CHARLIE ALICE RAYA

easy town books

42 towns and counting

Ideas for thriving and inspiring towns

graphics collection

42 towns and counting by Charlie Alice Raya is a collection of ideas for thriving and inspiring towns.

The town list for this collection is now complete and contains ideas for 77 towns.

It will take some more time to transcribe and edit all the notes for these towns. In the meantime, this collection presents the graphics and some idea snippets for each town – a bit of food for thought for the road.

If you have any question about a town idea, or if you would like to contribute to an idea, or challenge one of them, please get in touch:

contact@towns-and-cities-international.org

Additional material is frequently published on the website towns and cities international:

www.town-and-cities-international.org

‘I just talked to Robyn, one of the town planners from the New Zealand Team,’ Hachiro said, leaning back in his armchair. ‘I know Alice is against it, but I hope we’ll build more than one town. And I hope that each town will have its own focus.’

‘What do you mean?’

‘Our first Easy Town will focus on the neurological patient. Everything is centred around that: research, treatment, making the town part of the healing process, giving the damaged brain stimuli and so on. But I think every other town could have a focus of its own. I’m dreaming of a fashion town. A vibrant centre for dot. international. And while I love Japan and Rebun Island, my home, I have a great fondness for New Zealand and its people. And I’d love to build dot.city there. Besides, I love the Maori body paintings and their work with feathers. It would be great to learn from them. I already had a chat with Tangaoroa from the New Zealand Team. He’s sceptical, but I think he might open up, given time.’

‘Hm. How would you focus a town on fashion?’

‘Simple, we’d have everything we need to create, produce and present fashion in our town. And we’d teach all the arts of everything involved: tailoring, drawing, design, composition (…)’

book 2/1, travelling, Australia

Introduction

What if towns had a purpose, a mission, a focus? Something to aim for?

These questions were not on my mind when I started to make the notes for Easy Town. Then, my questions were: what can be done to make the recovery process for neurological patients more promising, and how could the relatives and friends of a patient be supported?

But as I kept working on the ideas for Easy Town, and later started to write the easy town books, more town ideas emerged, and at their core are these questions: What if a town had a purpose, or a mission, or a focus? Or something to aim for?

In the upcoming book, 42 towns and counting, the 77 town ideas are rough drafts, sometimes a collection of thoughts, little splashes, dots and notes for each town, sometimes a dialogue, mostly an exploration into what might be possible and how.

Features discussed in the book will include: the focus of a town and what that might imply, the composition of a town, its layout and architecture, its businesses and business practices, its particular research questions, its approaches to coexisting with nature, its societal and political questions, and more.

Both the easy town books and the dot.story already provide ideas and thoughts on those issues.

Also included will be the towns specials on different easy town websites, which look at a town idea from the specific perspective of a business idea or subject. The town specials on the Hub website, for example, explore how the administrative tasks of a town can be simplified.

By now the towns collection has become a journey into what is possible if some rethinking is done.

And the more I think about it the more it seems to me that every single of these town ideas has advantages over towns which simply house people, or guard the memory of some dead person, or some historical event.

The towns presented in this collection will not only be alive, they will create, inspire, thrive and live, I guess.

Why bother with towns at all?

WHY BUILD A TOWN AND NOT A CITY?

‘We don’t want to put more people through an experiment than strictly necessary.’

Some in the auditorium laughed.

‘And it will be easier to make adjustments in a town. Also, large cities suffer from overpopulation, and small towns suffer from an exodus of people and jobs. If we discover how to run a town attractively, then our results will help cities and towns alike.’

book 1, beginning, at the conference

42 towns
and counting

graphics collection

Towns with a focus on

health

Easy Town

Focus on neurological patients

Easy Town

Focus: The neurological patient

‘Our first Easy Town will focus on the neurological patient. Everything is centred around that: research, treatment, making the town part of the healing process, giving the damaged brain stimuli and so on.’

book 2/1, travelling, Australia

See also
www.towns-and-cities-international.org
Key material about the easy town story

Sensepool

Focus on the human senses

Sensepool

Focus: The human senses

While Easy Town focuses on the injured brain, Sensepool focuses on exploring the uninjured human senses. And each part of the town will represent one human sense.

This representation will be apparent in the architecture, the businesses, the research, the gardens, the museums, and the entertainments in each respective part of the town.

Hearts Beat Bridge

Focus on the human heart

Hearts Beat Bridge

Focus: The human heart

This town is all about the heart: the functions of the heart, how to keep it healthy, how to heal it, heart procedures through the centuries, the use of the heart in stories and myths, and more.

Bonedee

Focus on orthopaedic patients

Bonedee

Focus: The orthopaedic patient

I picture Bonedee a bit like a playground. A place with a lot of research into every single bone in our bodies, yes, but also a place where we can have fun, like climbing a monumental skeleton, walk-through skeletons, bone throwing competitions and the like. A place, in short, where we can learn to appreciate this masterpiece of nature, and where we can learn how to take care of it, and how to use it in the best possible way.

Skin Town

Focus on skin health, cosmetics and leather

Skin Town

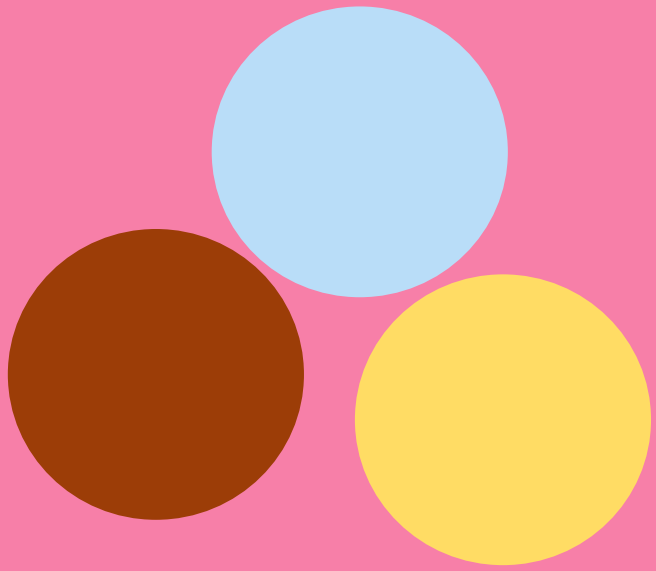
Focus: Skin health, cosmetics and leather

Skin Town is about everything that is relevant for the human skin, and about working with leather.

This includes:

- skincare
- skin health
- cosmetics
- skin art, as in the best tattoos
- skin colour narratives and how to address them
- the effects of fabrics on skin
- restoring damaged skin
- leather products through the centuries
- drums and more

See also www.dot-international.net/blueprint-for-soap-opera



Ice Cream Springs

Focus on the human psyche

Ice Cream Springs

Focus: The human psyche

Ice Cream Springs has three main areas:

- researching mental health
- offering retreats & support for people who need rest, healing and inspiration
- Arts & Crafts as connector, tool and mediator in healing processes

About this town's name:

When someone is in a bad place, inviting them to get some ice cream can make a big difference.

ViMiTON

Focus on vitamins & minerals

ViMiTon

Focus: Vitamins, minerals and other food supplements

ViMiTon focuses on which vitamins and minerals the body needs, and how the body can get those without any supplements.

Additionally ViMiTon would look into how fruits and vegetables can be grown, cooked and prepared with the least loss of vital elements.

There is also an interesting idea for a cooperation between Skin Town and ViMiTon in the pipeline.

See also
www.dot-international.net/blueprint-for-breathe-pharma

Honeycomb

Focus on diabetes

Honeycomb

Focus: Diabetes

I remember a classmate who had diabetes. In fact, that's all I remember about her.

She couldn't eat what she wanted, she had to test her blood and inject herself.

It's that image of blood testing and injecting that stuck with me.

And among many other things, Honeycomb would be a place for children with diabetes, be it as a resident or for a holiday break so that they aren't for once the kid that gets stared at in a kind of horrified fascination.

Cancer
Sucks
Lake

Cancer Sucks Lake

Focus: Cancer

Sometimes it's better not to sugar-coat a situation. Having cancer sucks. That's just how it is. But there are ways out of it. Finding and improving those ways would be one major focus of this town.

The other major focus is the research into what causes cancer, and how it can be avoided in the first place.

Cake Town

Focus on pandemics

Which are, as we all know by now, a piece of cake.

Cake Town

Focus: Pandemics

Contrary to most other towns, Cake Town would be divided into rather exclusive parts: acute patients, long-term patients and research. The fourth part, to make this cake complete, would be a large park.

Like some other cakes this town would need a good helping of cream. And the best cream for this town would be a second town, nearby, which has the business diversity and cultural offers required to make Cake Town work and thriving.

Health Creek

Focus on healthcare systems, general health, and interdisciplinary medicine & healthcare

Health Creek

Focus: Interdisciplinary medicine & healthcare, and What makes a healthy environment for humans?

Health Creek would be something of a centre for all health-related towns, a place where research results from all other towns come together. And instead of focusing on a specific illness, the researchers of this town would work on how to improve interdisciplinary medicine.

Other research and test fields would include: adequate healthcare systems, rethinking hospitals, and how to improve medical education, especially with regard to social skills, plus the question of which external factors contribute to human health.

Drugsdale

Focus on medicine

Drugsdale

Focus: Medicine

‘All towns will be amazing.’
‘Yeah, we just need to find places for them, and I hope Brazil won’t suggest a Drug City.’
‘Why not? Imagine a city that takes on the pharmaceutical giants.’
Alice laughed. ‘Now, there’s a thought.’

book 2/2, travelling, Romania

See also
www.dot-international.net/blueprint-for-breathe-pharma

Herbsnest

Focus on medical properties of herbs

Herbsnest

Focus: Medical properties of herbs

In the planning stage for this town, I would start by researching the history of using herbs in medicine. Based on this, I would plan a town which takes the visitor through that history by using a combination of period buildings, and gardens with the relevant herbs.

Sportsham

Sportsham

Focus: Sports

Apart from a wide range of sports opportunities, this town would develop and build everything that is needed in sports, from clothing to footballs, or running shoes to canoes.

The Full Monty

Focus on the human body

The Full Monty

Focus: The human body

Who wants to live in the colon district? might be a question someone on the planning team asks, because one of the ideas for this town is to build it like a human body (one half for each sex, and yes, I know what your next questions are).

Saying this, one of the other ideas is to have body gardens, where people can walk into an oversized model of the human body and get — well, probably a little scared — but also a better idea of how amazing the human body is.

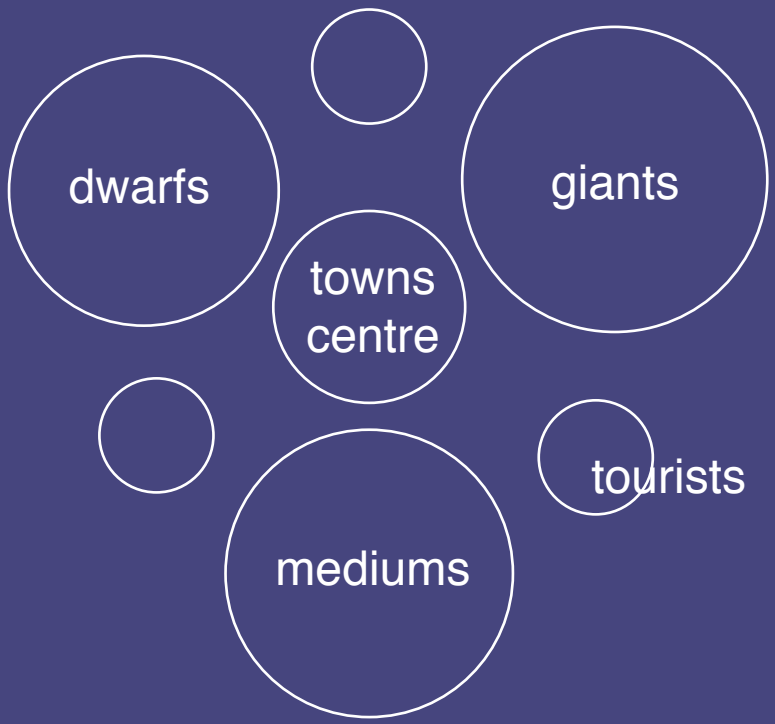
This would be an ideal town for students of all medical professions.

But there is more to it …

See also the towns special on
www.we-need-to-talk-about-sex.org/ towns-specials-and-the-sex-talk

Towns with a focus on

special characteristics



Three Towns

Focus on the human body size
dwarfs, mediums, giants

Three Towns

Towns run by and for

Town 1: dwarfs
Town 2: mediums
Town 3: giants

There will also be special considerations for big people, but since they come in all sizes, they might not get their own town – or maybe they will.

Focus on disabilities
Plumburgh

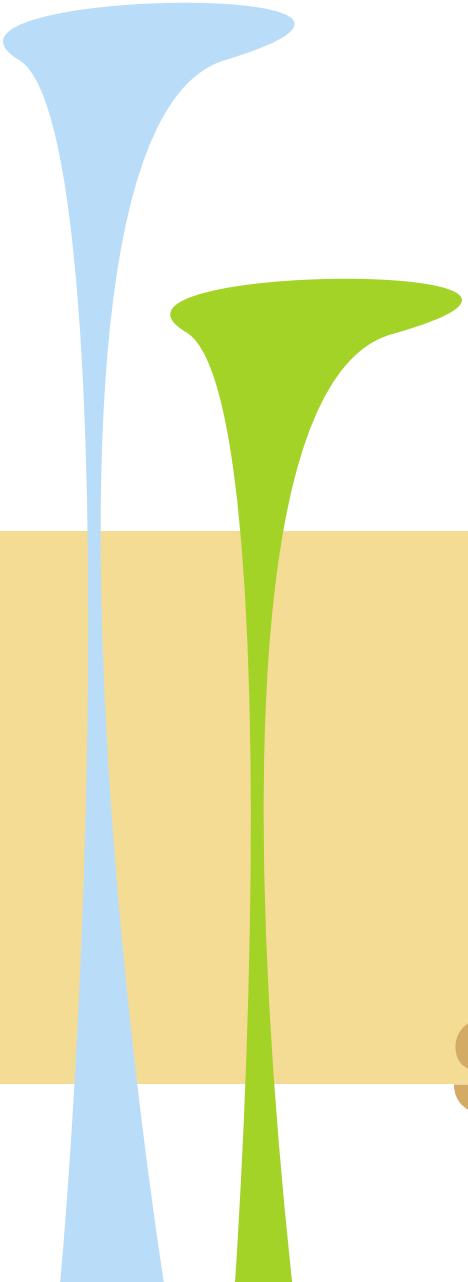
Plumburgh

A town run by and for people with disabilities

When the idea for a town for disabled people came up, it had a bitter taste, and the crimes against disabled people over the centuries rushed into my mind.

But then, I thought, no. Only because this idea conjures up terrible images, doesn't mean it's a bad idea. After all, it's always easier to live with people who face the same questions.

So, still a little uncertain, I here present Plumburgh, a haven for anyone with disabilities, their relatives and their friends.



Silent Town

Focus on silence & deafness

Silent Town

Focus: Silence & deafness, a town run by deaf people

I like silence. Silence isn't necessarily noiseless but quiet and unexcited. The easy town books and the dot.story feature Silent Gardens.

The Silent Garden is self-explanatory. It's a place where no one speaks, and where you can go for a stroll, sit on a bench, read a book … I wouldn't go for flowerbeds or fountains but rather for a wilder, untamed kind of place with little trails, old trees, wild plants and maybe a small stream.

book 1, beginning, week 1

And I thought a Silent Town would be great too, a place where you can go and — well, be silent.

Combining being silent with the opportunity to communicate in sign language was the next intriguing thought.

See also www.book-stations.org/sign-language

Lulu Shore

Focus on blindness

Lulu Shore

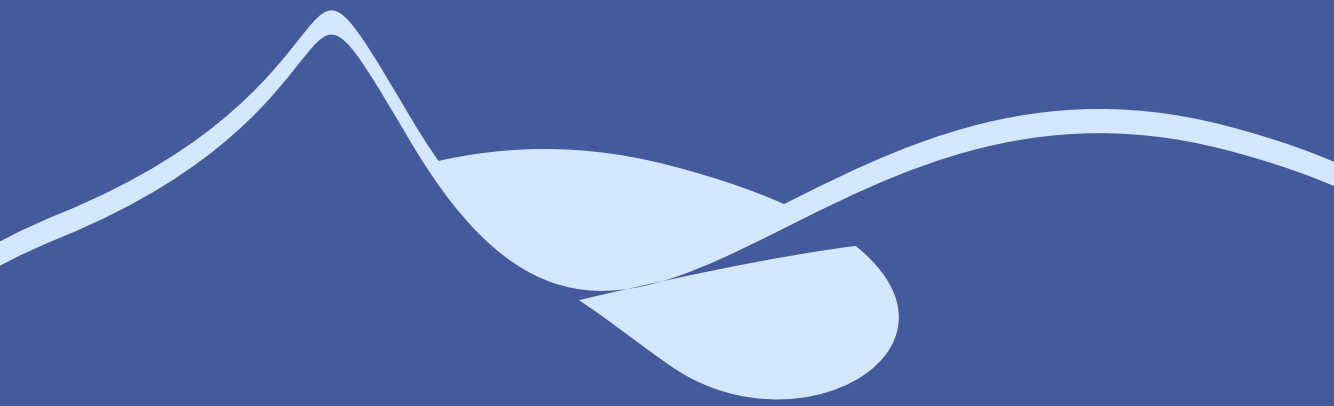
A town run by and for blind people

This town is named after the fictional blind Lulu who trained to become a librarian in the Great Library of Sitseaf in Otaon and baffled the library's council with her skills.

See book 2, travelling

See
www.book-stations.org/braille-at-book-stations
www.book-stations.org/casey-s-bookshop-a-concluding-example

Square Root Nest



Focus on autism

Square Root Nest

A town run by and for people with autism

Towns with a focus on natural resources

Focus on forests
and wildlife
Bears Cross

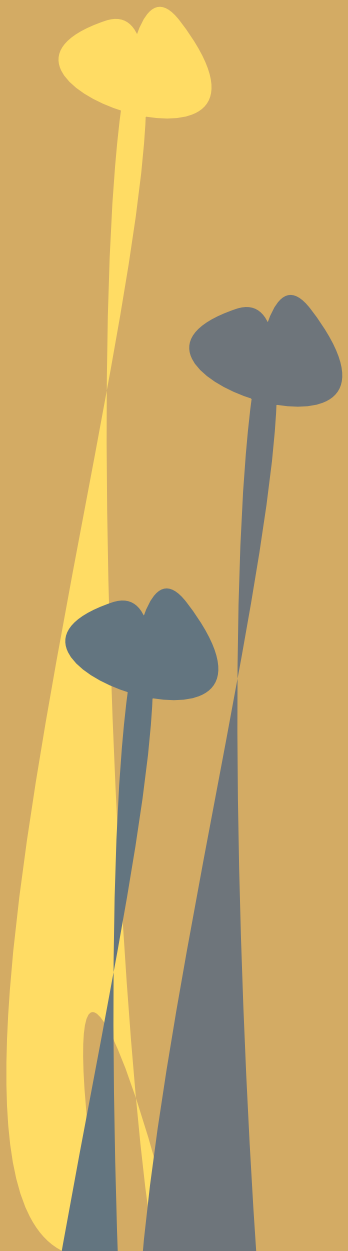
Bears Cross

Focus: Forests and forest wildlife

Dennie did his best to distract them both by telling Alice about the vast Russian forests which were falling victim to speculations and corruption like so many other forests worldwide. He spoke fondly of bears and wolfs, forest lakes, hiking trails, the paper industry, timber families and the rich forest wildlife, before once again dropping into a tirade about all the arseholes who had nothing better to do than to cut into the planet's hearts, and all the stupid, short-sighted customers who only knew one motto: want, want, want. And the jerks who said: they want, we deliver — in prime time.

book 2/2, travelling, Russia

Land
Mills
Focus on agriculture



Land Mills

Focus: Agriculture

It might be interesting to test some kind of job rotation system in this town. Say, someone is a doctor, and three days a month, she helps out on the farm, and two days a month, she runs the ice-cream parlour.

Or the tailor splits his time between, tailoring, farm work and tour guide.

There are several advantages to this approach: no one is stuck in a single job, farmers will get a lot more support, and more people engage in looking after the land and after the town.

Focus on food production
Munchport

Munchport

Focus: Food production and research

Munchport is about food production and about research regarding diets and methods of processing food.

The subjects researched include: what makes healthy food, how to produce food sustainably, what are the production limits to avoid damage to natural resources, how to organise the production process so that every worker has a healthy work environment, what kinds of packaging are sustainable, what are the optimal sizes for production facilities so that many different regions can be involved in the production processes?

Sea's Murmur

Focus on oceans,
fishery and boats

Sea’s Murmur

Focus: Oceans, fishery and boats

In Sea’s Murmur, people will build sailing boats of all sizes and for all oceans. For this they will collect the world’s knowledge about boats, and extent it to include sustainable boat building and greater security.

The other branch of Sea’s Murmur is about fishing and about guarding the ocean’s ecosystem as well as the beaches and dunes.

Rivermouth

Focus on rivers, boats, wildlife

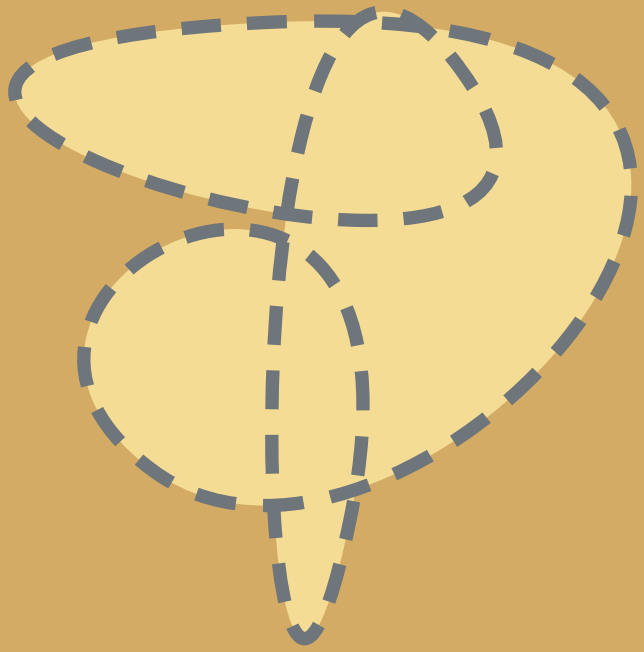
Rivermouth

Focus: Rivers, boats, wildlife

Alice strolled alongside the river, mostly walking on the thick grass, sometimes going down to a small sandy beach, other times climbing over a fallen tree, or walking around a rock.
Would they have to count the fish in the river to determine how many they could fish? But did an excess of fish ever happen? Didn't nature take care to keep a balance? But if the human is part of the ecosystem, then catching some fish might be part of maintaining the balance?
Hm.
Alice stopped and watched a group of brown ducks, waddling along the opposite riverbank until the bank was nearly level with the water. There the ducks slid into the river.
Would the ducks mind some birdwatchers? Or photographers? Or playing children?
Alice walked on.
The river was broad enough for three small ferries, passing each other.
Yes, the river could be used to transport goods and people. It just had to be done without polluting the water, and without affecting the wildlife.

book 2/2, travelling, China

Metals &
Minerals Bay



Metals & Minerals Bay

Focus: metals & minerals

In its beginnings, research will play a major role in this town, not least into how not to screw our fellow humans, and how not to screw up our planet.

Towns with a focus on

sustainability

Nopla Nowa Valley

Focus on no plastic, no waste

Nopla Nowa Valley

Focus: No plastic, no waste

This town could grow into a city. After all, we are still so entangled in plastic that a whole city could be kept busy with exploring alternatives to plastic.

Coexhill
Focus on the coexistence
between human and nature

Coexhill

Focus: Coexistence between human & nature

'Imagine it in spring when everything is blossoming. It is an ideal place for your project. You said beauty is important.'
'Yes, but we can't build in a place like this. We would only destroy it.'
'You could build with nature in mind.'
'Test if preservation is possible?'
'Or coexistence,' Lian said.

book 2/2, travelling, China

See also
www.book-stations.org/coexisting-with-nature-at-book-stations
www.dot-international.net/dot-stations

Cycles Gate

Focus on building and producing
with natural processes in mind

Cycles Gate

Focus: Building and producing with natural processes in mind

‘Humans are the only organisms who constantly create things that neither regenerate nor digest or live. It’s as if we make the planet swallow plastic balls. No one can survive swallowing plastic balls, not even once.’
‘You’re not wrong. We have made our world into an artificial world. It’s not properly alive any more.’
‘And we keep adding dead things, suffocating our planet and ourselves.’

book 2/1, travelling, South Africa

See also
www.book-stations.org/book-cycles
www.book-stations.org/cycles-and-digesting-at-book-stations

Gardens
Springs

Focus on gardening & gardens

Gardens Springs

Focus: Gardening & gardens

I don’t know much about gardening, but I guess you can easily fill a town if not a city with people who love gardening, and who are happy to further explore the past, the present and the possible future of gardening, probably with a special eye on diverse insect populations, soil quality, which plants can and which can’t be neighbours, and the like. It would also be great to have a huge botanic garden and a great library with gardening knowledge from around the world.

However, I am more interested in gardens with a specific focus. You can find a list of gardens on the towns and cities website.

See

https://www.towns-and-cities-international.org/gardens-for-towns-and-cities
https://www.book-stations.org/gardens-at-book-stations

Lightville

Focus on energy consumptions
& energy sources

Lightville

Focus: Energy consumption & energy sources

‘The start-from-zero approach allows us to begin with a clean board. Take power, for example. The most sustainable town in terms of power consumption is a town which doesn’t use any power at all. This is our zero point, and our starting point. Can we make the town work without any power? Yes, of course, we can. Humans lived without power for thousands of years. Next, we identify areas where the lack of power is undesirable, such as living without a fridge in a warm climate. Todd?’

book 1, beginning, week 4

Towns with a focus on

arts

Sound City

Focus on sound & music

Sound City

Focus: Sound & music

Sound City is one of my favourite towns, and it is a highlight in the Romania chapter of book 2/2, travelling.

I can’t wait for the first Sound City Music Festival which, according to some characters in the story, will take place as part of the ground-breaking ceremony.

Dancerock

Dancerock

Focus: Dance

Apart from the professional dancers and dance shows, a lot in town would be about enjoying dance regardless of whether you follow any specific school of dance, which dance skills you have, or whether you just like to move to music.

The Party Den, one of the main gardens in the easy town books, is probably larger in this town than anywhere else. This Party Den could be built in cooperation with Sound City and Gardens Spring, and together these three towns could develop Party Dens around the world.

Storyland

Storyland

Focus: Stories & storytelling

Storyland focuses on everything that has a connection to stories, except publishing and marketing, the first is the main focus of Pepperbourgh and the second is an issue that needs some proper rethinking and reevaluating, but that will be some other town's purpose — maybe Unlearn Wood is best suited for this task.

Come to think of it, there are some other exceptions: Journalists Quay will look into the use of imaginative stories in journalism. And I guess Speakers Ground will get the thankless task of identifying and rethinking stories in politics. But maybe they will get some help from Thinkers Bay.

Playcove

Focus on theatre

Playcove

Focus: Theatre

Each of the art towns should be a work of art, with playful and sometimes surreal elements.

Playcove, for example, could have a long gate with red curtains which are lifted every morning at sunrise.

I know there are good reasons not to do this, but it would be fun to find a way to make it work.

Dreamrivers

Focus on film

Dreamrivers

Focus: Film

One of the things that always fascinated me about film were the many crafts that came together to make a movie. Presenting this diversity in crafts will be part of how this town is built.

Comedythorne

Comedythorne

Focus: Comedy

Funny enough, I see a town with loads of little platforms everywhere, microphones included, and comedians testing their latest jokes.

Visual Arts Splash

Visual Arts Splash

Focus: Visual arts

This is more of a quiet place, with easels everywhere.

And the town is only open to the public for twelve weeks a year, when it presents its artist's work in the huge underground museums.

Design Metropolis

Design Metropolis

Focus: Design

Wow, this has to be an extraordinary place where each building, each square and each garden is a masterpiece in its own right and style.

The different designers are mingling, but here and there you see a group of them shine through.

Arts Capital

Arts Captial

Focus: Celebrating the arts

This city is a celebration of the arts, and it works closely with all arts-related towns.

While Design Metropolis is kind of shiny and even has a touch of sternness, Arts Capital has a lot more experimental and playful elements. And it is more flexible, meaning that all elements are subject to change.

In this capital, art never stops to evolve, and no part or aspect of the town is built for duration.

Towns with a focus on

crafts

pepperbourgh
Focus on printing and publishing

pepperbourgh

Focus: Printing & publishing

This will be a town with special reading places, like tree houses, public cottages with fireplaces, haylofts, rafts on the lake, the roofs of some towers, and maybe there is a pipe delivery system for books.

And of course, this town will have book festivals, probably six weekends, one each month in the darker seasons.

See also
www.book-stations.org/what-about-publishers

TOYSTON

Toyston

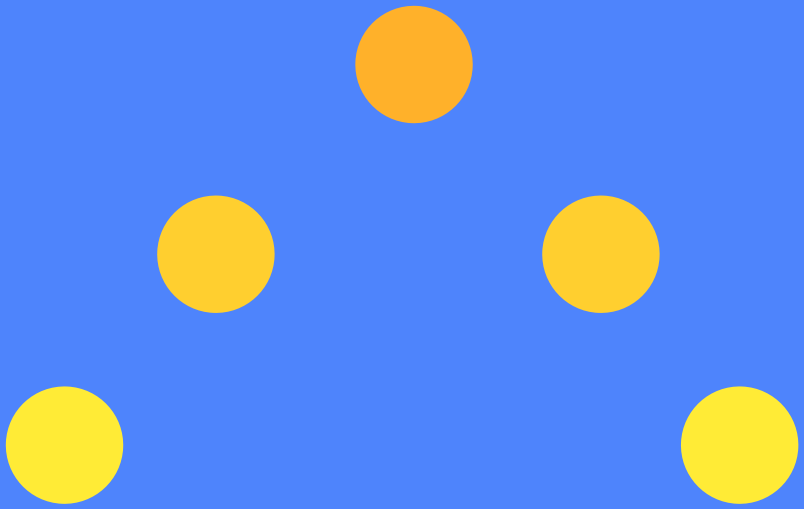
Focus: Toys & games

This town will test whether it is possible to trade in ideas & designs rather than in finished products. The idea is to get away from mass production and give local craftspeople a chance to produce toys & games.

Apart from this, the craftspeople of this town will create new toys, and the town itself will be full of little chances for games, and I am not just talking chessboards in the Games Park.

See also
www.dot-international.net/blueprint-for-toys-around-the-world

Focus on magic tricks



Doves Creek

Doves Creek

Focus: Magic tricks

Doves Creek is really a sister of Toyston and probably a cousin of Playcove.
Funny enough, I'm not a fan of magic tricks. But the idea of a whole town that's all about magic tricks and that's built with tricks and little surprises all over the place, is something that puts a big smile on my face.

And this would be a good place to test the idea of fold towns, as in twice a year the town unfolds for festivals and crowds of visitors, and afterwards it folds up again to a cosy size where the magicians of this world rest, practise and teach their tricks.

Oh, and there would be doves, loads of them. Though maybe not all 300 species of their family.

dot.city
Focus on clothing

dot.city

Focus: Clothing

‘I am dreaming of a town that focuses on fashion. A vibrant centre for dot.international.’

book 2/1, travelling, Australia

See also
www.dot-international.net
www.dot-international.net/dot-city

ShoePort

Shoe Port

Focus: Footwear

‘People who walk properly, and in shoes right for them, have a lot less trouble with their back.’

book 3, shaping

To me Shoe Port has something very down to earth. It’s about the function of our feet, and their interaction with the body as a whole, about the craft of shoe-making, about shoes and socks for all occasions, about leather and other materials for shoes, about recycling, repairing and foot health & care.

See also
https://www.dot-international.net/blueprint-for-shoe-port

Cabinet Green

Focus on furniture

Cabinet Green

Focus: Furniture

Cabinet Green is all about furniture, and it combines designs and production of practical furniture with offers for bespoke creations. In all cases durability and sustainability play a big role.

See also
https://www.dot-international.net/blueprint-for-hidden-doors

Two Wheels Dawn

Focus: Everything with two wheels or more

Two Wheels Dawn will be a centre for the business idea Two Wheels which uses a business model centred around the core-job principle.

Iron Sparrow Brook

Focus on iron & irony

Iron Sparrow Brook

Focus: Work with iron & irony

I once knew a blacksmith, and I always liked the smell of iron. I guess that's why I have a bit of a soft spot for the work with iron.

However, now that I think about it, I wonder whether using iron doesn't need a rethink before there can be a town. After all, you need enormous heat to work on iron, mining is problematic, transporting critical, and there are probably more undesirable effects on the environment.
In which case, this town will start as a research unit, and then hopefully the research team will find solutions for working with iron sustainably.

Original Craftsdom

Focus on preserving crafts

Original Craftsdom

Focus: Preserving crafts from around the world

The towners of Original Craftsdom are guardians and craftspeople.

It is their task to preserve every craft, past and present, found on this planet.

Preserving includes: documenting, practising, teaching, to be nice to tourists who show an interest in their work — and a lot more.

Towns with a focus on

technology & devices

straight forward mountain

Focus on programming

straight forward mountain

Focus: Programming

The big points in this town is to create straight forward systems and software. Or in other words: software without any shenanigans and with a high level of adaptability and choice for the user.

HighFlyFold

Focus on
technical devices

HighFlyFold

Focus: Technical devices

This town is about all kinds of devices from alarm clocks and the project phones to computers and everything in between. Some of the main challenges are: how to build durable and with replaceable items, how to build plastic-free, which alternatives are there to rare metals, how to reduce the use of resources, and what are mechanical alternatives?

HUB
GATE

Hub Gate

Focus: The Hub and Hub Stations

So far, the Hub is an invention for the easy town books.

In the story, the Hub started as the project's own social media platform and has evolved into an internet within the internet.

The Hub features include everything social media has to offer, plus a search engine, a book library, a cinema, a sound basement, an art gallery, a shopping mall, a bank, special town features and more.

In Hub Gate every aspect of the Hub would have its core base.

Towns with a focus on

ways of life

HOMECASTLE

Focus on what makes a home

Homecastle

Focus: What makes a home?

This town is about looking into every aspects that contributes to making a person feel at home.

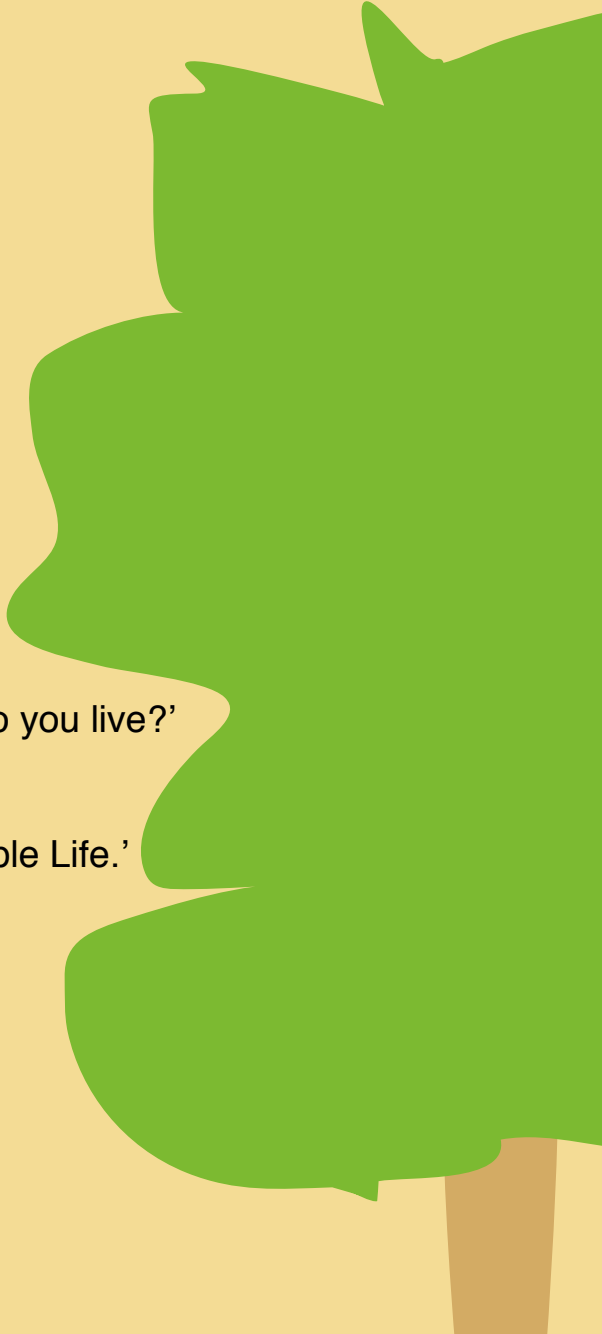
This includes subjects as diverse as: the size of homes, interior design, communities, air and noise quality, friends, proximity to a work place and more.

The Simple Life

The Simple Life

Focus: The simple life

Imagine someone asks you: ‘Where do you live?’
‘The Simple Life.’
‘Not what, where?’
‘That’s the name of my town: The Simple Life.’
‘Oh. What’s it like?’
‘Simple. Life. The. Really.’



Dungeons Tree

Focus on living underground

Dungeons Tree

Focus: Living underground

The first town I remember building as a child was underground, but I think that the underground worlds of the dwarfs in Tolkien's and Pratchett's stories have influenced the ideas for this town, too.

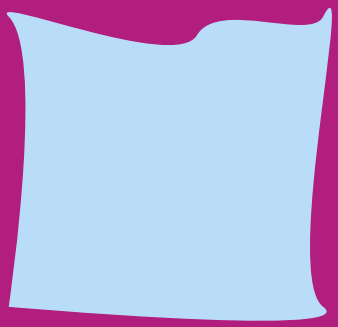
And then there is a rather practical consideration: since nature needs space to properly recover, and since humans do a lot of things that don't actually require daylight, it is useful to explore options of using underground spaces — below the tree root line, of course.

The first ideas for underground spaces come up in book 1, beginning and more details will get into book 3 and 4, and of course into this towns collection.

Ritual Well

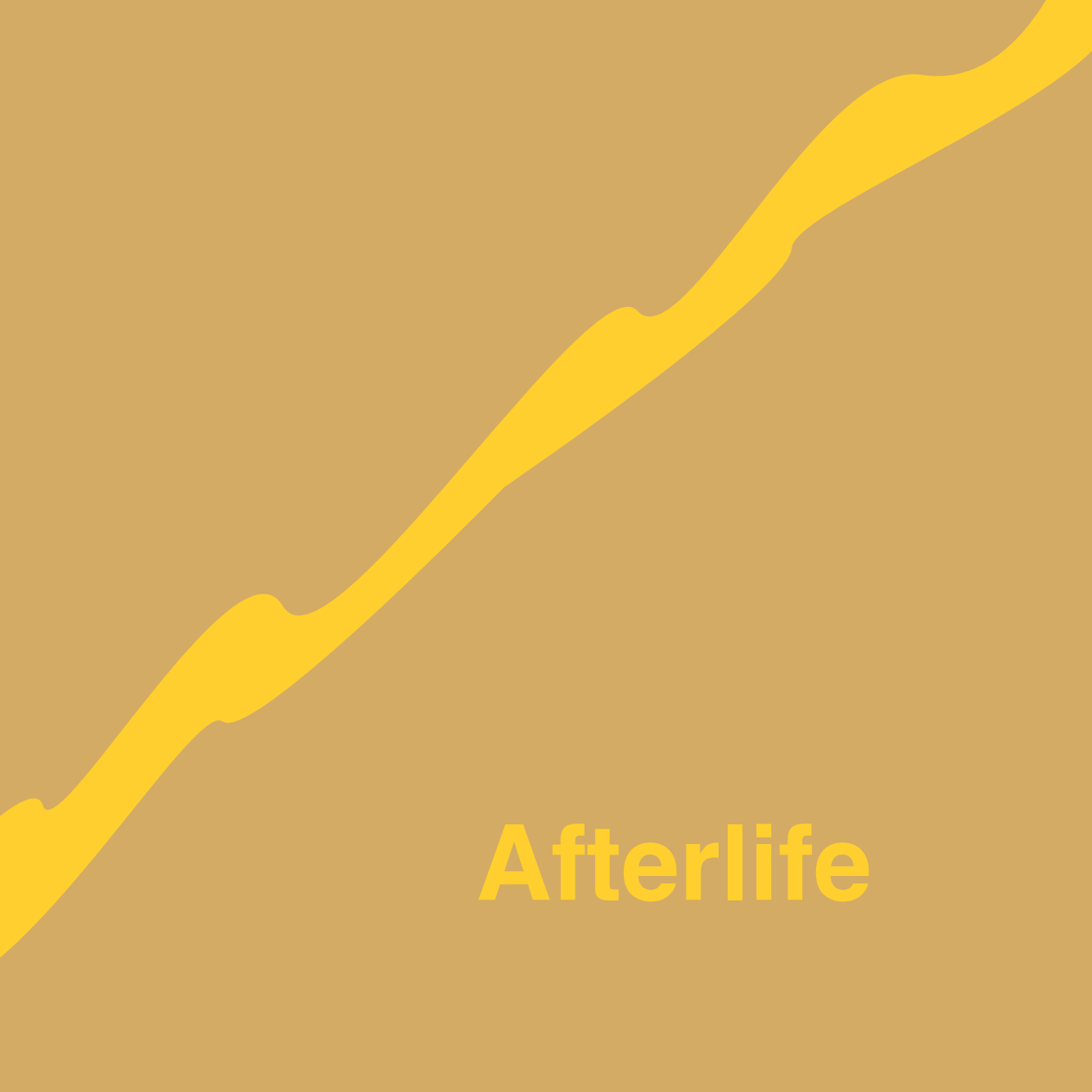
Ritual Well

Focus: Rituals



‘In the early days, the ritual chambers were a great secret. King Laril and Queen Liral used these chambers to experiment with rituals from all over the known world. And they invented some rituals themselves.’

book 2/2, travelling, Otaon


Afterlife

Afterlife

Focus: Dying, grief, loss, death rituals and legacies

Afterlife is a place where you can go to mourn a lost friend, where you can prepare yourself for death, where you can asks all sorts of questions about death, or where you can go for the last months or weeks of your life.

Despite this rather heavy focus on the end of a life, it should be a light place, and I think jazz should play a part in this town.

Towns with a focus on

family & growing up

Hapamahachi

Happy parents make for happy children

Hapamahachi

Focus: Happy parents make for happy children

If you want to help children, help their parents.

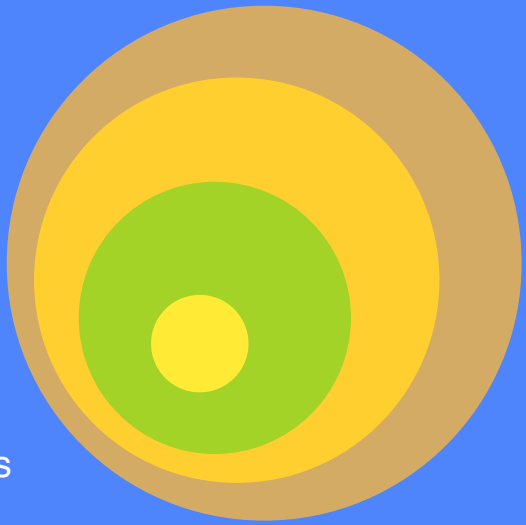
This town explores what makes parents unhappy, and it offers extensive services for unhappy parents and their children.

TOAMWELL

Teens on a mission

TOAMWELL

Teens on a mission
Almost a town run by and for teenagers



‘It might be good to interrupt school and give teenagers one or two years off so they can deal with puberty, with the changes in their bodies and minds.’

‘You’re not serious.’

‘Actually, I am. (…) And after walking and talking, puberty is the most enormous change in a human’s body and mind. Why not give this transition period proper time too? Why force the teens to do and learn things which are irrelevant to what they are going through?’

book 2/2, travelling, China

Orphans Paradise

Orphans Paradise

Almost a town run by and for orphans

I have wondered many times whether it wouldn't be better to give orphans and children in screwed up situations a space where they can organise themselves. It would take time to figure out how to make something like this work safely, but such a town could become a place where kids could grow up without having to deal with pity or patronising, and a place where no one asks silly questions about parents.

Kids are very resilient. What they — and most adults — need is a clear framework and the freedom to explore.

Towns with a focus on

consequences

No Laughs Home

Focus on veterans

No Laughs Home

Focus: Veterans, soldiers
and more generally people who have seen war

While this town is a lot about healing in a no fuzz, no pretence place, there will also be extensive research into the roots of wars.

If you wondered why there isn't a town for photography, then here is the answer: in the easy town books photography plays a big role in this town, as do reconstructive surgery and prosthetics.

Freebelt Meadows

Focus on homelessness

Freebelt Meadows

A town run by and for homeless people

Homelessness enters the easy town books in book 3, shaping, and over the years of the story, it is a recurring concern of the Easy Town administration to support homeless people who arrive in town. From these stories, the idea for a town run by and for homeless people emerged.

Gentlehaven

Focus on survivors of violence

Gentlehaven

Focus: Survivors of violence

The first Easy Town in the book series will have a sanctuary for survivors of violence. No questions asked.

This sanctuary has three large and separate buildings (with a lot of space between them), one for men, one for women, and one for children. All buildings are connected to a larger central building where everyone can start to mix again when they are ready.

The town Gentlehaven would probably work with a similar principle, and additionally have a certain degree of self-sufficiency for each part, meaning they all have their own shops, jobs, educational buildings, cinemas and so on.

Greenfield

Focus on prisoners

Greenfield

A town run by and for prisoners (to some extent)

I rarely quote the bible, but I always liked the sanctuaries in the old testament.

Apparently the idea was that a convict could flee to a sanctuary town, but if they ever left the town, anyone could shoot them.

This is the starting point for the prisoner's town idea.

Why? Because prisons as we know them obviously don't work.

Float Island

Focus on building
floating islands &
buoyant towns

Float Island

Focus: Building floating islands & buoyant towns

Most of the consequences towns make me shudder, and this one should too. But here my imagination pushes aside all those pesky questions about why humans destroy their habitat, and jumps right into the ideas for how towns could be made buoyant, and what it would take to build floating island that actually worked as habitats? After all we have a lot of space on the seas and oceans (space and heavy storms).

And imagine if Venice could be made to float, to rise with the sea.

Oakgrove

refugee town

Oakgrove

Towns run by and for refugees

These towns have several objectives:

- provide a town where refugees can recover, and where they get treatment for their health and traumata

- provide a town where refugees can regroup to fight for their countries and for their rights, from a safe place

- and provide a town where refugees can live an actual dignified life, and where they can build businesses, schools, health services, art venues and everything else that makes a town.

Godsfield

Focus on believes,
the past, and Gods Gardens

Godsfield

Focus: Believes, the past & Gods Gardens

Like the Gods Gardens, this town would bring different religions to the same place where they can test how to make life together possible.

For the visitors of this town, this could be a place to explore all the different believes which have developed on our planet.

WEtree

Focus on multiculteral living

WEtree

Focus: Multicultural living

This is one of the most intriguing town experiments, and probably one long overdue.

It’s in the nature of this town to face all the questions of why multicultural living still doesn’t work, and what it takes to make it work.

Towns with a focus on

sexuality

Sexshore

Focus on human sexuality

Sexshore

Focus: Human sexuality

‘Jack cocked his head and countered playfully: ‘I agree. Sex is a private matter. But since this private matter has led to abuse and chronic unhappiness, we need to talk about it. Once sex is a happy undertaking again, devoid of abuse and dissatisfaction, it can all go back to being private.’

book 2/2, travelling, Otaon

Sexshore would be a town which explores everything that has even the slightest connection to sex.

See also :
https://www.we-need-to-talk-about-sex.org

Oceans Pride

Oceans Pride

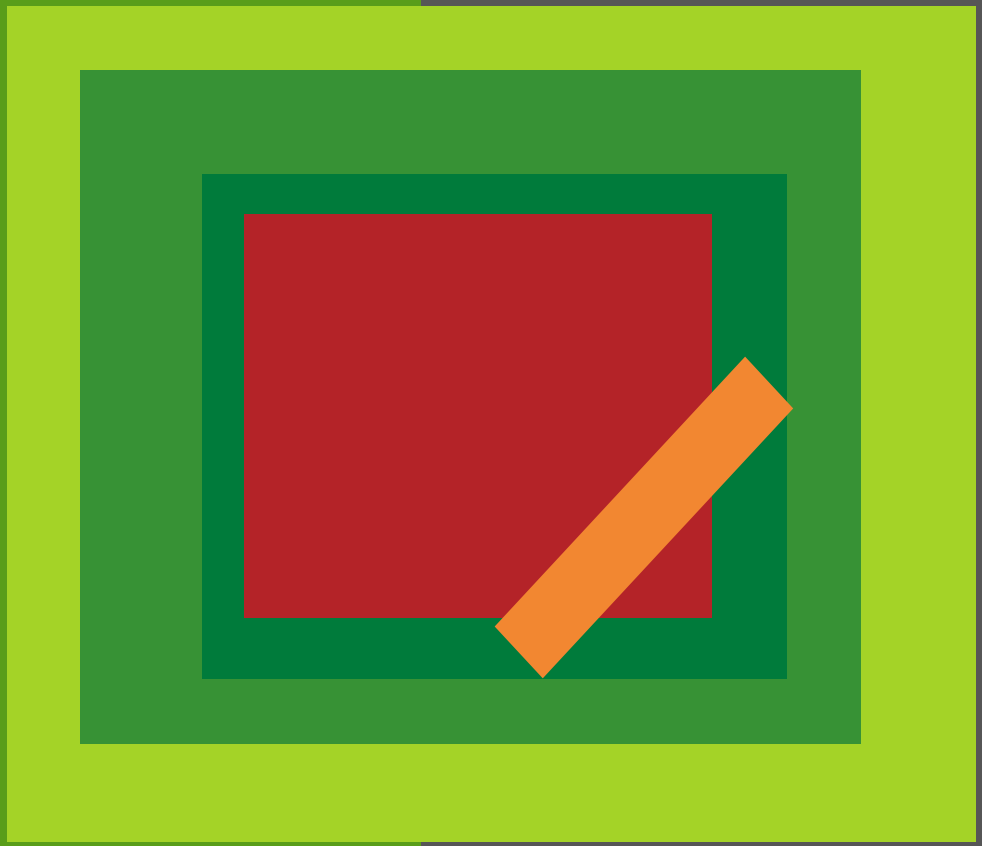
A town run by and for the LGBTQIA+ community

With a big research museum about gender fluidity and sexual preferences throughout the millennia.

Towns with a focus on

discourse, research & learning

Thinkers Bay



Focus on thinking, questioning & rethinking

Thinkers Bay

Focus: Thinking, questioning & rethinking

I already love this place. I think it could be a mix of areas where people strictly think, as in: don't interrupt me. And areas were people ask questions, not so much to get answers but to explore them together, or to do a rethink on something that has been bubbling up for a while.

In a way, this needs to be a very relaxed and unproductive place so that thoughts aren't drowned by an everyday buzz.
But since the work of this town will benefit everyone, it should be financed by all other towns.

Research Tree

Research Tree

Focus: Research

Research can be a lonely endeavour, so it would be great to have a place where others work in a similar way.

But Research Tree would also do a lot of research into research methods and compile an amazing collection of research material and scientific publications.

And there would be many conferences.

Speakers Grounds

Speakers Grounds

Focus: Debate & politics

I guess Cicero will feature in this town.

Journalists Quay

Journalists Quay

Focus: Journalism & international cooperation

You could argue, that journalists need to be out there in the world. You could also argue, that journalists will do a better job if they have a place where they can exchange ideas, let off steam, cooperated on a big story, or work with some of the finest researchers.

Unlearn Wood

Unlearn Wood

Focus: Taking a close look at what we think we know, and unlearning what needs to be unlearned

I will never forget what my cello teacher said to me when I was a teenager. ‘You have to be very careful how you hold the bow. You can quickly learn how not to do it, but unlearning a flawed posture is very difficult.’

Libraries Point

Libraries Point

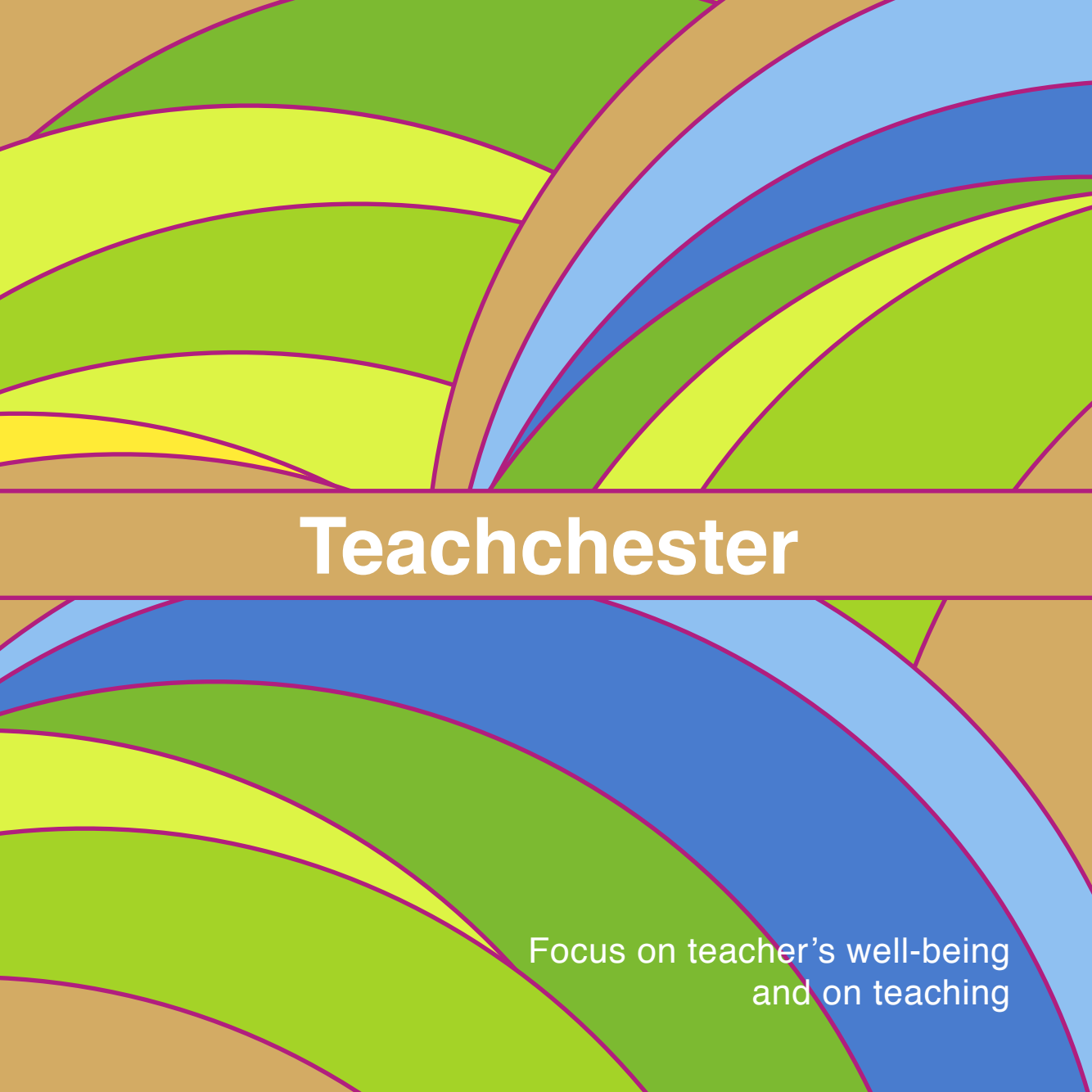
Focus: Libraries

When you read the Otaon chapter of book 2/2, travelling, you will see that I have a great love for exceptional libraries.

Libraries Point would probably surpass even the ideas for Otaon's Great Library of Sitseaf.

Apart from being the greatest library of all times or rather a library town, this town will also become a centre for developing extraordinary libraries around the world.

And every librarian on this planet will make a point of spending at least some months of their education in this town, and they will probably return a few times in their lives.


Teachchester
Focus on teacher's well-being
and on teaching

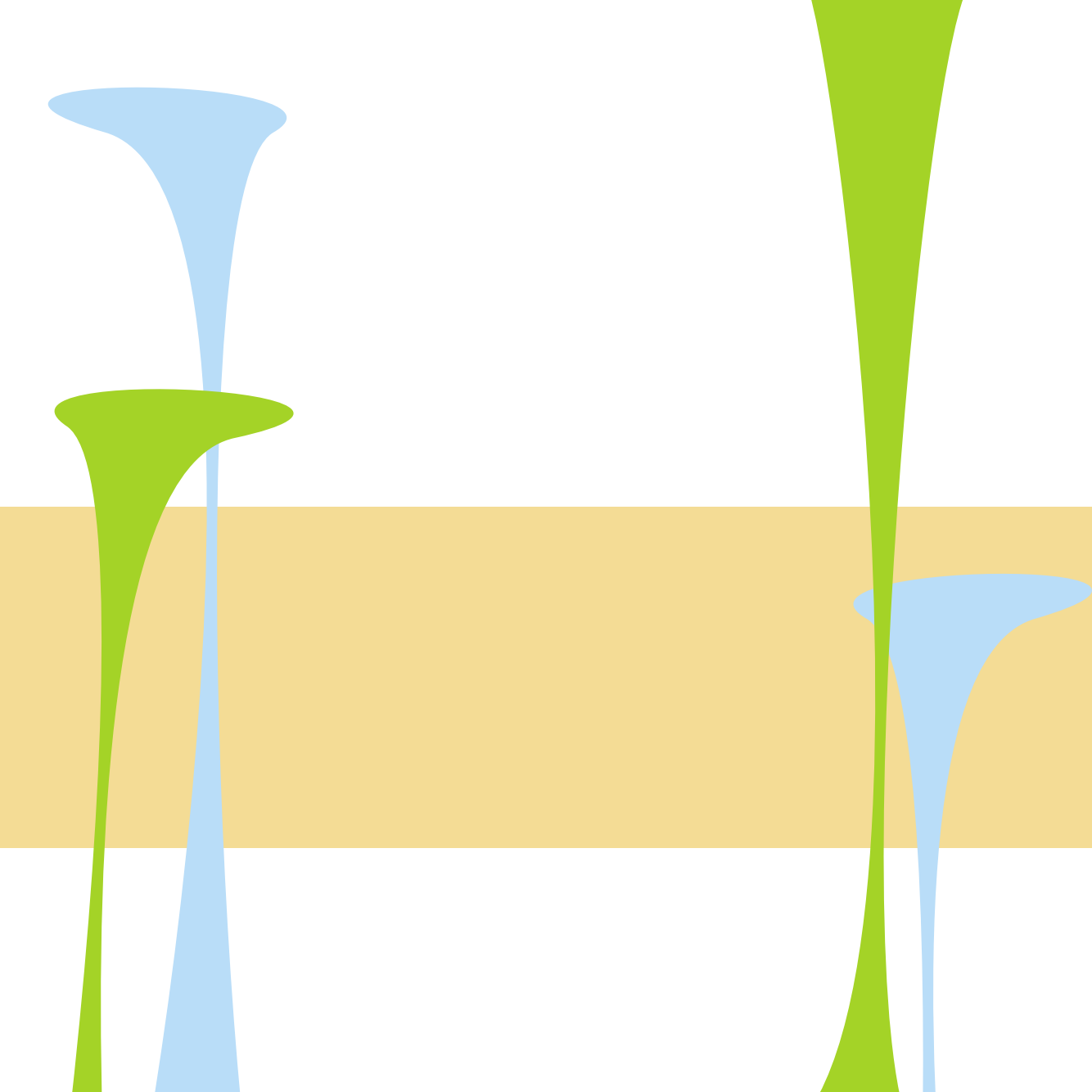
Teachchester

Focus: Teacher's well-being, and on teaching

I wish I could say I have met many good teachers, some, yes, many, no.

Generally speaking, it might help to give teachers a place where they can train, rest, research, rest some more, exchange ideas and get some really good advice and support, preferably before they burn out, or before they damage their pupils.

And then there are the big questions: what to teach children and adults, and how to teach them? And from where I stand both questions still need a lot of thinking and rethinking.



This was
the graphics collection for

42 towns
and counting

more

Each town idea will get its own page on the towns and cities international website, and many will include additional information.

https://www.towns-and-cities-international.org/town-ideas-overview

On the website, you will also find the category: Rethinking towns.

And there will be more towns specials from the Origins of the Easy Town Ideas to an extensive list for gardens, a discussion about randomness versus creating, and a lot more.

www.towns-and-cities-international.org

more

Plus, town specials are frequently published on the following easy town project websites.

- The Hub International
  https://www.hub-international.org

- dot.international
  https://www.dot-international.net

- book stations
  https://www.book-stations.org

- We need to talk about sex
  https://www.we-need-to-talk-about-sex.org

easy town books

42 towns and counting, graphics & teaser
including quotes from the easy town books

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