from across the road will bring a smile to your face this summer".

It is recognised that the local community will grow a little with the occupation of Chantry Villas. It is therefore hoped that the generosity of existing residents in offering their thoughts about local life will help to activate positive and enduring dialogue and connection between immediate neighbours and with those across the street. Indeed, perhaps even the Ottomans will become talking points.

"The best thing about living on Chantry Road are the trees on the street in the spring and summer."



Some of the best things about living on Chantry Road are:

"A leafy oasis in the heart of the action. Friendly and diverse residents who like a street party. Bold as brass foxes who are partial to a baguette from Café du Jour. Make use of the branch line to explore the rest of the city, then retire back safe in the knowledge that you live in the best bit!"

"Brilliant location, within walking distance (or a cheapish taxi ride) to any event or activity within central Bristol."

"The ability to meet friends for drinks or dinner, and then walk home and be in bed in moments."

"The church bells from Tyndale Baptist church on Whiteladies Road. It took me a little while to get used to them as they ring every hour on the hour 24 hours a day. Interestingly the church was hit and partially destroyed by the Luftwaffe during WW2. The tower and the bell survived whilst the rest was destroyed."

"The first time I entered Chantry road it was from St. John's Road turnoff. It was on my driving test. I was living in London at the time but moving to Bristol and looking for accommodation. I loved the road immediately with its gnarly trees and assortment of garden flowers. I didn't realise then that I would be living there within a year and this would be my home. It is peaceful apart from the slight buzz of traffic from Whiteladies Road and the view that Chantry Villas will have in the spring and autumn from the houses across the road is just breathtaking due to the very keen gardeners that live there. I'm sure you'll be very happy and I look forward to meeting you all."