

Rhodri Samuel, CEO Dartington Hall Trust Presentation Tuesday October 31, 2017

Creating an international centre for narratives and values – a home for the next Zug style events

1. Become part of an international ‘ferment’ to develop ideas around the concept of the international centre for narratives and values at Dartington

The Dartington Hall estate is located in Devon, England. It is a campus environment of 1200 acres including extensive farmland, forestry and buildings, with a medieval Hall, courtyard and beautiful formal gardens at its centre.

The estate has a fascinating heritage that includes the remains of Bronze and Iron Age settlements, sacred features, important medieval buildings and, not least, a remarkable 20th century history in which Dartington Hall became the location of a progressive international experiment in living and learning. For almost 100 years Dartington has been a place of interdisciplinary exchange between the arts, education, enterprise, agriculture, horticulture, crafts, social justice and community wellbeing.

A major opportunity now exists to reimagine and reinvent Dartington for the next 100 years as a hub and gathering place for a new international movement of civil society committed to pioneering meaningful transformation in our world. This movement includes the faiths, investors, the United Nations, NGO's and other green and ethical organisations interested in developing shared narratives and values that help us collectively to address and solve the critical questions and challenges of our time. We would like to invite all interested parties to join us in a dialogue to develop and deliver this exciting concept at Dartington as a base for a new international network dedicated to purpose and values-driven change.

2. Fostering the expression of a many-sided life

In the words of the founders of Dartington Hall Trust, Dorothy and Leonard Elmhirst, the original purpose of the Dartington experiment was:

‘To create a centre in the countryside where a many sided life could find expression: a place where living and learning could flourish together; where the practical life was balanced with the activities of the mind and the spirit; where there was reverence for the old and a joy in the new; where you could live with beauty always; and where human values would be respected above all others - care and respect for the individual, concern for one another and a sense of responsibility for our neighbour’.

The Elmhirsts consciously sought to create a complex, multidisciplinary environment at Dartington - a microcosm of the macrocosm - which offered the optimum conditions for the human spirit to flourish and enabled *learning through doing*.

Dartington has influenced national and international policy and practice; not least the formation of Britain's National Health Service and welfare state; as well as the formation of the Arts Council, the Open University, the Consumers Association, the national School for Social Entrepreneurs and many other innovations.

Today, Dartington Hall Trust upholds the same tradition of the many-sided life, believing that we are all born multifaceted and connected with each other and with nature.

Our core activities currently include running Schumacher College (an international centre for ecology), Dartington School for Social Entrepreneurs, Research in Practice (providing evidence-based best practice and training to the care sector), an international summer school and festival of music, a cinema, a year round craft programme, a small hotel, conference facilities, a campsite, cafes and shops. We also host over 150 innovative small enterprises on our land. Collectively, these activities represent a significant social impact benefitting a wide range of audiences.

3. Our vision and strategy

Inspired by the original purpose of the Dartington experiment, we will become a 21st century campus and laboratory for learning by doing. We will be part of an international network delivering tangible opportunities to experiment in living a larger, more connected life, discovering our true potential and pioneering meaningful transformation in ourselves and society.

We have developed a prioritised 5-7 year plan that seeks to raise around £50 million of investment mainly through bonds and loan finance from ethical banks and social investors, as well as through traditional fundraising and philanthropy. We plan to create a vital, relevant and sustainable future for the Dartington Hall Trust as a leader of ideas, practice and change collaborating with an international network of partners.

The investment will be used to bring about a step-change in the quality and experience of Dartington as an international destination. Key projects include the imaginative interpretation of our history, becoming a regional and national centre for artisan food and drink, and developing our potential as an international centre for discourse and exchange. As a central part of this concept, we are seeking to become the international hub for the Sacred Cities project - hosting the new centre for narratives at Dartington. This hub will be focussed around the development of an exciting new eco-hotel and gathering place at the heart of the estate.

The rest of our strategy focusses on investment in Dartington becoming a contemporary pioneer in experimental learning, live and visual arts, rural housing, social justice, enterprise and land stewardship.

4. An invitation

We would like to invite you to participate in our plans and to propose that the next major meeting after Zug be held at Dartington in two years' time. We are keen to talk

to other partners and funders interested in co-hosting and investing in helping us to bring this about.

Rhodri Samuel, Dartington Hall Trust

***Rhodri Samuel** has been advising Dartington Hall Trust in Devon on development strategy and community involvement since 2014 and was appointed CEO of the Trust the following year. He began his career in arts management and production, including the Bath International Music Festival, which led to him leading major projects and initiatives in Bath including the Bath City Identity project and a long term programme to transform streets and public spaces across the city. Following his work in the public sector, he led the Craneworks project and Community Interest Company, a social enterprise to create a new centre for invention and making in Bath. Rhodri has established several leadership networks and is a Fellow of the Royal Society of Arts. He lives in Devon with his partner Johanna and their two sons.*