



THE Otherham PROJECT

Stories by
young people



‘Otherham’ was a 6-week programme for young people aged 12-16 working towards designing an alternative Rotherham. Working in collaboration with Imitating the Dog, this project influenced the final projections in the Winter Light Festival 2025. Here the young people’s stories and pieces of writing were used as the stimulus for the five reimagined buildings and surrounding performances in the Winter Light Trail. Across this project the group explored various writing prompts and styles that ignited their imaginations to turn the five buildings in Rotherham Town Centre into brand new reimagined locations in this alternative ‘Otherham’. All of the young people’s pieces of writing can be found here in this publication that was beautifully created by Grimm & Co’s volunteers Mollie Speight and Sylvie Gosselin. A special thank you to Maxwell, Hibba, Chloe, Nico, Alice, Aaminah, Viera, and all the young people who participated in this project for all your amazing ideas and wonderful stories.

30 Young people

worked with Grimm & Co on the Otherham Project helping to create content and bring the story to life.

Many volunteers

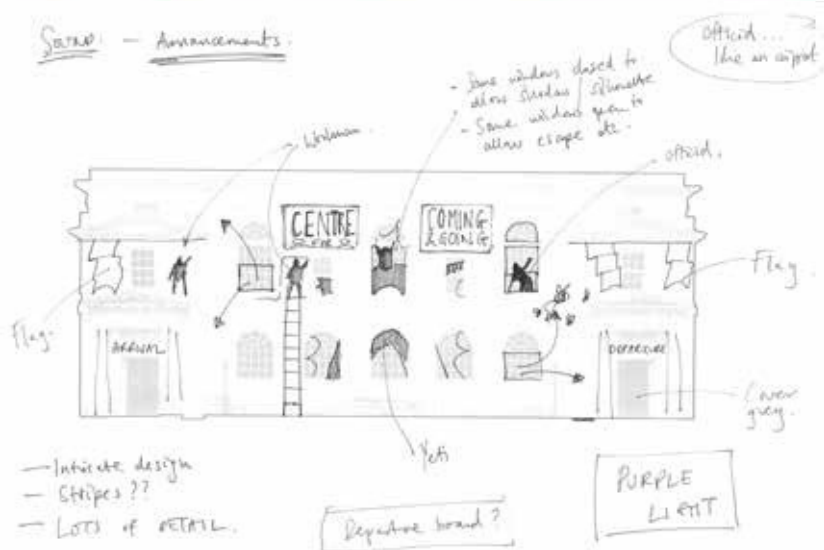
worked across the ‘Otherham’ project, helping to make it all possible. Grimm & Co would also like to thank Kate Li for her continued mentoring support across the delivery of this project and a special thank you to Lucy Huzzard for bringing the young people’s lyrics to life in song.

1 unforgettable experience!

7,123 people interacted with the Otherham Winter Lights Festival across the three days increasing visits to the town centre by 72% compared to the week before.

The Bright Ideas Mining Company Inc.

In Otherham, there is one building quite hidden away. On the outside there's lots of bushes and plants covering the windows to keep the secret in. When you walk through the door, the ground feels like a bouncy castle, the building jumps with joy at all the imagination being brought up. One day, the rainbow lion found out that children had been stealing all the imagination he had worked hard to mine. "Why are they stealing my magic!? Why oh why oh why?" The lion shouted. He stamped his feet and yelled loudly. "I'M GOING TO CUT THEIR HAIR; THEY ARE NOT ALLOWED TO WEAR RAINBOW DYE ANYMORE!" The lion was so angry he called a meeting with all the children and said, "if you don't give back the imagination I'm going to stop you all from expressing yourselves!" All the children gasped and cried "Nooooo!" The hall was silent while they debated whether to give it back or not...

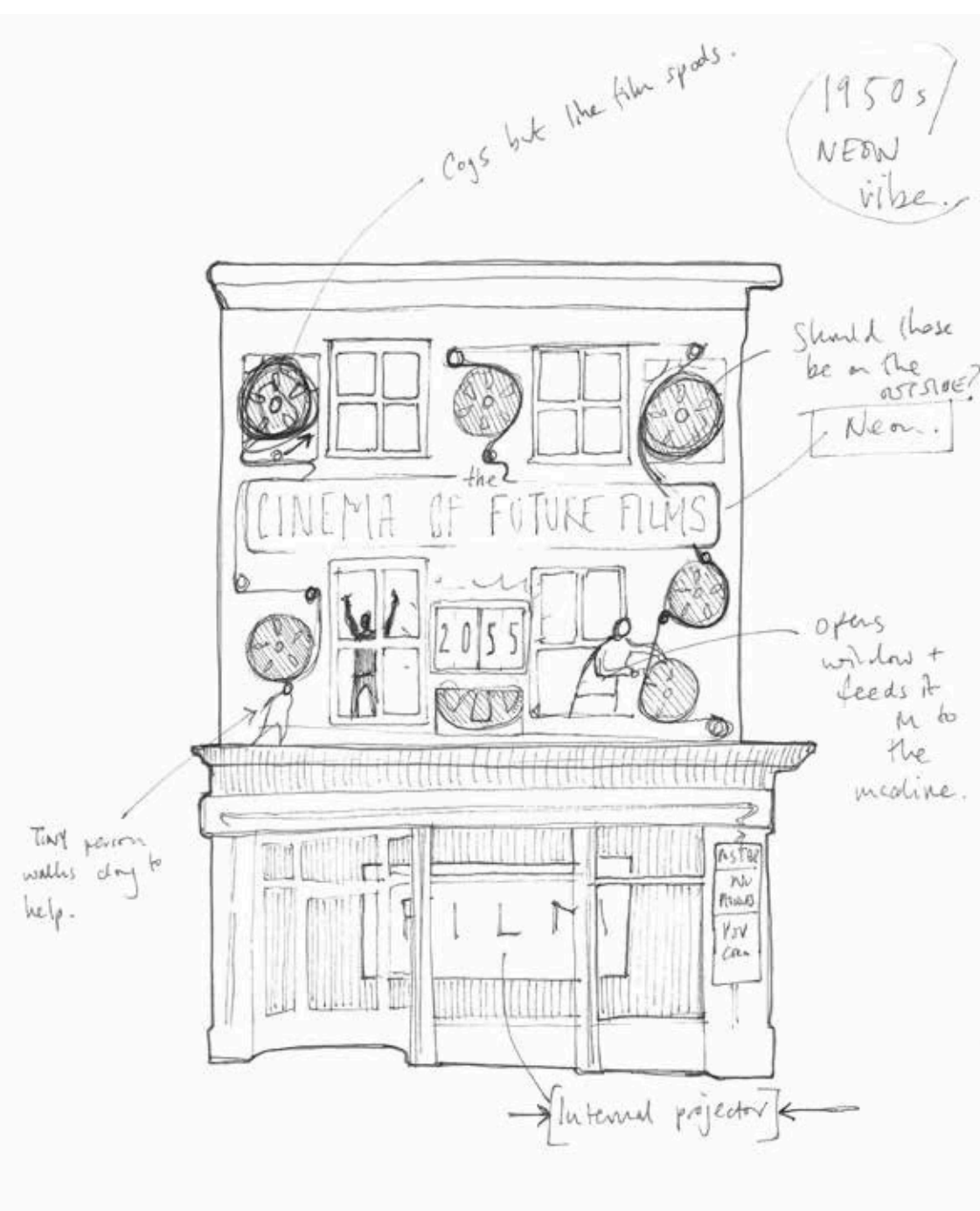


I am awoken, furious out of my parts- everything is falling out of place at the train station; all because of these foolish chil- dren! No one can tell me other- wise! These kids are portraying their childish character, all to get a small giggle out of their 'friends' in return... Everything (and I mean EV-ERYTHING) is now subject to delays because of this idiotic group of yetis throwing ice inside the portals, which, if you did not know, transports them to Iceria- Not THE coldest place in all of the dimensions. I want to explode out to smithereens and throw the biggest lightning bolt possible at them. They chuck potions which- oh my, I cannot even believe I'm saying this- but... It shoots the boats up as if they were a firework, and makes the ship dance in the middle of the shy... That's a story for later...

The Centre for Coming and Going

The Centre for Coming and Going is a multidimensional portal for all creatures to travel. It normally works off a magical band system which you can buy at the entrance to choose your destination. However, recently it has been malfunctioning and sending creatures to the wrong dimension with things like giants going to a land for pixies and causing chaos. So, the portal has been stopped for the past few days causing creatures to be stuck, until one of our engineers realised a wire had been cut so they fixed that and all the creatures were able to finally get back home.





The Cinema of Future Films

The Cinema of the Future Films is a dangerous place because if you don't want to know the future and someone takes you there you will learn it. Connor the pet lives in the cinema of future films. It is there because it can mine at 100 miles per hour because its owner is a miner. The pet Connor adapts to its owner.

Dear Diary

31st October 2150

I work here 24/7, the sweet smell of popcorn and sugar and the disturbing odour of people (humans) and their materialistic objects filling my pixified nose. The screams still haunt me, idiotic humans revealing their future. What a waste! I'm a pixie, duh! I work here: as a viewer, to see other futures. I've worked here for 2 days! The sight of humans screaming, they're mini pixies crying fills my minute eyes. I hate it here, I hate it, I hate it, I HATE IT! I've been abandoned by Kio, my spirit. Why? I don't know! "Kiera Hia, here now!" booms a voice filling my dwarfsized ears. Best go. Bye!

Future Film Adverts:
10:30-11:30: Mia Mardy. Future film - be prepared you might be bored for eternity.

Dear Dragons of Otherham

This is a public letter from me, the building that contains the Cinema of Future Films.

Please, please, please stop scorching the back of my chairs when you let out fire from your noses when you laugh at funny films.

It is not funny!

Also, snacks of live sheep are not permitted.

Popcorn and nachos are the only foods allowed during screenings.

My friends, all the other buildings in Otherham, are standing by me and have agreed that unless the rude and disrespectful behaviour of the dragons stops, the dragons will be banned from all buildings.

We cannot risk the cinema being blown up or set on fire. Also, the mice have complained that the dragons are blocking the view of the cinema screen with their wings. Please be aware that in future dragons will be only allowed to purchase back row seats. We also want to highlight the importance of ensuring that you DO NOT invite the pixies to the late Wednesday night showings at The Cinema for Future Films.

Despite numerous warnings, they still insist on doing a conga line right in the middle of the screening in front of the screen!

This is not acceptable!



Otherham Chronicle

Austin the fish(he/him) and Laura the computer (she/her) are journalists at the Otherham Chronicle.

The Otherham Chronicle is a very unusual place. A package is delivered. It is medium sized and smells of computers and toys. Austin finds unboxing the package very exciting. He unboxes it while humming. He looks at the instructions. It says, "How to build a robot". He builds the computer's head. After he builds the robot, he presses the computer keyboard. Laura says hello. Austin says, "What's your name?" They shake hands and say, "Nice to meet you."

"Why do you have one eye?" Austin says. "It's because I am a cyclops computer robot, and I have two arms based on computer mice." She can communicate with everyone apart from villains and enemies.

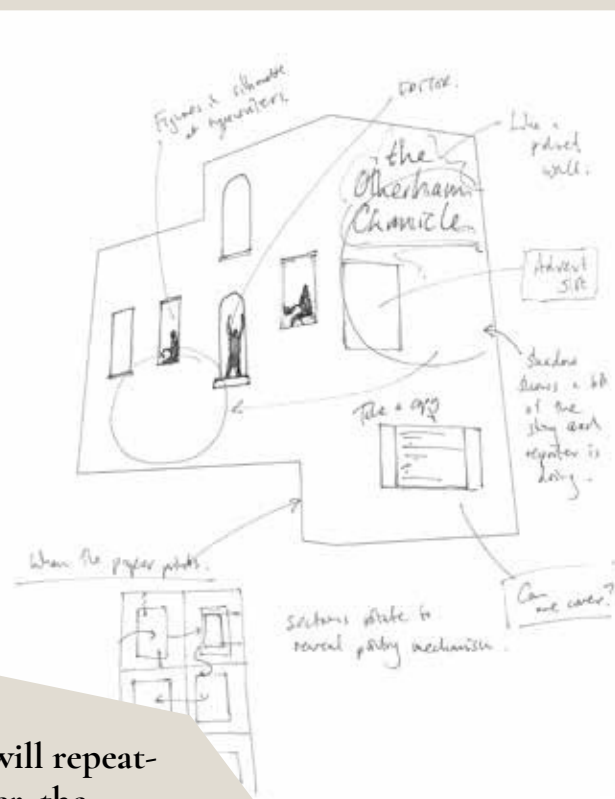
"That's good to know", says Austin.



Austin



Laura



The Mole

Hello. I am reporting live from the Otherham Chronicle, and I will repeat- there is a mole. Earlier, on the morning of the 190th of September, the identity of a spy was revealed. Man-Less Chester has received several charges regarding this extreme break-through in the history of news. Blanche White, a member from our research department, has been with us since February and had several previous jobs on her CV of prestigious news companies such as The Daily Pain, and The Moon. At approximately 12.21, Blanche left early and revealed her true job upon her computer. "Blanche White also seemed a bit off. Too nice to be true." These are the words of former colleague, Fergus Small. "Being a Dwarf, it's a whole other world above, but Blanche revealed what it was really like" "I am living a lie". Read the next issue for more.



Twinkle gets her Wrinkles.

Twinkle, born in the 80's, has announced that she'll be dead soon due to her short lifespan as a fairy. Which means that she must retire her colourful career as a ballet dancer. The day she walked into the Otherham Chronicle there were already people whispering about her retirement.

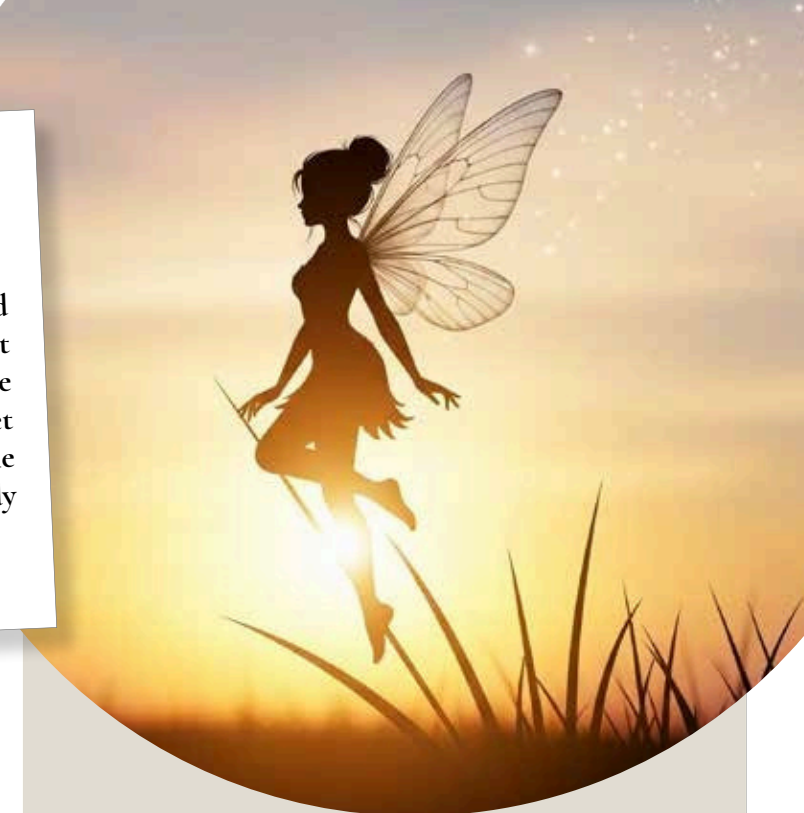
Dear Ministry company,

You're the best one in town. How rich you make me and how nice you taste, all your happiness spread across town, and it never makes me frown. You taste of cotton candy and everything else wonderful is what I should be saying. But know all my pixies are working for hours and hours get no happiness or ideas. ~ Love from Maxwell

Once upon a time, a fairy made a necklace. It had special star beads. Because it was special, the pixies hid it. It was lost in the woods. It was important because it had a magical beam.

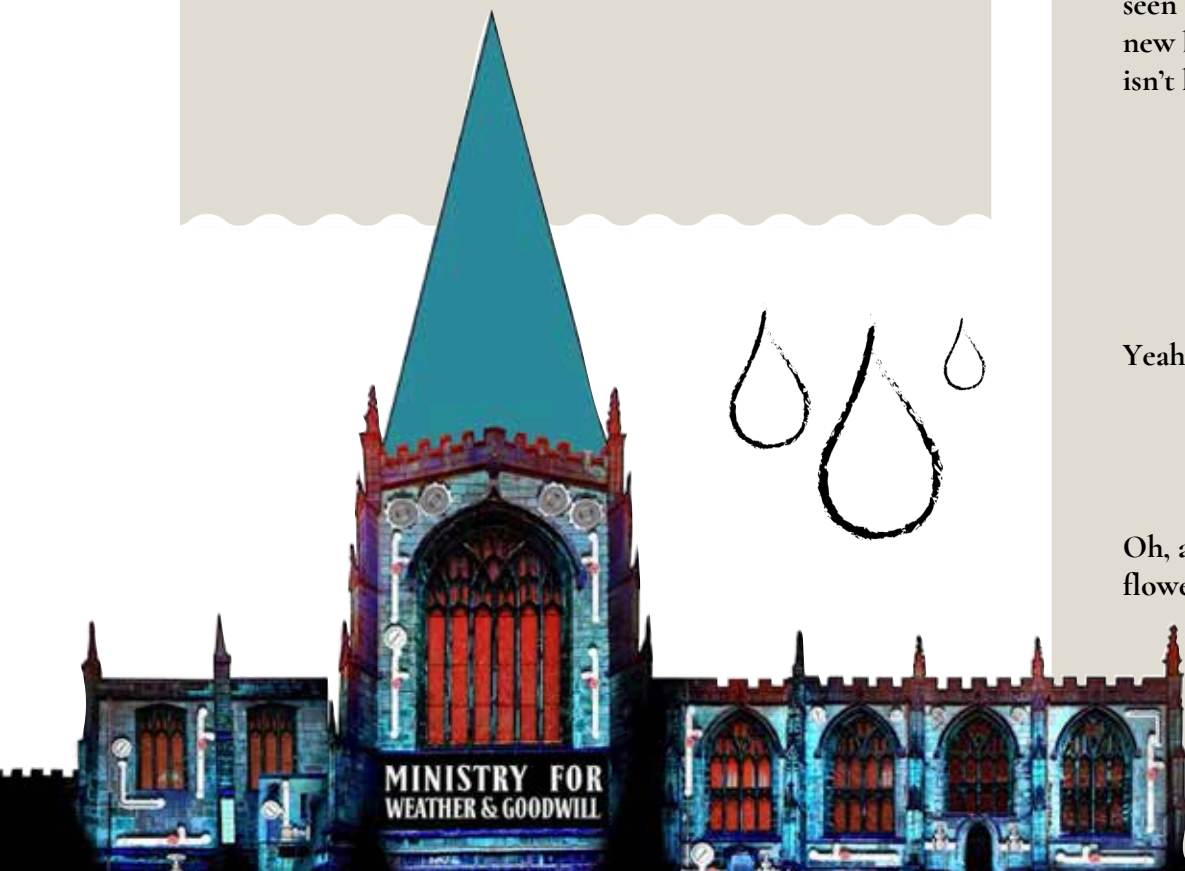
FIRST PIXIE & GIANT WEDDING!

Former rapper Biggie Talles and Alesha Pixton have announced their engagement after Biggie got down on one knee to propose whilst they were staying at Hotel Transylvania. Count Dracula also said, in his response to the proposal, "Ironically I have never seen a couple more right for each other than these 2 beings!" The big surprise was reportedly seen by Trollie Mantle -(lava country singer) who kept the ring for safekeeping. All the fans are extremely happy to see the 2 rejoice in happiness and holy matrimony. All preparations for the big wedding in July at the Grand G & C. Grimm & Co's wedding suite is also being designed by young entrepreneur Stacey Rockomon. And that's back in the studio. Thanks Ana. Read on to find out about Little Trix's Threat to break up.



The Ministry for Weather and Goodwill

The Ministry for Weather and Goodwill is a mysterious place, with adventures coming round every corner. A thundercloud, sun, a raindrop and a snowball is set on top of the white, painted pristine and important structure. It brings Otherham together with weather. Whether it be rain or shine there is one person who ALWAYS decides Otherham's fate, and that is thunder. The Ministry hates hail as a thief stole it off them. Someone, quiet, merciless, evil, cruel and jealous: Shadow. Thinking hard, cunning is the 1 thing The Ministry doesn't do. That's why they let Thunder be in charge. Thunder is bossy grey-faced and stern. "All of you get back to WORK!!!" His angry, booming voice announced. You could hear it from the pavement 10 metres away. Suddenly, the Earth shook, trees toppled over, and things came out of the sky. Shadow minifigures. Shadow had arrived, "Hello old partner, back again?" Thunder spat before he rapidly left the building, smoke trailing behind him. Shadow's merciless voice boomed, "Just Stop! Why Thunder, why?". And that's when things went downhill fast.



The cloud is jealous of the rain because the attention is taken by the people down below. When weddings happen at The Ministry everybody is crying, because the chocolate & candy are getting married.

Everybody who sees the building feels jealous because of how big it is, how tall and grand it is. The romance is between the yellow building and the clouds. The Ministry likes the clouds too. The yellow building dyed its hair, and the clouds didn't recognise them. ... My darling, I miss you; I really miss you, please come back to me. I know I disappointed you by dyeing my hair all different colours but that's just me. LOL! I don't really mean that! Oh, and if you've not seen it on the weather app, I have a new boyfriend called McCloud - isn't he cute!

"Puff! Puff off!
You wanna meet up with him?"

Yeah let's do that.

LOL Let's not because
I don't like you.

Oh, and I brought you a bunch of
flowers. See I can be romantic can't I?

No.

Sanguine & Sunshine

Smelled like thunder fury, petrichor. It towered over me with thunder like fury. Nostalgic scent of petrichor. Smelled like sanguine and saporous sunshine. Atmosphere felt harsh and aggressive, like rain as sharp as daggers. Rain clattered like keys on a computer. As I stumbled through the ancient door, an atmosphere harsh and aggressive like rain as violent as daggers immediately struck me. My bony witch fingers stretched out; urgent to catch myself before I plummeted to the floor! Bang!

Oops...

But there was no time to apologise for the attention I unintentionally drew to myself. Adjusting my silky, dark as mid-night witch hat onto my luscious locks, and repositioning the rags draped over my slick shoulders, the only persons time I was wasting was my own, I had a job to get on with ...

I strutted to each department (disguising, or at least attempting to) the embarrassment displayed on my face. I began in the happiness home where it smelt like sanguine and saporous sunshine. I couldn't help but let an ear-to-ear genuine smile spread across my face. Onwards!



Uncle Barry

A feeling of dread swished through my veins. I made my way through the granny scanner and was sniffed just in case red slashed onto the screen. Same old checks. All because Uncle Barry had to nip out on a full moon and have a snack before his anniversary dinner. I told him not to, and now he's ended up in the wood loggers stew. And I've ended up here. In a stuffy security office for the 90th interview. Apparently, having Uncle Barry's blood means intense security and background checks. But I have to get this job. I can and I will. Curse you, Uncle Barry. "Right, straight through the main hall, left to reception, up the stairs with straight ridges, not slanted, out the fire door, round not through the director's office, and right to the long corridor, up 4 sets of stairs, into the lift of 50 floors and to cloud level." He narrowed his eyes and repeated hissing through his teeth "Would you like me to repeat that?". I replied "Yes, that would be gre-". He said, "Good that's best for everyone". My first enemy on my first day. Curse you, Uncle Barry. - I finally got a job, today the pay is... Okay... there are too many feet!!! And I keep finding lost shoes! And now it tastes like feet and it's so loud, talking, coughing etc. So many shades of grey, black, white and beige I have to keep stopping people from sticking gum to the seats. All that to say: I have a sturdy job and can have custody.



Channel

BIM CIA building - Interviewed by -Lady Ida-Eas

Hi Guys!

Welcome back to the channel - for those of you who don't know me, my name is Ida Eas and I chat to the troubled citizens of Otherham. Today, we have a very special guest! May I introduce all to Miss BIM CIA a very special building indeed.

Ida - Hi Miss BIM C, pleasure to have you

BIM - Hi Ida pleasure to be here. Please call me BIM.

Ida - Thanks, BIM. So, first of all, I wanted to ask you, what all the viewers want to know: why are you a troubled guest today?

BIM - Yeah. To be honest I'm not great.

Ida- Tell us a bit more. What makes you say this?

BIM - I'll start from the beginning. A few days ago, I started to get these weird trances - I didn't know if I was happy or upset or angry- anything really. I was just kind of meh. My thoughts were overcrowded and I didn't have space to think.

Ida - Elaborate

BIM - Well, to be honest, I feel exhausted and completely overmined, it was constant knocking day in, day out-

Ida - Sorry to interrupt BIM, but we have spotted one of the gnomes.

Fergus - Hiya. Fergus here. For those of you who don't me - well deal with it! I work at BIM and can I just say - no offence BIM- honestly how horrid can your ideas get!

BIM - I'm sorry- what?

Fergus - you heard me. All your ideas are like the crusts on bread. They are there and unwanted. The people that made the bread don't get it. I mean, you can get bread without the crusts but ah you know what I mean!

Ida - Fergus I believe you are using quite strong language to our guest here - is this correct?

Fergus - "Unwanted" Was my exact term.

Ida - I'm sorry to say that this goes against our health and safety policy -

Ana - Fergus are you here again! This time you are definitely getting reported.

Right time to let you go.

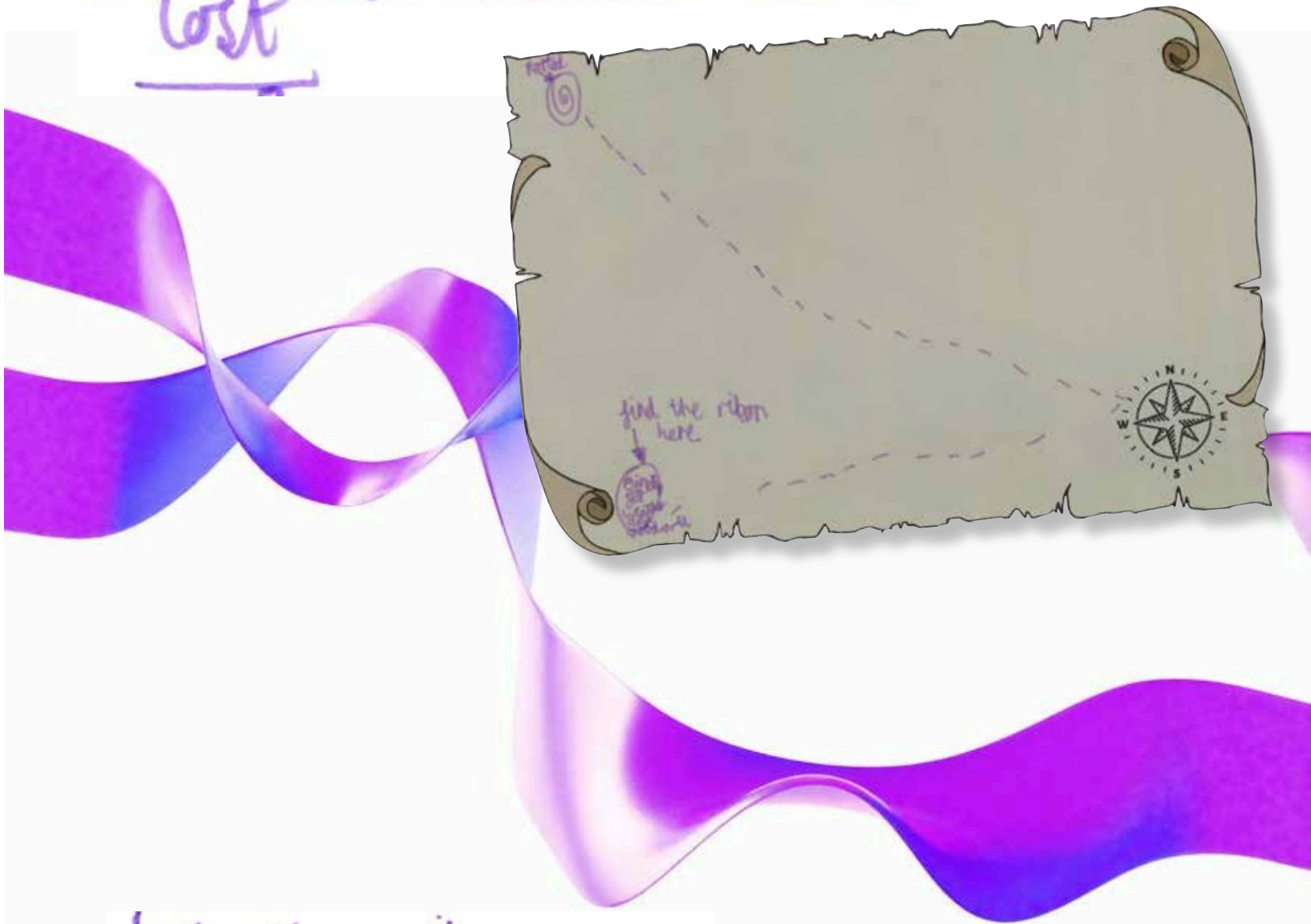
Fergus - What? What do you mea-

Ida - Sorry viewers - and it's back to the studio.



Name: Fergus Small
Job: Mining gold coal
Likes: Graffiti
Purpose: Lost

The magical ribbon of the
lost



lost the ribbon of
the lost will come
to you and grow
into a trail
that leads you
home.

Otherham Song

Verse 1 (The Centre for Coming and Going)

Leave in the canon, arrive by balloon,
You should be careful you don't land on the moon.
We haven't had a death for nearly ten years,
You pay with your soul, it's such a good deal.
Such a good deal, oh what a steal.

Verse 2 (Ministry for Weather & Goodwill)

*Rain or shine, it'll be fine,
In the Ministry for Weather fortunes you'll find,
Calm the storm so all is still,
In the Ministry of Goodwill, of goodwill, of goodwill.*

Chorus

*Weird, Disturbing,
Alternative Reality,
Otherham is a place that you want to see.*

Verse 3 (Cinema of Future Films)

Come to the Cinema of Future Films,
Select your year with just your tongue,
Go back in time or jump in 5D,
I wonder how much that would cost me?
Back to the future, Back to the future.

{Chorus}

Verse 5 (The Otherham Chronicle)

*The Otherham Chronicle is a small shop,
Printing stories that will make your jaw drop,
The people in this paper, can be very bold,
Here there are some stories that should never be told,
Never be told, never be told.*

{Chorus}

Verse 4 (The Bright Ideas Company)

The Bright Ideas Company is filled with Dwarves.
They're short with their long pointy hats on,
And their big bushy beards that reach to the floor,
Their beards on fire in an indigo blaze
An indigo blaze, an indigo blaze.

Chorus

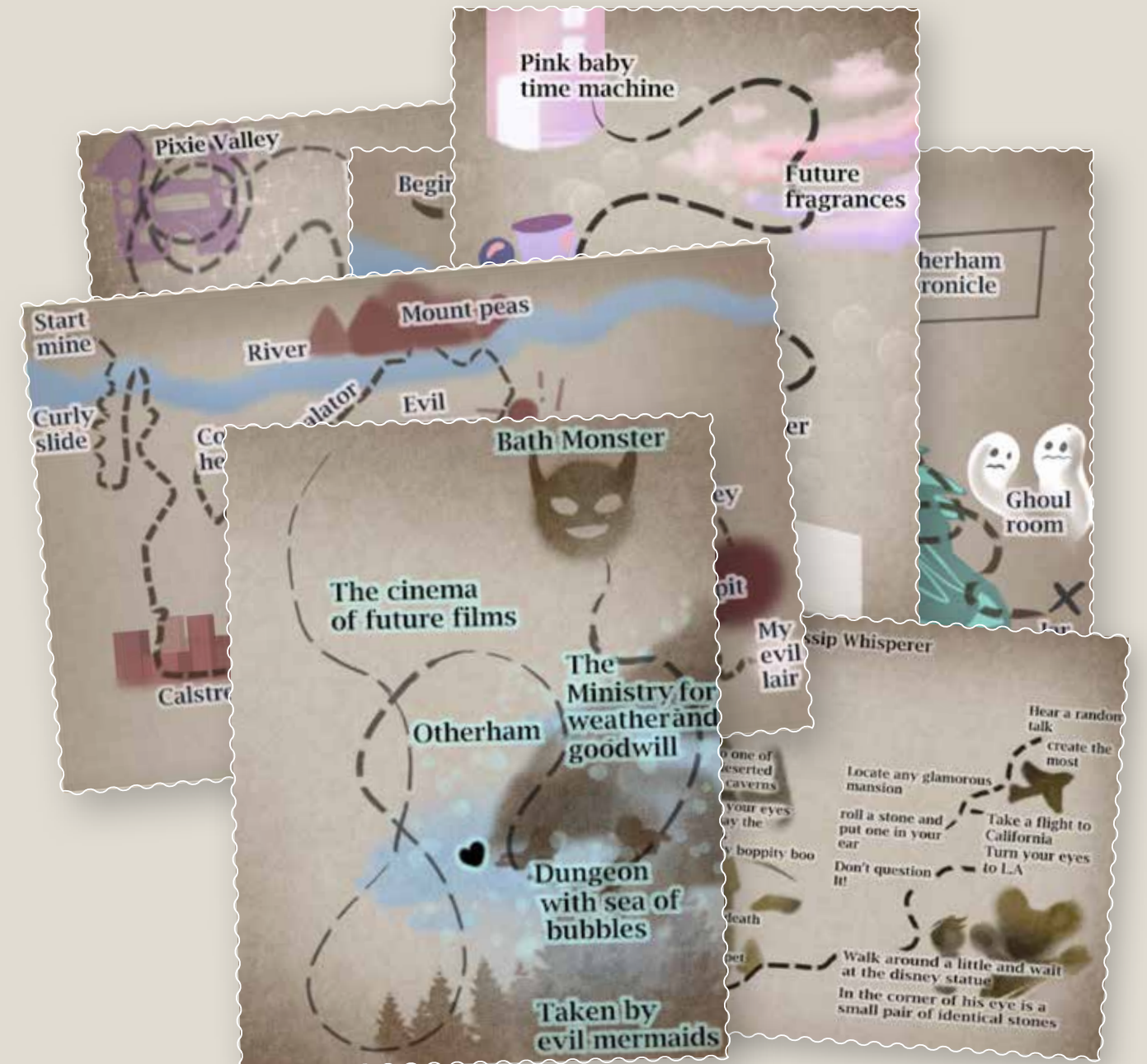
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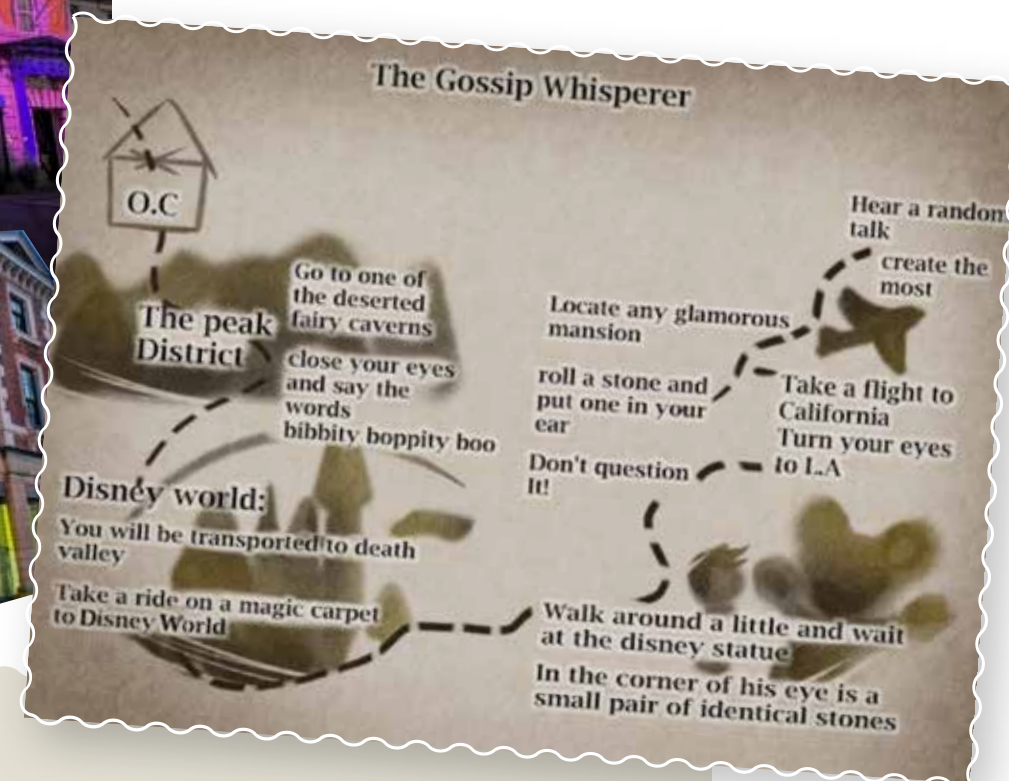
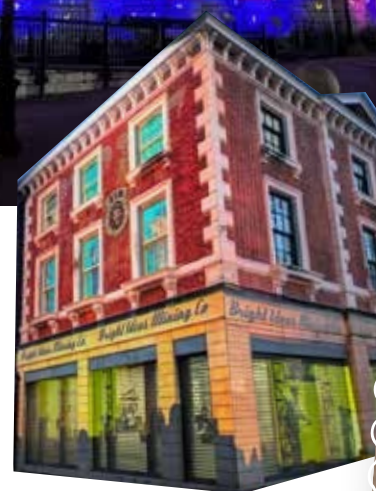


[Click here to listen to the song!](#)



Long Lost Forgotten Items were discovered across the 'Otherham' buildings. Objects and trinkets that to the untrained eye may seem mundane or dull. But to those with imagination and creativity as strong as a thousand winds show their true purpose, history and magical abilities. Here are the maps designed by the young people of 'Otherham' that lead you to these Long Lost Forgotten Items, taking you on twists and turns through Pixie valleys, Dragon lairs and Mount peas through to the comfiest recliner in the history and future of time.

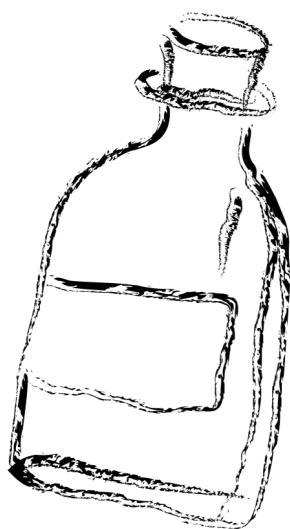




The Jar of Evil

This is the mysterious, unknown object no-one talks about. Past owner- William Fakespear-wanted to take over the world with evil. As a last resort if he failed - he did - he hid it deep inside Otherham Chronicle: in the murky depths. If you want to try and find it look at the map. It is unknown...

If anyone opened this green, filled jar, ETERNAL PERIL! It should stay hidden, if you find it, hide it like a secret. Evil will never happen.



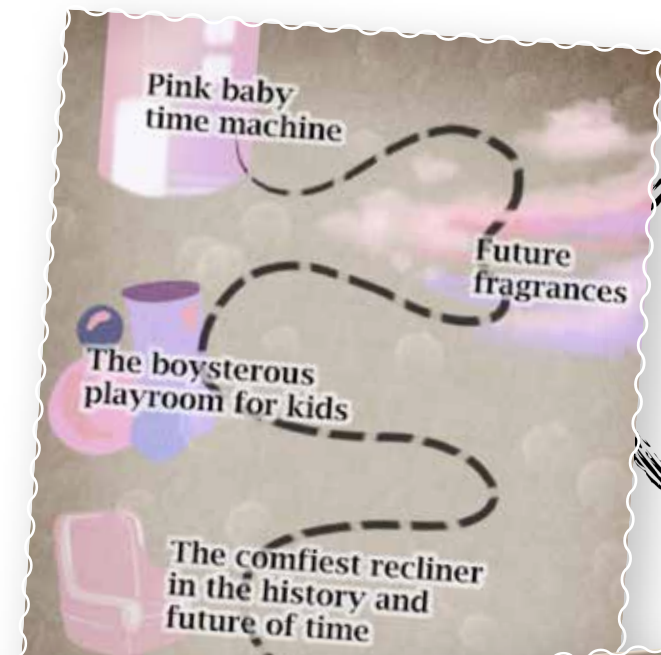
The Bracelet

Throughout history, people have taken advantage of this illusional bracelet by overusing it's magic to look like they're from the 80's every day. One day, Robert had had enough and hid the bracelet in the dump in the Cinema of Future Films. Fortunately, a rainbow cat was chasing a cheeky mouse but ended up catching this pink bracelet instead. The Rainbow Cat carried the bracelet to the 80's room where she likes to dance. It's a good job the Rainbow Cat rescued the bracelet otherwise Otherham would never be able to get a film from the future, as this bracelet unlocks the time machine where future films are received by the Cinema.



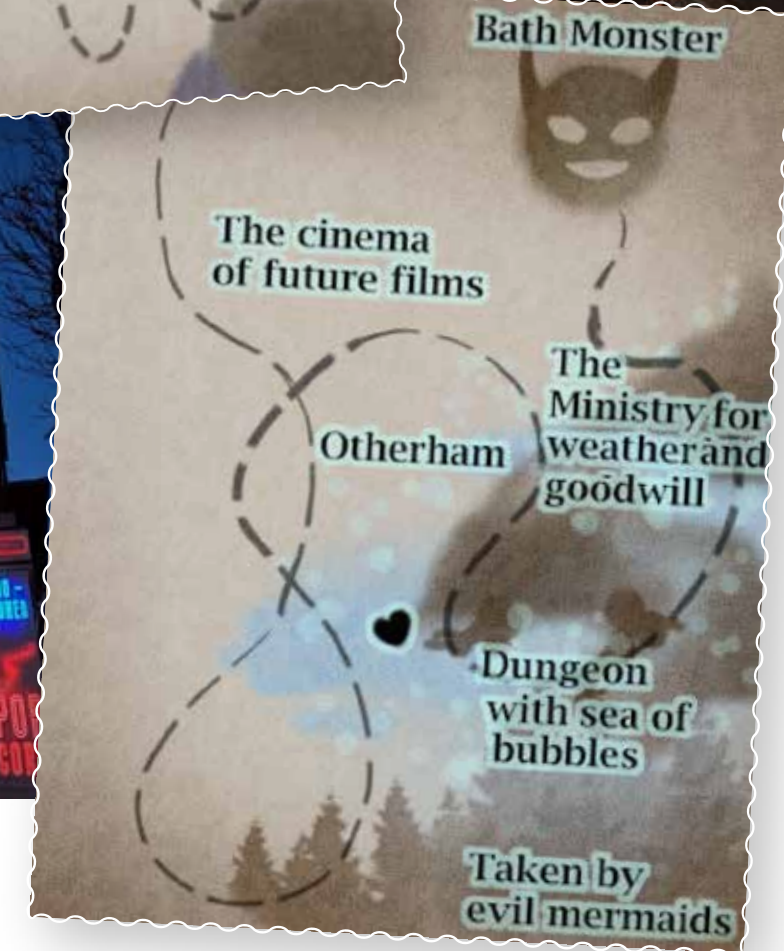
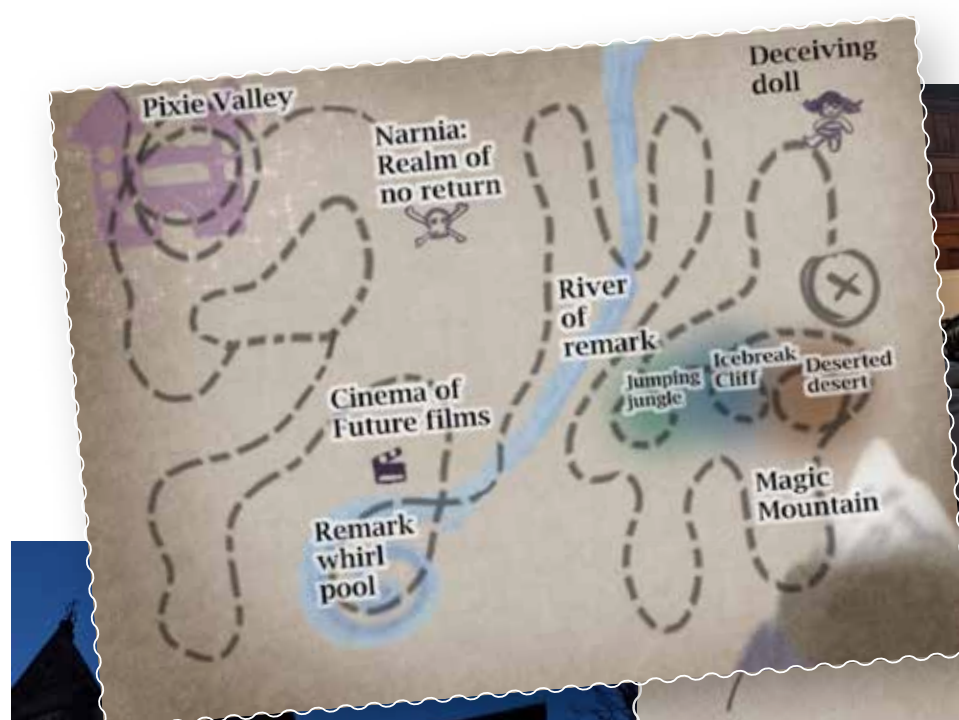
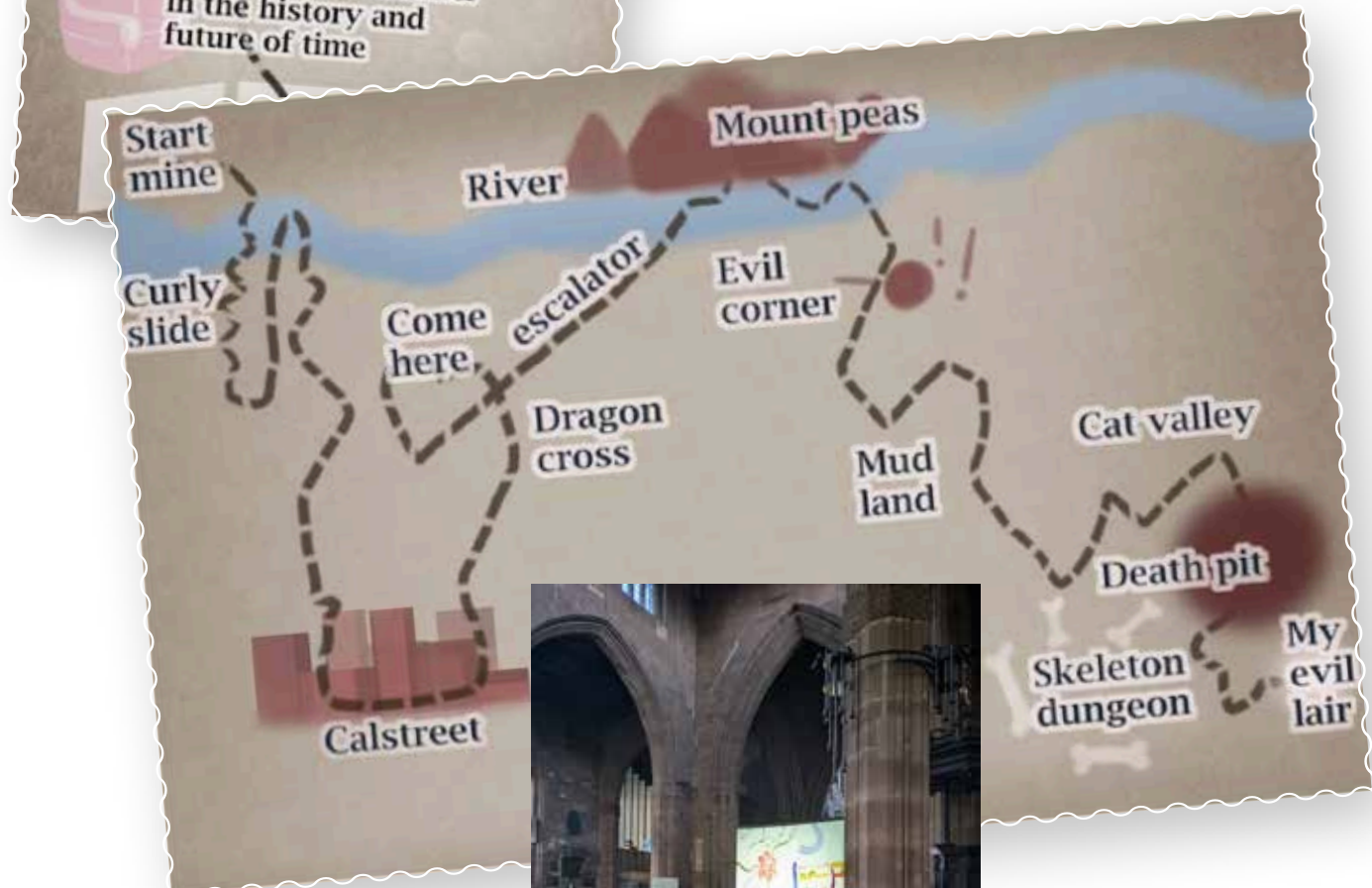
The magic tennis bat, hits the ball every time.
Lost in a magical room door which says no one is allowed.
Go through that door. When on the other side, turn right but the door is locked.
So, the code is 27076. When the door is open, run through and collect the magic tennis bat.





The ball of pure imagination is very important to power the machines but is very wanted for its power.

A hyperball is like a space rocket. It comes out of the spire (aka; rocket depot). The hyperball lived at The Ministry and Graham Grimm stole it. It is now in his secret office in a safe with 3 guards all named Billy Silly. The safe is made of hot dogs. The door is in a room that young people use. The secret door is a portal to the Ministry for Weather and Goodwill. Vent leads to his office. Clue: not the wardrobe. The door is a fake fire door.



The infinite sponge was lost in 1024, due to mermaids, over 1000 years ago and it was important as it absorbed the rain when it was stolen from the sea of bubbles and the bath monster.

Thanks are extended to Flux Rotherham
and Imitating the Dog, without whom
this project would not have been
possible. Thanks are also dedicated to
Grimm & Co's core funders

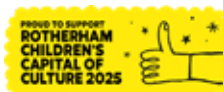
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