ABSTRACT
The author, an insider researcher, is exploring community as perceived and experienced by a purposive sample of eleven academics at a UK university, through a series of extended conversations and focus groups, the works at the institution in a new management role related to the research area, and has recently delivered a national pilot aimed at changing the culture of higher education.

COMMUNI-TEA PARTY
AT THE ACADEMY

INFUSIONS: blends that reflect dispositions of the learned

Conversational pieces on community:
What do you say? What do you hear?

- Our sense of community is too big here.
- Sometimes people grow into spaces that don't exist. It's just something that happens because of who you are and what drives you.
- Academics still enjoy locking themselves away in their monastic cells.
- It's a lesson I have not fully learnt...that I still want my community. It's just a bit of an oxymoron.
- Our community doesn'tpeople...it doesn't support people...it can be very exclusion.
- Definitions of community being anything to do with a composite university definition.
- It's an institution rather than necessarily a community.
- You're an individual and their stories that for me, you know sort of encapsulates the idea of community.
- Scholarly communities...it's almost as though they're being hounded down and flushed out.
- Our common rooms were undemocratically whipped away.
- You're building a community you have to build a sense of feeling of we are doing this together.
- The more strongly we cherish something the more it is to protect us.
- We don't provide the social spaces...the social cement.
- The degree of uncertainty is destructive of a sense of community.
- I don't think the university understands really what communities are.
- The work of the academic is become more like labour rather than scholarly endeavour.
- And they're having another reorganisation down our hatch just now.
- There's no natural area for congregation.
- I still struggle with the concept of community that is put across in the corporate plan.
- I don't see why a sense of community in a university should be any different to anywhere else.
- Sometimes people grow into spaces that don't exist. It's just something that happens because of who you are and what drives you.

FOOD FOR CONCLUDING THOUGHTS
Does 'community capital' exist inside higher education?
How might it be accumulated and utilised; by whom and to what ends?
What conditions are necessary in order to realise and reproduce community in a university environment?