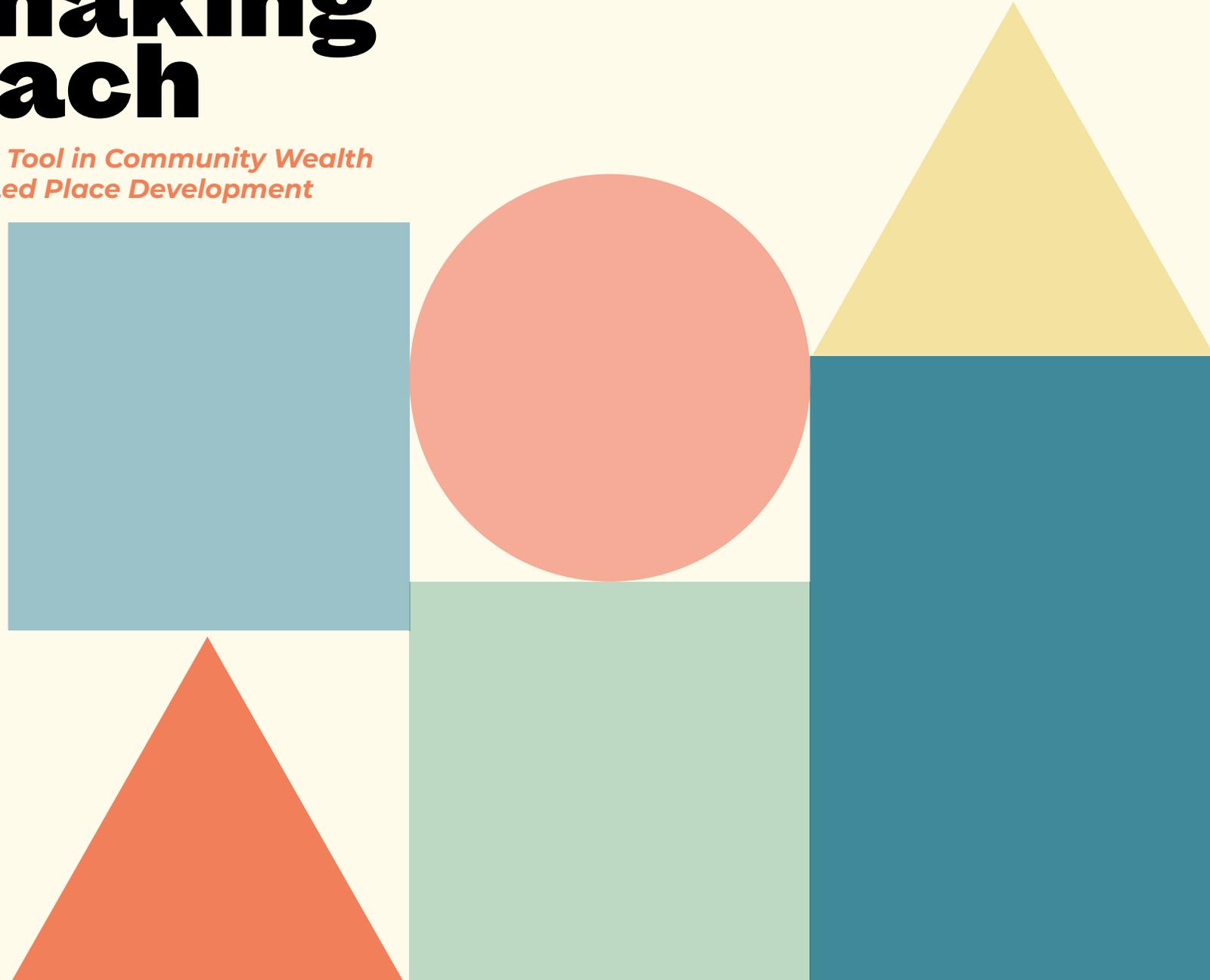


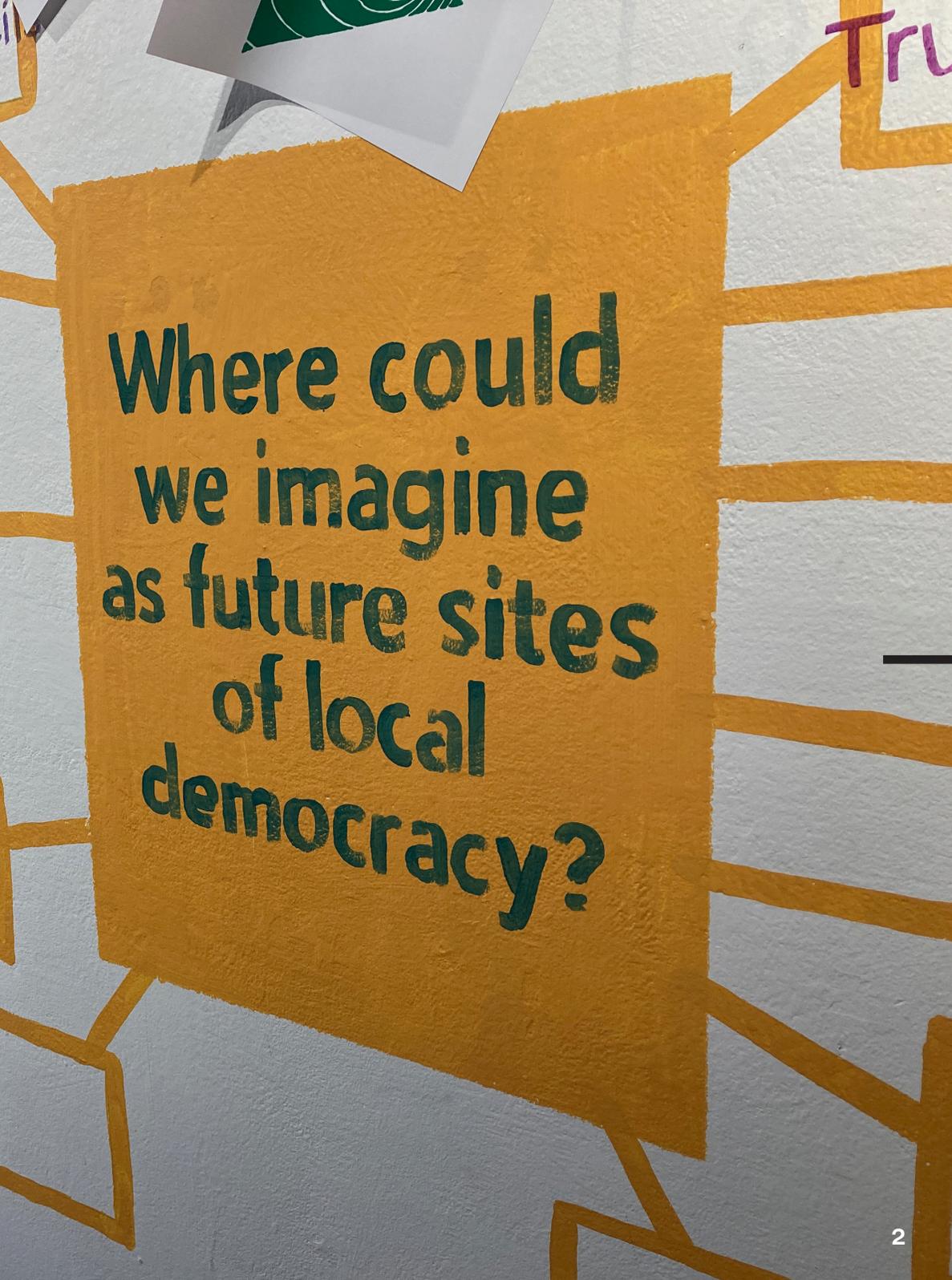
A Creative Placemaking Approach

Culture and Creativity as a Tool in Community Wealth Building and Community-Led Place Development



the
stove
network





Where could
we imagine
as future sites
of local
democracy?

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Introduction

The Creative Placemaking Approach¹ presented here is grown from more than 10 years of rural-based practice in the South of Scotland alongside wider research and consultation by The Stove Network². It responds to the need of rural communities and places to form connected yet place-specific and contextualised approaches to address civic, economic, and development needs and presents creativity and culture as a bridge to cross-sector working towards shared outcomes. The intention of this piece of work is to take a wider strategic view of creative placemaking to support community-led place development and a wellbeing economy. This is an approach that can also form part of strategies for sustainable development of the creative sector in our regional economies.

This document is designed as a guide for governing bodies, local authorities and other stakeholders working at scale to deliver services, capital infrastructure, place-based development, and policies for deeper community benefit. It aims to support collaboration and joined-up thinking between sectors by sharing values and working methodologies for creative placemaking. Emphasis is on a layered approach to place development by proposing points of linkage between the work of active agencies/ organisations within a geographic area or region(s) as starting points to co-develop strategies of support and implementation within their communities. A set of recommendations is offered to drive forward the role of creativity as an enabler of this; of regeneration, placemaking, and in growing more sustainable economic futures from the grassroots of our places.

¹ Creative placemaking in the South of Scotland was recently highlighted as an exemplary approach to unlocking the wider impact potential for creative industries in the UK Government's Policy Paper (June 2023) Creative Industries Sector Vision, https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1162721/Creative_Industries_Sector_Vision_accessible_version_.pdf

² The Stove Network is an arts and community organisation based in Dumfries and Galloway, and a leading practitioner in this field in Scotland, <https://thestove.org/>

The Stove was supported by South of Scotland Enterprise to develop A Creative Placemaking Approach that could be shared with others. The main themes that were explored were:

- 1. Creative placemaking as a means for different sectors to work with the creative/culture sector towards common goals (for example: Wellbeing Economy, just transition to net zero, regional identity, opportunities for young people, diversity and inclusion, and innovation).**
- 2. Participation for all in creativity and culture, and models to support this in communities.**
- 3. The connections between creative placemaking and other activity within the creative and culture sector.**
- 4. Creative placemaking as a community wealth building model for a region, building the capacity of local organisations to develop and sustain initiatives for themselves.**

These themes were explored with stakeholders in the South of Scotland through a series of events, collective discussions, interviews, and feedback processes to identify the opportunities that creative placemaking presents across different sectors and for communities. Consultation work was carried out around the values and key principles of creative placemaking, analysis from which can be found in the Appendices.

The resulting Approach also draws on the considerable work in both practice and research already undertaken by The Stove in exploring creative placemaking in Scotland. Research work began with their research paper with Carnegie Trust UK 'Embers: Creative Placemaking for the South of Scotland'³ which analysed the role of creativity in 21 community-led regeneration projects. Practice began in 2012 with The

Stove's award-winning work in Dumfries town centre and continued work as part of Scotland's national Culture Collective Programme⁴ to support community-based creative practice. Culture Collective supported The Stove to pilot a creative placemaking network for Dumfries and Galloway⁵ between 2021 and 2023. Learning from the overall Culture Collective (26 regional projects coordinated by Creative Scotland) and Scotland's 'Creative Communities' programme led by Inspiring Scotland (both part of Scotland's implementation on their National Culture Strategy⁶), has also informed this report.

Creative placemaking features as a key approach within both the Scottish Government's Programme for Government (2023 to 2024)⁷ and their recent National Culture Strategy Action Plan⁸ (Dec 2023) which highlights the work of The Stove alongside other national examples for creative community-embedded working. In a UK wide report released by Creative Industries Policy and Research Centre, Geographies of Creativity⁹, the possibility of 'joining relatively dispersed and discrete areas up' is identified to address sometimes competing approaches to constrained resources. The UK Government's policy paper 'Creative Industries Sector Vision'¹⁰ highlights creative placemaking approaches in the South of Scotland as exemplary in unlocking the wider impact potential for creative industries.

The underpinning ethos of this Creative Placemaking Approach is:

- 1. That communities are best placed to identify their own needs and means by which to address those needs.**
- 2. That creative methodologies are a key to genuine community engagement and accessing less-heard voices.**
- 3. Creative Placemaking supports communities to drawing first on what is around them, grow their own capacity, and build strong partnerships with others to share learning and expertise.**

³ Wheeler, K (2020), Embers – Creative Placemaking for the South of Scotland, The Stove Network, available from https://thestove.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/EMBERS_Spread.pdf

⁴ The Culture Collective Programme supported 26 projects across Scotland, <https://culturecollective.scot/>

⁵ <https://www.whatwedonow.scot/>

⁶ Scottish Government (2020), Culture Strategy for Scotland, available from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/culture-strategy-scotland/>

⁷ Robertson, A for Scottish Government (2023) 'Cabinet Secretary for Constitution, External Affairs and Culture', Programme for Government 2023-2024, p50, available from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/programme-government-2023-24/documents/>

⁸ Scottish Government (2023), A Culture Strategy for Scotland: Action Plan, p11, available from <https://www.gov.scot/publications/culture-strategy-scotland-action-plan/pages/4/>

⁹ Siepel, J, Ramirez-Guerra, A and Rathi, S (2023) Geographies of Creativity, Creative Industries Policy and Evidence Centre, available from <https://pec.ac.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/Creative-PEC-Geographies-of-Creativity-State-of-the-Nations-December-2023.pdf>

¹⁰ Department for Culture, Media and Sport (2023), Creative Industries Sector Vision: A joint plan to drive growth, build talent and develop skills, p37, available from https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1162721/Creative_Industries_Sector_Vision_accessible_version.pdf

Defining Creative Placemaking



Placemaking

Placemaking traditionally refers to the concept of developing successful spaces for communities and encouraging connection and creativity for the common good.¹¹ The term is often used to refer to urban design, in architecture and planning, and can be undertaken with a greater or lesser degree of influence from local people who live in the communities involved.^{12,13} The language of placemaking has the benefit of communities as the focus of its intentions but there are often questions over whether it offers communities the necessary safety nets to protect them from the negative effects of economic growth and market competition.¹⁴

An expanded notion of placemaking is evolving that encompasses the identity, social and built environments, and civic and economic infrastructures that make for healthy communities.¹⁵ The Scottish Government's Place Principle¹⁶ is an example of such an expanded notion addressing the need for more holistic approaches to place development that are better aligned with policies of community empowerment, agency, and ownership, and identify cross-sector agendas and opportunities. The Place Principle is a national framework for Scotland which encourages collaboration across agencies and agendas (e.g. health, education, economy, transport, environment etc.) positioning improving places as a shared goal that should inform individual agency agendas towards a localised and holistic approach.

¹¹ Project for Public Spaces, (accessed 2023), available from <https://www.pps.org/article/what-is-placemaking>

¹² Anderson, D (2019), The Developer: Why does every article about placemaking begin with a definition of placemaking?, (accessed 2023), available from <https://www.thedeveloper.live/opinion/why-does-every-article-about-placemaking-begin-with-a-definition-of-placemaking>

¹³ Greenspace Scotland, Community Placemaking, (accessed 2023), available from <https://www.greenspacescotland.org.uk/community-placemaking>

¹⁴ Smirnova, V and Guerra, V M (2017) 'Placemaking Revisited', Community Change, 1:68-72

¹⁵ Courage, C et al (2020) The Routledge Handbook of Placemaking, Routledge, also see <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Sfk1ZW9NRDY&t=36s>

¹⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction/>

Creative Placemaking

Creative placemaking is a cultural and arts led approach to placemaking that uses creativity as a support structure for communities to take a leading role in the development of their places. The practice of creative placemaking in Scotland is emerging as a critical tool in supporting communities to participate meaningfully in wider, holistic placemaking initiatives.

While the term ‘creative placemaking’ has been used most frequently in the US, the idea that the arts and culture more generally can have a central role in bringing about positive social and economic change in our towns and cities has been a mainstream concept in UK and Scottish policy for some time,^{17 18 19} with the discussion ongoing around the civic role of arts organisations and creative practice in this.²⁰

‘The local creative sector is often vital in facilitating this imaginative process, and using playfulness to spark the imagination of the local community and decision-makers within a town’ - Carnegie UK Trust²¹

Creativity has been identified as a central pillar of place-based working in projects that ‘engage in new spaces or with previously underserved and under-represented groups; approach assets, objects, and experiences of place in new ways; generate artistic visions or provocations; create safe spaces for

people to ‘play’ and experiment with ideas of place; and in the creative and co-created outputs through which people express and negotiate different understandings of place’.²²

The Stove Network’s Embers Report for the South of Scotland explored the particular strength of creative grassroots activity in place development defining creative placemaking *as a community-led approach that uses creative activity to support collective decision-making and positive change for people and the places they live.*²³

A recent UK publication, Creative Placemaking: Research, Theory and Practice, advocates ‘creative placemaking to be centrally positioned to deal with the challenges of the twenty-first century with creative place-based approaches offering tangible locally scaled explorations of global concerns.’ This same publication states that ‘if creative placemaking is to contribute to place-in-the-making (Silberg, 2013) and encourage citizen-led agency, new conceptual frameworks and practical methodologies will be required, advocating transdisciplinary, resilient processes and new models of theory and practice.’²⁴ When considering the wider impact and opportunity in place work it is generally accepted by those involved in and/or affected by work that there is a need for approaches that bring all who have a stake in a place together to work towards shared and smarter working. Creative placemaking offers an inclusive and empowering means by which to facilitate this within communities and identify areas of need and opportunity for cross-sector working and strands of delivery.

¹⁷ Lees, L and Melhuish, C (2013) Arts-led regeneration in the UK: The rhetoric and the evidence on urban social inclusion, European Urban and Regional Studies.

¹⁸ Ruiz, J (2004) A Literature Review of the Evidence Base for Culture, The Arts and Sport Policy, Scottish Executive

¹⁹ Matarasso, F (1997) Use or ornament? : the social impact of participation in the Arts, Stroud, Comedia

²⁰ See Calouste Gulbenkian - https://content.gulbenkian.pt/wp-content/uploads/sites/18/2017/10/01175222/Civic-Role-of-Arts-Phase-1-Panel_FINAL.pdf

²¹ Petrie, I, Coutts, P and Ormston, H (2019) Turnaround Towns UK, Carnegie UK Trust, Available from <https://www.carnegieuktrust.org.uk/publications/turnaround-towns-uk/>

²² Madgin, R and Robson, E (2023) Developing a People-Centred, Place-Led Approach: The Value of the Arts and Humanities, University of Glasgow

²³ Wheeler, K (2020) The Embers Report, The Stove Network

²⁴ Courage, C and McKeown, A (2019) Creative Placemaking: Research, Theory and Practice, Routledge, Oxon

Community Wealth Building

Placing Creativity at the Centre

At its simplest, creative placemaking uses creativity to support community-led change.

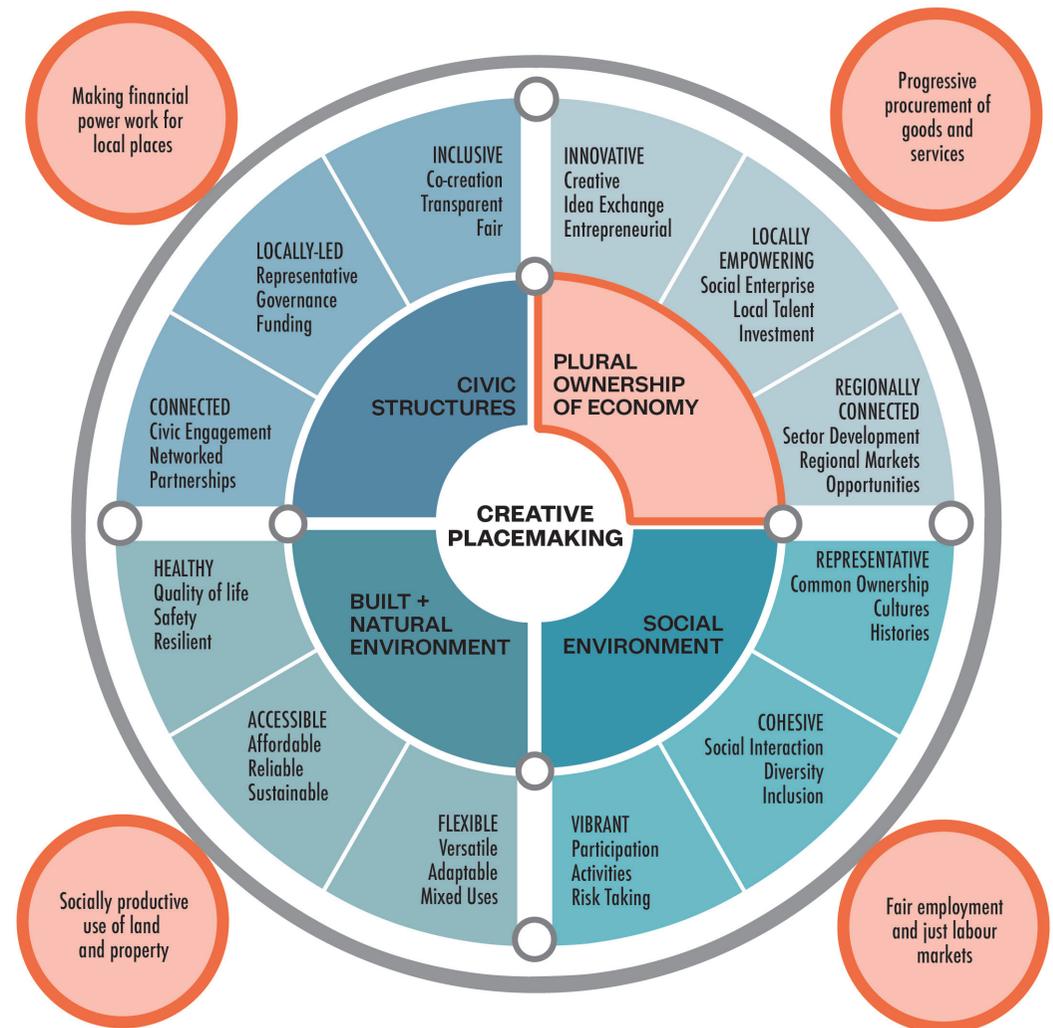
The Approach will show how creative placemaking is particularly effective at developing community engagement, amplifying less heard voices, and supporting the development of community capacity and partnerships to effect real change. This ‘grassroots’ or ‘bottom-up’ creative approach generates genuine innovation and local solutions and increases the power of communities to help them retain wealth, develop future resilience, and support fair work, diversity, equity, and inclusion. As such, creative placemaking can be seen as a methodology for Community Wealth Building.²⁵

The diagram opposite shows how creative placemaking, by bringing together communities with other partners, can support outcomes across:

- Built and Natural Environment
- Social Environment
- Civic Structures
- Plural Ownership of Economy

The five pillars of Community Wealth building are mapped onto the diagram in red:

- Plural Ownership of Economy
- Socially productive use of land and property
- Fair employment and just labour markets
- Making financial power work for local places
- Progressive procurement of goods and services



(Inspired by 'Hyperlocal: Place Governance in a Fragmented World' 2022 Ed. Jennifer S. Vey, Nate Storrington. Brookings Institution Press)

²⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building/>

'Community Wealth Building is a policy framework which focuses on growing the influence communities have on the economy and ensuring communities receive more of the benefits from the wealth they create. Building CWB into the fabric of creative placemaking is a new development, which has great potential given the Scottish Government's policy emphasis on place as well as CWB. CWB is still a new area of policy in Scotland with great scope for the development of approaches which embody the CWB Principles but do so in innovative ways which respond to the needs of our communities. This Creative Placemaking Framework is both timely and an important development as we devise ways of aligning national policy objectives in order to empower citizens and make our communities good places to live.'

Rob Davidson,
Strategy Manager,
Community Wealth Building with SOSE.



Case Study Stranraer



10 years ago, Stena Line moved their Northern Ireland-Scotland ferry line from Stranraer to Cairn Ryan, throwing the town into serious decline. Stranraer was made a 'priority' by agencies who ringfenced budgets once the town came forward with a vision for its future. The past 10 years have seen a lot of tension between the towns' different interest groups to come to a shared vision with their community and with the support of their local authority, Dumfries and Galloway Council.

What We Do Now has played a part in working with communities and local groups in Stranraer to get involved and collaborate towards a shared vision. The What We Do Now (WWDN) project worked with Stranraer Millennium Centre as a local place hub, employing two creative practitioners, Hope and Rory, for 18 months to ask people to imagine their town differently. Hope and Rory produced a colouring book filled with line drawings of underused buildings and spaces and put up a series of banners asking, 'What Could Happen Here?'. This was followed by a community 'Song for Stranraer' recorded (with many local voices singing) and animated with people's drawings from the colouring book.

At the same time WWDN worked with Stranraer's local Development Trust on establishing an 'Unexpected Garden' at the harbour. The Unexpected Garden is now a community food growing project and events space (c.10% - 750 - of the town's population came to a harvest celebration). This momentum coincided with a move to carry out major re-development of one of the buildings highlighted in the colouring book – the former George Hotel - as a community/cultural centre. WWDN activity helped evidence to the local authority that the success of such a building required a grassroots momentum within the community and to grow and establish the activity and local skills it required when open.

WWDN is now supporting the set-up of a small placemaking and creative engagement organisation in Stranraer (Creative Stranraer) who can take on commissioned work in support of regeneration initiatives in the town and will have the capabilities to support the redeveloped George Hotel when it opens.



Outcomes: New social enterprise, growth and vibrancy of local creative industries sector, significant uplift of the physical environment, engagement with people from diverse backgrounds in the future of the town and improved wellbeing outcomes for people personally and as groups by growing connections, confidence, and skills.

Case Study

Stranraer

'I now have a completely different outlook on the value of arts and culture in communities...a new-found respect...It has made me think about working with artists completely differently and opened my eyes to what it can achieve. If someone were to phone me up and ask if they should do this type of project I would say 100% yes. I now want to keep working with Hope and Rory on a permanent basis. If you can change the mind of someone like me in a project like this, then that is saying a lot.'

Stephen McCutcheon,
Millennium Centre (Place Hub) Stranraer

'It's tremendously gratifying to work on a project like this with the potential to make a real, positive difference to the community.'

Hope London,
Artist in Residence for Stranraer



Knowing Your Landscape

Creative placemaking builds on, connects, and supports initiatives that are active in a place. A mapping of existing activity (particularly in different sectors) is an important foundation to any creative placemaking activity. By way of example, the diagram below shows some current activity in the South of Scotland.

Things unknown at this point...

D+G Place Planning Partnership

Working group of partners engaged in place planning. Creative placemaking represented in group.

Net Zero Roadmap

South of Scotland initiative to support just transition to Net Zero in Agriculture Sector. Creative placemaking approach built into project.

Community Place Plans

Being prepared in communities, opportunity/demand for creative placemaking.

Wigtown, National Book Town

Creative regeneration of town centred on book festival and literature development.

Community Ownership

Fast growing and diverse range of assets (land, forestry, buildings) being taken into community ownership.

Alchemy Film & Arts

Award-winning community-embedded creative programme. Part of national Culture Collective initiative.

Community Wealth Building

South of Scotland is one of 5 areas piloting approaches to CWB in preparation for national strategy. Creative placemaking is part of SoS pilot activity

D+G College Arts Degree

In development with University of the West of Scotland in response to need rurally, interested in teaching skills in creative placemaking.

'Place Partnership'

For Scottish Borders between Creative Scotland and Scottish Borders Council.

What We Do Now
Pilot Creative Placemaking Network, comprising 6 towns in D+G. Led by The Stove as part of national Culture Collective initiative.

Community Asset Transfers

Local Authorities in South of Scotland have active programme of transferring assets to communities.

Dumfries, Midsteeple Quarter

Community-led regeneration of High Street. Initiated through creative placemaking.

Community-Led Housing

Numerous projects of differing scale across South of Scotland. All starting with community visioning.

Destination Tweed

Connecting Threads: 5-year programme of creative placemaking for Tweed catchment (Southern Uplands Partnership).

Borders Place Programme

Supporting communities to revitalise their places. Opportunity/demand for creative placemaking.

Great Tapestry of Scotland

Creative regeneration project in Galashiels.

Regional Economic Strategy

Cultural and Creative Excellence is one of the 5 themes of the RES with creative placemaking as an objective.

D+G Cultural Partnership

Creative placemaking a priority objective.

CABN

Arts development and support resource for culture in the Scottish Borders, in development with support from Scottish Borders Council, Creative Scotland and South of Scotland Enterprise.

NHS D+G

Home Improvement Teams: place-based initiative. Art and Healthcare Network in development.

Skills Investment Plan

For South of Scotland and relevant skills for creative placemaking taught in FE Colleges

Borderlands Inclusive Growth Deal

9 towns in South of Scotland are part of the Place Programme with allocated resources supporting community-led regeneration.

Community and Cultural Groups and Organisations

Local Development Trusts, Groups and Organisations across the South of Scotland are taking a leading role in place planning and using creative placemaking approaches.

'Creative placemaking creates health by nurturing relationships and building community-based connections and solutions in a holistic and inclusive way. Place-based approaches that use creativity in this way are, by their nature, relational and collaborative. Using place as a lens to look through, our work helps us to understand the interconnections and relationships between issues that affect people's daily lives. By bringing people, communities, and agencies together, creative placemaking can identify the drivers of poor health and help us to improve health and reduce inequalities in health. Most importantly, in line with the principles supporting health and social care integration in Scotland, this approach puts people and communities at the heart of health, giving them a voice, and agency, to bring about change.'

Caroline Comerford,
Public Health Academic.





A Creative Placemaking Approach



↘ An Approach to Creative Placemaking

1. Principles

- Qualities, objectives, and characteristics of outcomes for places.

2. Elements

- Component parts of a creative placemaking approach.

3. Process-led

- A methodology for collaborative working without pre-determined outputs.

4. Values

- Decision making, and evaluation led by commonly held values.

5. Creative Practice

- The roles of creative practice in creative placemaking.

6. Impact

- Outputs and outcomes of creative placemaking for people and places.

7. Measuring

- Bespoke approaches to monitoring and evaluation.

‘Creative Placemaking has been intrinsic to our approach for the past 15 years. CatStrand is a central hub for the Glenkens, allowing Glenkens Community & Arts Trust to organically form partnerships and develop projects. ‘Cultural Glenkens’ is a key strand of CatStrand’s artistic vision, nurturing locally led arts projects and amplifying community voices. Our programme is rooted by projects that speak of our landscape, cultures, heritage, concerns and experiences and use the principles of creative placemaking as laid out in this document.’

Peter Renwick,
Creative Director,
CatStrand Arts.



'Placemaking, driven from the grassroots, is about people shaping their surroundings. It is a catalyst for transformative change, the heartbeat of innovation, a testament to the power inherent in every individual's imagination. Hands-on in and with place, placemaking is a practical, tangible way for communities to craft their own narratives, fostering a sense of unity and strength that grows from the ground up. The power of this process forges a collective narrative that elevates the value of shared spaces, fostering a sense of belonging and shared purpose that resonates far beyond the physical and material of a place.'

Dr Cara Courage,
Culture and Place Consultant,
Researcher and Academic.

↙ A Creative Placemaking Approach

This document aims to support a vision of place and community where: ***creativity is used to develop a resilient and fair future society, built on community wealth building principles, innovation, and long-term thinking.***

The Creative Placemaking Approach shared here provides a values-based methodology to holistic and cross-sector working that develops sustainable and long-term capacity building (Community Wealth Building) within communities to take projects and programmes forward for themselves. This is a methodology for creative engagement with place and communities which amplifies less-heard voices, grows vision and enterprise, builds connections to the work of others, and supports the sustainability and diversity of the creative sector.

Creative placemaking used in this way supports communities to co-create with cross-sectoral agencies (economic development, business, health, enterprise, education etc.) and helps communities to take the lead in designing the services, facilities, and infrastructures they need. Adopting this approach across a geographical area or region(s) will address the need for joined-up working within our systems of civic, economic, and social and built environments whilst ensuring the control within these systems remains within communities.

The Creative Placemaking Approach shared here can extend in scale from one person's development journey to the consideration of the 'voice' of an area of landscape, to a community-wide re-imagining of a place. Embedded within the culture and history of our places, it has the potential to carry the creativity of our contemporary culture onto an international stage.

'Build the scaffolding communities need to move towards change' ²⁶

²⁶ kNOw One Place Round Up, available from www.whatwedonow.scot/about/know-one-place/



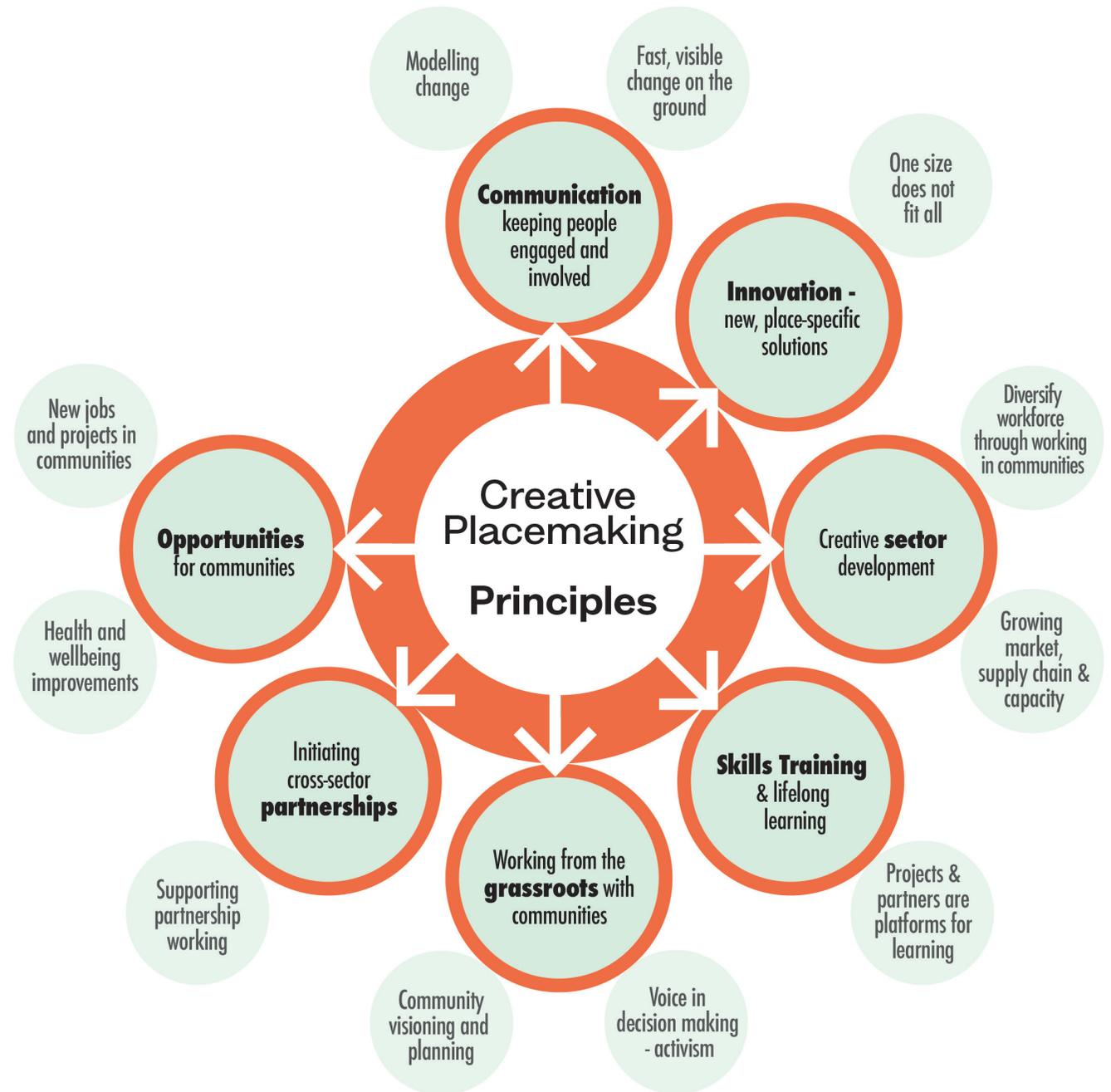
1. Principles

Working from the grassroots

Creative placemaking employs the tools and methodologies of community activism to support communities to develop their agency and power to take a central role in processes of change.

Building on the activity and work that is already happening in a place and developing working approaches that enable communities to take a lead in the identification of need, exploring and developing ideas, delivery, and review of work. Creative placemaking is particularly effective in reaching sections of communities that do not usually engage in local decision-making – for example people experiencing disadvantage and/or inequality. The use of creativity in community settings helps bridge the ‘power gap’ often experienced with more traditional formats which often use methods that are familiar to some but can alienate others (e.g. written surveys, architectural plans etc.).

Engaging people in creative ways that support them to feel comfortable to express what they really think and contribute and explore their ideas can support the development of innovative local solutions and sow the seeds for community plans and new initiatives/projects. The informal contact fostered by creative placemaking enables agency and is a vital information source to understand local needs/opportunities and bring participants into contact with local decision makers/agencies.



1. Principles

Initiating cross-sector partnerships

Building connections to the work of other partners across sectors and identifying areas of collaboration towards shared outcomes, such as the long-term health improvement for those participating in activity. Creative projects are particularly effective at building new and less likely partnerships. There is something unthreatening about a creatively-led initiative that is not directed towards a set objective which is owned by another sector. The open space of creative projects draws different partners into a collaborative ethos and provides an equal footing from which to grow new working relationships, this can lead to further collaborations and initiatives for the place.

Innovation

At root, creativity is about innovation. Top-down methodologies of change are often based on 'things that have worked elsewhere' or a 'one size fits all' approach. Creative placemaking starts from the principle that local people know best what will work for them and their place and offers them the tools, space, and support to imagine and bring forward genuine innovation that is specific to their context. Creative placemaking takes an exploratory and experimental approach to work that allows for ideas to develop through the process of testing and trialling without fear of failure or meeting overly rigid outcomes. These processes and outcomes are bespoke and what works in one place will not be what works in another.

Communication

Ongoing communication is critical in community-led place-based work. Traditional methodologies can lead to an initial rush of excitement for new ideas in a community that are then taken forward by a committee which disappears from public view leaving everyone wondering what happened. Creative placemaking foregrounds communication as central to everything, setting up channels of physical and digital dialogue within communities. A central part of the creative placemaking methodology is to model change making with temporary demonstrations of ideas generated by the community (e.g. temporarily turfing an area to model a new play space). These interventions have the dual impact of helping to progress an idea whilst keeping the overall process live so people feel confident things are moving forward. Creative communication shares the story of the working process that everyone is embarked on together as a method of regular review and ongoing evaluation.

Opportunities for communities

Putting the community benefit and impact for people and environment at the heart of the work and ensuring the growth of local opportunities and wider social benefit of work are forefront within decision-making. Opportunities range from improved wellbeing for individuals, to employability, to seeding new enterprises and environmental initiatives for places. Through capacity building for Community Bases (see 2. Elements) they can become a resource for communities in growing new skills and resilience for the future. By becoming a hosting space (and coordinator) of cross-sector partnerships formed through creative placemaking activity (see 'Initiating cross-sector partnerships' above) Community Bases become points of connection for communities in larger initiatives.

Creative sector development

Creating opportunities for the creative sector to work differently within communities. By working at the grassroots of places and supporting skills development locally, creative placemaking makes pathways for those less represented in arts and culture to gain experience and enter the sector. Working in communities as part of cross-sector projects is a growing market for the creative sector. Creative placemaking provides a framework for sustainable development of this market and if adopted at scale could grow the infrastructures our places need to become a leaders in this area of practice. Developing Community Bases as local hubs with experience and capacity in creative placemaking enables them to become support structures for a population of creative freelancers in their locale.

Skills and training

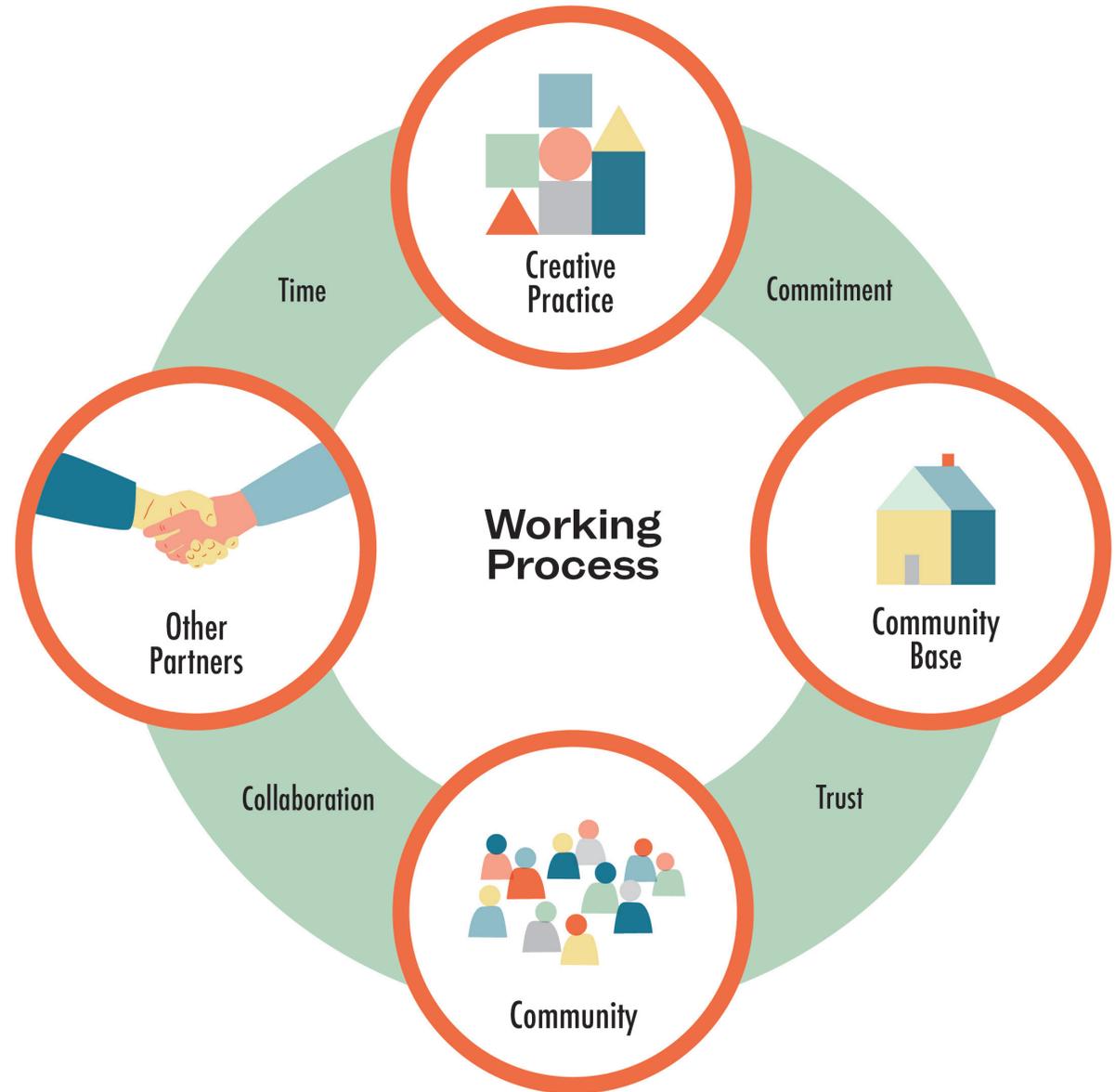
Creative placemaking projects can become platforms for skills. Sometimes this is built into the working process from the outset, in other instances the opportunities for skills and training grow naturally as a consequence of projects. Skills can be very diverse, ranging from creative practice through to event production, administration/finance, marketing/communication, project management etc. Creative project working also embeds meta skills in participants and communities of team working, problem solving, understanding of local processes of decision making and resource management (e.g. funding). Skills development, education and employability organisations are natural partners in creative placemaking collaborations.

2. Elements

Creative placemaking involves **people, place, and community**. This means that people in communities are working together with others in open and genuine ways inclusive of the needs of the place, the people, and the environment around them. While there are specific needs that depend on what is already present or not present within a community, there are elements that create the conditions that creative placemaking work can grow from.

These elements are:

- **Community**
the land, the people, the identities that makes up a place.
- **Creative Practice**
co-creative work with communities.
- **Community Base**
a locally-based organisation, group, and (ideally) a physical place to ground the work.
- **Other Partners**
other groups / organisations collaborating in the work.
- **Working Process**
a way of making things happen together.



Adapted from Wheeler, K, 2023, Embers Handbook, licensed under Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International

2. Elements

Community

A geographical place or environment and a community of identity or interest that are at the heart of the work. We are all experts about the places we live and can work to nurture the environments we need. Creative placemaking nurtures a community around place-based work, a community who lead the direction it takes.

Creative Practice

Socially engaged creative practitioners are skilled in opening conversations, and developing/delivering complex projects which reframe local challenges. In creative placemaking they co-create programmes of activities for engagement, inspiration, and active exploration with community members. A creative practitioner can be anyone (an artist, a gardener, a chef, a writer) who can support creative expression and exploration.

Community Base

Organisations that are embedded in their local community. This could be a Development Trust but can equally be a Sports Centre, Youth Club, Community Cafe, or other community group. A Community Base can hold responsibility for the long-term vision and strategic impact of the work and may start with an informal group that then develops a more established structure long term. A physical place as a consistent base for the work is not essential, but creative placemaking projects without a physical base often begin by creating one. In most cases such a physical space will be managed by the Community Base. The Community Base may already have creativity/culture as part of its existing service delivery or it may be working with creatives for the first time. The Community Base acts as a headquarters for community engagement and is, critically, a trusted route into the local community, providing

access to networks, groups, and partners to progress the development and delivery of work. A Community Base does not need to have all this in place already but can use the Creative Placemaking Process (see below) as a mechanism to start to grow this role within their community and develop programmes of work around that.

Other Partners

Any individual, group, agency, or local authority who gets involved with the project to support the work that is being co-created by the community, Community Base, and creative practitioner(s). Partners are part of alliances around shared agendas and can help drive the long-term outcomes of the work. Partners may also include an organisation/agency/community who is commissioning the work. Partners are identified through the Creative Placemaking Process (see below) of developing activity to identify shared agendas and joined-up approaches around services and the development of work (e.g. health improvement approaches, place plans, capital build projects).

Working Process

The process and structure agreed by those involved for taking ideas and work forward. In creative placemaking this should be open, collaborative, and inclusive of less formal structures that form around the work as it develops. Ideally the Community Base will provide a space and headquarters supporting this structure as it develops.

These elements on their own will not create a successful creative placemaking project. They require the time, commitment, trust, and collaboration from everyone involved and people who have the capacity to manage and facilitate the work long-term.



'When we started, this community lacked any kind of inspiration. The council put all this money into the area, we had all these parks that weans could play in, but nothing inspiring them. The parks were just your typical metal bars with basic swing, slide, and roundabout. That's what was given to us as a community to be active. LIFT started putting on creative activities; lantern making, working with willow and paper mâché. What we were actually doing was bringing our community together. Suddenly I had 50 folk, which might not seem like a big number, but considering the social issues faced here, lack of confidence, deprivation, that was massive. I still have weans coming up to me and saying 'mind that time we went and made those costumes, and we done that catwalk'. That's amazing for people here that have had nothing similar before, it's about making positive memories that they can pass on. By providing creative spaces and tools, LIFT now fuels a chain reaction of inspiration, empowering people to envision and enact change in their communities. That's our creative placemaking vision.'

Angela Gilmour,
Managing Director and Founder,
Lochside Is Families Together (LIFT)

3. Process-led

‘Create processes that have adaptability at their heart’²⁷

Creative placemaking is about collaborative and community-led visioning and problem solving, it could be a transport plan, a wellbeing strategy or a film expressing the identity of the place. Fundamentally, it is not only about ideas, but also the initial prioritisation of community needs that are identified by creative community engagement.

A process-led approach is a way of working where the outputs are not pre-defined, rather it is a genuine journey of discovery that all parties commit to. The process must build trust to generate solutions that are innovative and specific to the particular situation and needs of those involved and affected by the work. There is not one way of doing this but creative placemaking offers a creative engagement approach to this exploration.

A creative placemaking process starts, and should continue to embed, a cycle of enquiry to explore the needs, challenges and opportunities within a place and community and come up with ideas and approaches of how local groups and people can work together to address these through creative activities, projects, and programmes of work.

The creative placemaking process uncovers what is active within a place and can be used to develop a collaborative and community-led structure of decision making embedded in a place that builds on the knowledge, skills, and capacity already present, to drive work forward.

Central to a creative placemaking approach is to build the capacity of communities to use creative practice in this way, to develop deeper approaches to creative engagement with community organisations providing a base for community-led decision making, review, and evaluation of work. In this way creative placemaking grows the skills, learning and capacity within communities to continue to deliver projects and activities that are initiated for long-term benefit and impact.

‘I always come away from meetings with a renewed sense of passion and drive for the work I do and a desire to do even more to try and make Dumfries a better place.’

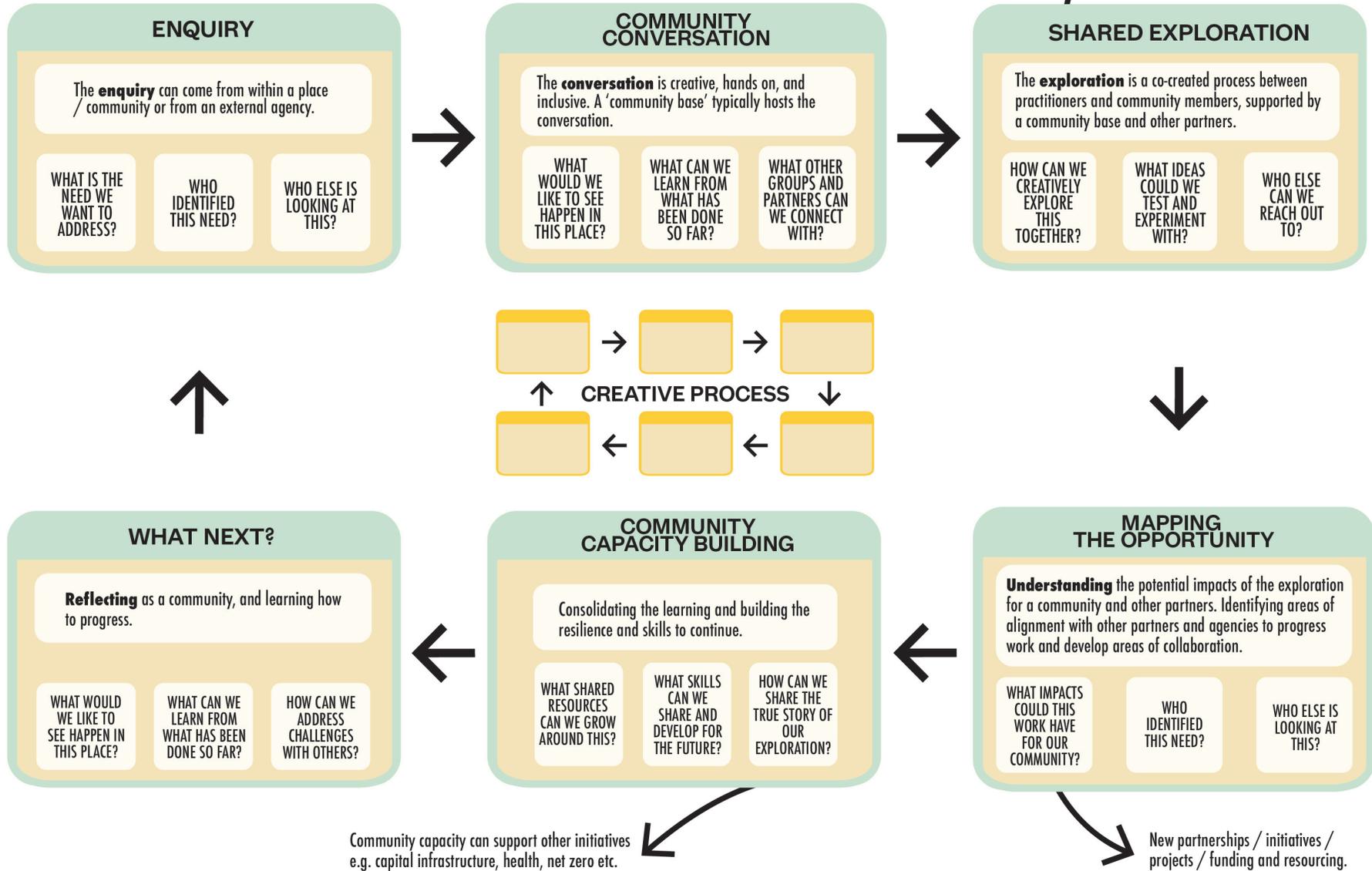
Participant.

²⁷ kNOw One Place Round Up, available from www.whatwedonow.scot/about/know-one-place/

Creative Placemaking Process

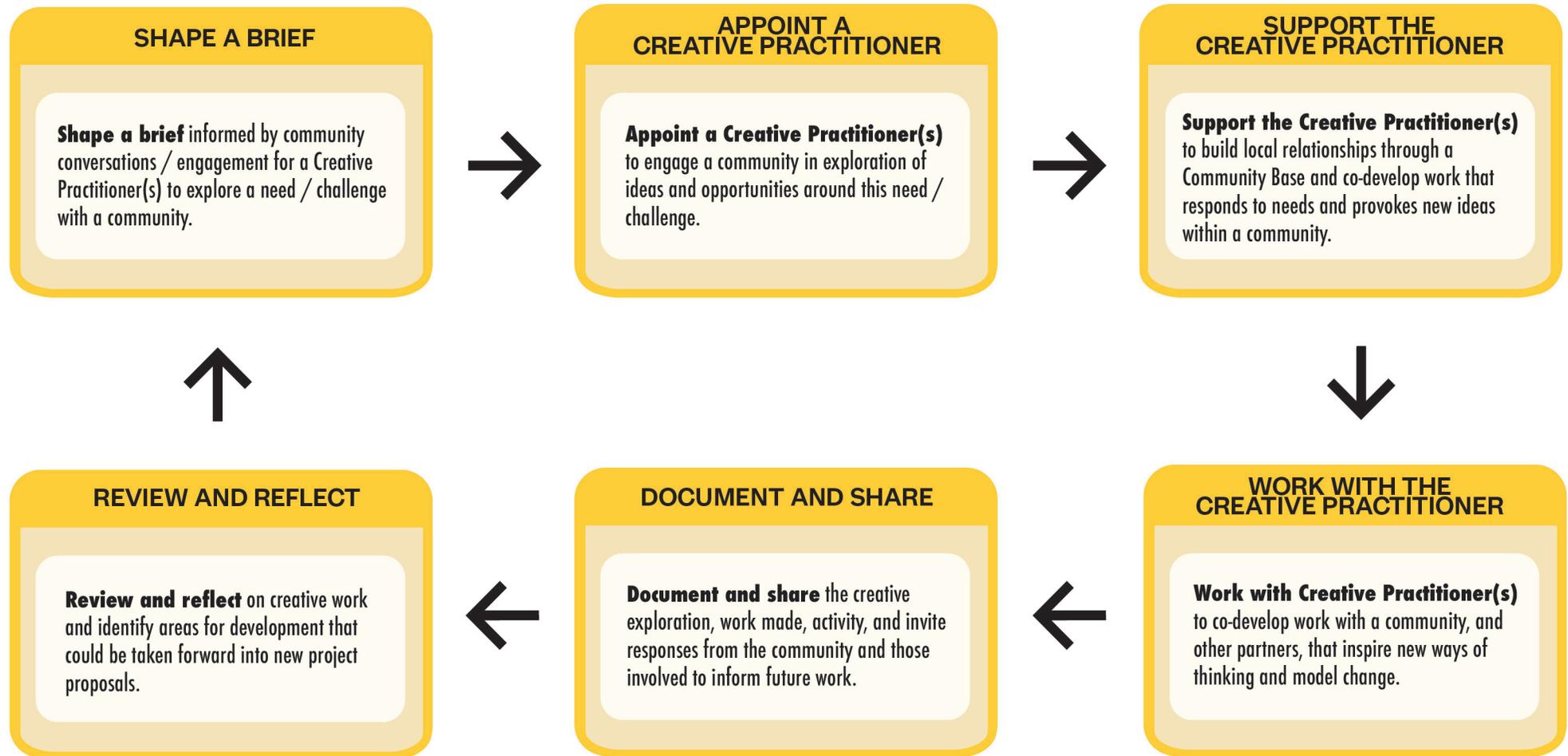
This process could be started at any point in the cycle.

- Could lead to variety of outputs e.g:
- Artworks
 - Community Vision
 - Modelling Change
 - Skills
 - New Projects / Enterprises



Adapted from Wheeler, K, 2023, Embers Handbook, licensed under Attribution-NonCommercial-ShareAlike 4.0 International

↘ Creative Process



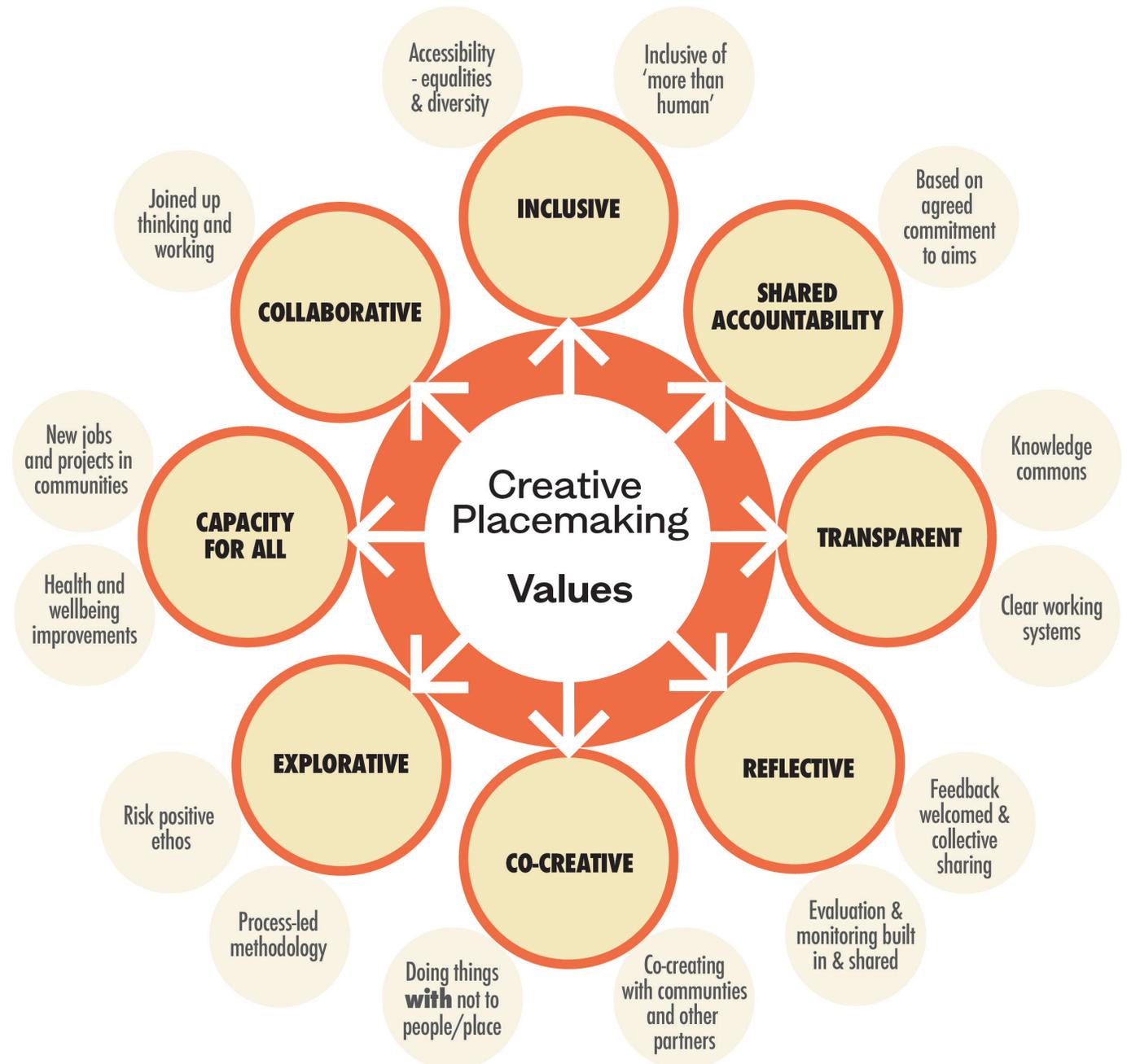
4. Values

A values-based approach underpins working processes and structures of decision-making in creative placemaking, to support genuine collaboration and community-led development.

It is part of the process-led methodology to agree the values that ground a collaboration at the outset. Values can be identified together as part of forming working frameworks between all those involved in projects and activity.

'There have been a few times, more recently, where I've felt the same anxiety or doubt and I try to think of an achievement I'm proud of, and more often than not, it's a project I was part of.'

Participant.



4. Values

The following list is not exhaustive, and values will vary according to the intent of individual projects.

Co-creation

Co-creation is a radical commitment to sharing leadership and direction across all participants. It uses collaborative processes in which people with different experiences, skills and knowledge come together and work in non-hierarchical ways to address a common issue. Co-creation aims to shift power, resource, and ownership towards the people the work is intended to benefit and offer alternatives to a traditional 'top-down' approach. Co-creation requires larger organisations to relinquish or share authority, and co-author outcomes with participants.

Reflective

A bold and honest approach to documenting and openly sharing throughout the working process, looking at the challenges as well as the successes, to learn from and inform work as it goes forward. This involves creating systems and spaces for regular feedback and collective learning through the project activity.

Capacity Building

A commitment to 'building the road behind projects' and working is such a way to always prioritise how working processes grow capacity for communities and the creative sector. This includes the values of Fair Work²⁸, a commitment to supportive working processes for freelancers, training and sharing of resources/knowledge.

Exploration

Committing to a shared learning journey that requires those involved to let go of fixed outputs and allow the process of engagement to lead the development of work. This requires an understanding that the end results of work may shift considerably from initial starting points.

Collaboration

Working together with other parties towards a shared goal or vision. The process of collaboration involves working together in open, and often creative, ways and ensuring everyone involved can shape the direction of the work with equal measure and sense of ownership.

Inclusive

Ensuring that everyone in a community can take part and share positive outcomes of work regardless of their socio-economic background, race, gender, abilities, sexuality, or other characteristics. Inclusive working requires knowing who is not currently taking part in activities and making time and resources available to change that. Elements of places that have no human voice (e.g. rivers and animal habitats) are vital to creative placemaking and given agency through inclusion in the working process.

Transparent

A commitment to visible and open systems of information and resource sharing for all those involved. This includes the creation of external processes that communicate the ambitions, aims and progress activity as well as internal systems between delivery partners to share feedback, income generation and fundraising, communication, and supporting the working relationships across the project.

Shared Accountability

A framework of responsibility between Community Bases, creative practitioners(s) and other collaborators/partners where everyone involved is committed to the long-term benefit of the work and has agreed to work towards positive solutions to challenges together.

Values can be identified together as part of forming working frameworks within all those involved in projects and activity. Such a project framework is very effective in shaping a bespoke approach to monitoring and evaluation.

²⁸ <https://www.fairworkconvention.scot/the-fair-work-framework/>

5. Creative Practice

Typically, in creative placemaking projects, creative practitioners / artists are commissioned to devise, develop and deliver engagement activities to grow relationships and explore ideas within the community. The aim of initial engagement is to create inviting and inclusive spaces within a community and develop activities that bring people together, start conversations and build trust and working relationships with groups and individuals. Creative placemaking is not a specific area of creative practice that someone can train in within an educational institution, rather there are a number of creative disciplines which overlap with creative placemaking. This section of the framework considers the specific nature of professional creative practices relevant to creative placemaking. However, as stressed throughout a 'creative practice' employed in creative placemaking can extend to anyone who employs creative processes in their work from a DJ to a community development practitioner.

Creative placemaking uses creative activity as a tool of engagement, participation, visioning and creative problem solving with communities. Creative activity is a vital part of this approach, and typically employs an artist or creative practitioner as one of the lead project workers. Working with artists in this way is not about 'art' as an individual creative practice that responds to a community, but rather an embedded way of working with artists and others, local and non-local, professional and non-professional, to creatively evolve conversations relevant to a place and community.

'Artists and creative, community-led projects can help us 'vision forward' – reframing challenges and (sometimes) working to build consensus between disparate stakeholders. A well-crafted, co-created project can highlight the voices and concerns of underserved groups, and begin to reweave their stories and histories back into existing dominant narratives. These projects are bespoke, unscalable, and we need more of them: We can only create what we collectively (re)imagine.'

Dr T S Beall,
Socially Engaged Artist and Researcher



Creative disciplines that are particularly aligned with this way of working include community, participatory and socially-engaged art practice:

Community Art is the creation of art by professional and non-professional artists and individuals, co-operating as equals, for purposes and to standards they set together, and whose processes, products and outcomes cannot be known in advance. (Matarasso 2019)

Participatory Art includes processes of making that give varying degrees of ownership to those involved. It is used to describe forms of performance art that involve the audience to help create the work as well as processes of co-creation but can be broadly defined by the 'shared creative act' (Matarasso 2019)

Socially Engaged Art or Social Practice is when participation is central to the work and what is created, which may be an experience rather than anything physical, often holds equal or less importance to the collaborative act and co-creative process. What defines social practice from a wider participatory practice is that while the latter simply requires participation, socially engaged practice requires a focus on social issues and shared authorship. (Helguera 2011)

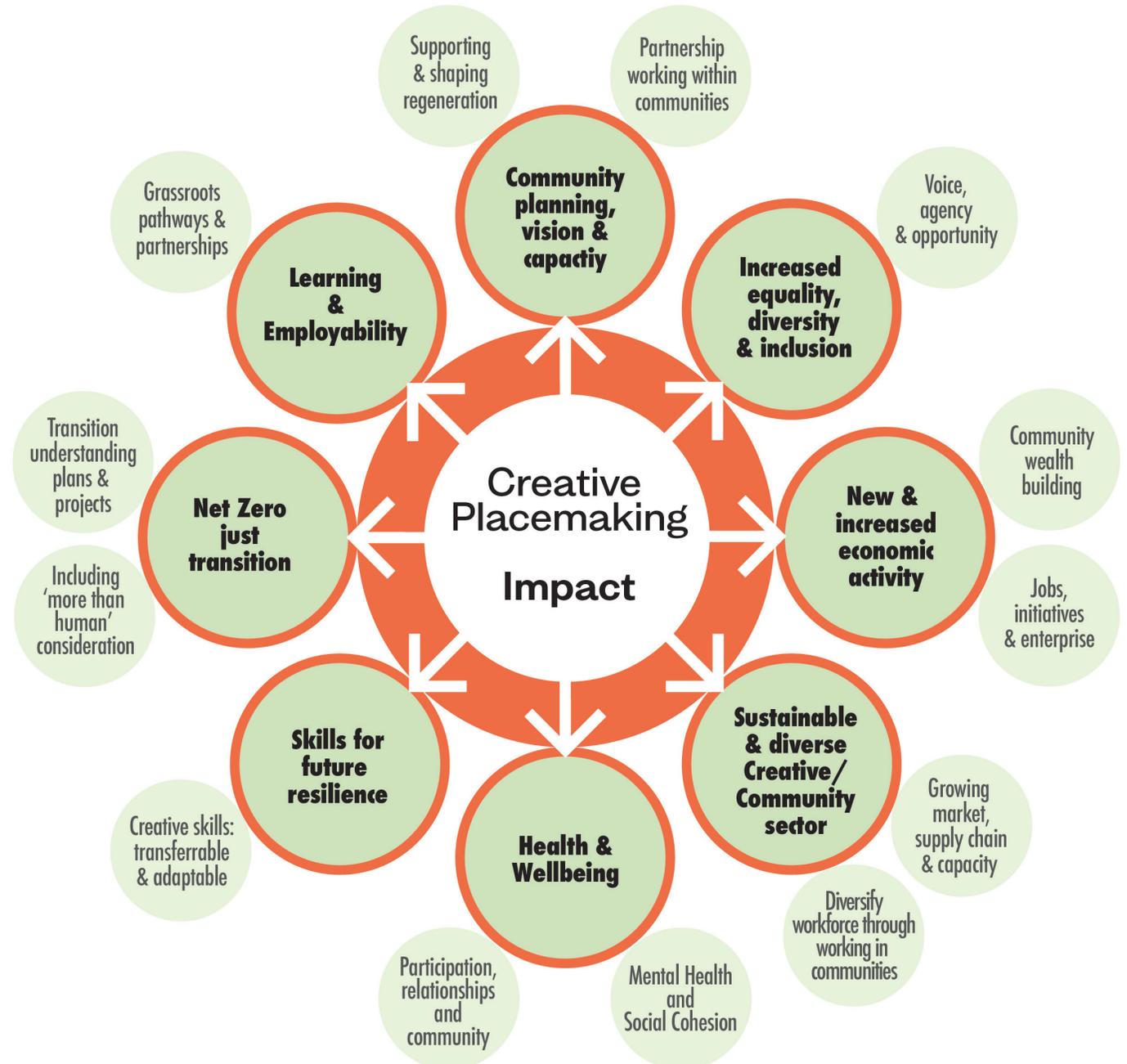
Socially engaged practice lends itself particularly well to creative placemaking, and artists working in this field often have significant experience in developing projects which deliver relevant outcomes. However the creative engagement / practice could also be more broadly identified, such as working with a chef or a gardener. The important aspect being that there is a wider structure of operation and decision making embedded in the community with the intent for long-term social impact and community-led change. Creative placemaking, its relationship to the arts sector and how it works across other sectors was researched by Dr Anthony Schrag as part of The Stove's What We Do Now work and published in *Field: A Journal of Socially Engaged Art Criticism*.²⁹ A video summary of this work can be viewed on the What We Do Now website.³⁰

²⁹ <http://field-journal.com/editorial/exploring-the-boundary-crossing-nature-of-creative-placemaking-the-stove-as-adaptor-converter>

³⁰ <https://whatwedonow.scot/placemaking/creative-placemaking-the-stove-as-adaptor/>

6. Impact

Creative placemaking grows the skills and knowledge required for place development work to be led from the grassroots of our communities building a powerful resource of creative innovation, knowledge, impact analysis and learning whilst also feeding the creative and cultural sectors of a place or area. The purpose of this approach is to establish a foundation for creative placemaking building towards wider social benefit and outcomes.



'If it wasn't for this work, I wouldn't have my sense of identity, I wouldn't have a sense of community nor care for the people as much as I do now.'

Participant.

6. Impact

New and increased economic activity (Community Wealth Building)

Creative placemaking initiatives can lead to new/retained jobs, enterprises and skills being grown within communities to support local people to take forward projects and initiatives themselves and ensure the economic benefits from work remains within our local communities. Where there are not already the organisational structures embedded, new groups are supported to form, develop proposals, lead funding and investment bids and deliver creative placemaking projects aligned towards regeneration and growing community owned resources and assets. Creative placemaking enables communities to build connections with each other and other partners to test and explore ideas. Community organisations, creative practitioners and other partners work together to create the spaces and programmes of engagement as a test bed for audiences and new social enterprises throughout their process of development. By growing a community of interest around initial ideas, initiatives are responsive to the needs of a place and can grow an evidence base for more ambitious development. Community Bases become places that identify, build, and sustain the community assets required for new initiatives and social enterprises to start building the connections, skills and resources required to help sustain them.

Increased equality, diversity, and inclusion

Creative placemaking can have significant impact within areas of disadvantage and with those experiencing inequality by developing methods of engagement that are relevant and inclusive. The creative and relationship building approaches within creative placemaking can connect with those who are often under-represented in more traditional mechanisms of engagement and decision making, increasing their confidence, agency, and influence to be part of those processes and create new ones that work better for them.

Community planning, vision, and capacity

Communities drive change using creative interventions and engagement to find common ground, foster collaboration and community cohesion and enable ambitious new visions and local solutions to emerge (place plans, community-led housing, wayfinding, local strategies and larger creative programmes). Programmes of engagement, led by embedded community organisations, bring local people together to have conversations, identify needs and build the connections needed between local players to collaborate towards common goals. Activities and creative interventions inspire and support community participants to test ideas and be active in local decision-making spaces. Partnerships grown with Development Trusts, local Community Councils, and community groups help new projects and initiatives to emerge that are central to the development and delivery of community-led change.

Learning and employability

Creative placemaking identifies the skills and knowledge already present within a place and the gaps and opportunities for development, from regular participation to leading and directing large-scale programmes and development projects. A commitment to locally-led solutions and work that benefits those who already live in a place means that opportunities are developed for local people to take work forward and develop any additional skills required to do this. Creative engagement programmes build the confidence and support learning pathways for those for whom more formal approaches to skills progression and professional development are less successful. Partnerships form with formal educational and employability services to provide more cohesive and joined-up approaches to learning.

6. Impact

Net Zero and Just Transition:

Creative placemaking brings people and partners together to co-develop equitable solutions to building more sustainable practices. Creative interventions and engagement programmes raise awareness and support those involved to explore the challenges and the opportunities our places and communities face and what is needed for a just transition to environmental sustainability. Partnerships form to grow the resource, support and infrastructure required to make changes happen in ways that benefit communities in the long-term. Working towards social cohesion fosters collective commitment between those that have a stake in a place to achieving net-zero goals. Creative placemaking also makes space for consideration of elements within places that have no human voice by actively including 'more than human' considerations such as natural habitat and time-based processes in landscape.

Sustainable and diverse creative and community sector:

Creative placemaking creates opportunities and supports creative practitioners to work with community collaborators and other stakeholders as part of the long-term visioning and innovation of a place. Long-term work is created that embeds creative practice within communities supporting relationships to form around activities and inspiring imaginative solutions to local problems. Creative programmes are developed based on the interests and needs of communities, engaging people who would not otherwise take part in 'arts' activities. Those less represented in creative industries are supported to take part and develop creative skills towards career progression in creative industries or are transferrable to other sectors. The creative and cultural sector is supported to grow the identity and showcase the unique qualities present across our communities.

Skills for the future:

Creative placemaking can be a powerful tool in growing the innovation required within our communities for less certain futures (climate change, digital technology and AI, aging population). Embedding creative placemaking approaches within our places develops meta skills such as: team working; creative thinking/imagination; problem solving and agency in local power structures. Creative placemaking embeds the skills required to get things started in places, test and trial new ideas and work together in solution-focused ways. The experimental, exploratory, and empowering methods of creative engagement supports new ideas and directions for work that those involved might not previously have thought possible and builds the relationships and connections required to progress these.

Health and wellbeing:

Creative placemaking supports health and wellbeing by nurturing relationships and building community-based connections and place-based solutions in holistic and inclusive ways. Creative projects can support new coping strategies for mental health, reduce isolation, grow confidence, and widen networks for participants. The evidence for the value of creative activity within initiatives like social prescribing and preventative health initiatives is widespread and compelling.³¹ Health-specific projects and initiatives emerge that bring people, communities, and agencies together to identify drivers of poor health (social isolation, accessibility, discrimination) and improve health through creative participation models. Partnerships between community organisations, agencies, and service providers are supported to form around these drivers and establish work and creative engagement programmes to understand the complexity of people's real lives and learn about what will make a positive difference to them.

³¹ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/929773/DCMS_report_April_2020_finalx__1_.pdf



ELSEWHERE.

'Our increasingly integrated place-based approach to economic development aligns with creative placemaking, involving people, place, and community. A great example of this is our local employability and skills partnership and their community-led delivery using service design approaches. These principles of participation from the outset and working meaningfully together in understanding problems and identifying solutions create a collaborative culture for improvement. Like service design approaches, the creative placemaking process naturally supports skills development and local innovation. Creative placemaking supports the vision of a wellbeing economy for Scotland where all economic activity has a purpose and "so that all of Scotland's people and places can thrive and prosper".'

Lynne Burgess,
Employability, Skills & Partnerships Manager,
Economy & Development Dumfries & Galloway Council

7. Measuring

Measuring the impact of creative placemaking requires an approach to understanding the immediate and direct effect (wellbeing, confidence, agency, new enterprises) on the places, communities and people involved in activity and programmes as well as the wider social impact of work as a catalyst for individuals and communities over longer periods of time.

This involves a multifaceted approach using qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection, documentation, process and impact evaluation, the creation of spaces for regular feedback and review, and partnership working to embed research and analysis through larger scale projects. Typically, bespoke frameworks for monitoring and evaluation are developed at the outset of projects and are begun by collectively identifying the values that are important to the project and an initial idea of common goals. Values can be identified together as part of forming working frameworks across all those involved in projects and activity. Such a project framework is very effective in shaping a project approach to monitoring and evaluation.

Documenting and sharing the story of the work throughout a project provides the content required for feedback and reflection within communities and is a valuable tool in visualising the impact of creative placemaking for those involved. This can be a creative exploration of its own, commissioning creative practitioners and researchers to **walk the journey** through the stages of development and

activity with the aim of review and reflection as the work develops. Creative commissions can support a variety of outputs that communicate participant's experience of the work in ways that are more widely accessible (writing, film, performance). Evaluation approaches (collective sessions, one-to-one feedback etc.) can be incorporated into engagement programmes and working processes. Academic partners and those with research expertise can be brought into development and delivery teams of larger projects to integrate collaborative and embedded evaluative processes through the work.

Measuring the long-term impact of creative placemaking requires we build strong partnerships and a knowledge base of impact through the collection of case studies, research, and data mapping. Contributing to and working closely with others who are active in these areas helps to compare local impact against national trends and align areas of analysis to other agendas (health, education, employability, economic regeneration, community wealth building etc.).

7. Measuring

Culture Counts³² advocates for the value of culture as fundamental to our common future in Scotland. To support this vision, they have established two cross-party groups in Scottish Parliament for 2021-26, the Creative Economy and Culture and Communities groups. The Culture and Communities group is focused on the impact of arts, culture, and heritage on the public sector, for example the social, health and educational impact of access and participation through creative engagement. A focus on Place is number one on the Culture Counts Manifesto³³ to integrate culture into communities with a percentage of local infrastructure projects investing in culture.

The Centre for Cultural Value³⁴ in Leeds was set up to better understand the role that culture plays in our lives. One of their four core research themes is 'community place and identity' with a recent query around placemaking and the role of arts and culture within this. Using quantitative and qualitative measures the Centre for Cultural Value are building up a resource and knowledge-base that evidences the impact of this work and aims to inform future policies.

Dumfries and Galloway Council are one of six pilot areas in Scotland to use the Social Value Engine³⁵ to measure economic value of wider social impact which puts a monetary value of return on every £1 invested in activity. The Stove Network's What We Do Now pilot³⁶ measured just under £4 return on every £1 invested.

Community Wealth Building policy is still a new area of policy in Scotland with great scope for the development of approaches which embody the CWB Principles but do so in innovative ways which respond to the needs of our communities. As methods as developed for aligning these policy objectives in ways which make sense to communities, empower citizens, and make our communities good places to live there is also an opportunity to take a wider and more social impact approach to measuring place development and economic regeneration.

³² <https://culturecounts.scot/about>

³³ <https://culturecounts.scot/cultural-manifesto-2021>

³⁴ <https://www.culturalvalue.org.uk/>

³⁵ <https://socialvalueuk.org/reports/social-value-project-2020-final-report/> 30 <https://whatwedonow.scot/about/>

³⁶ <https://whatwedonow.scot/>





'I've never been comfortable with the term community engagement. You engage with an enemy not a friend. Creative placemaking favours active involvement rather than passive engagement. It is an approach that is potentially transformative in terms of bridging power dynamics between communities and service organisations, empowering communities rather than relegating them to passive roles. Traditional engagement methods often amplify the voices of the confident and articulate, leaving others feeling disempowered. Creative placemaking, however, builds confidence and capacity for all, fostering equality and overcoming imbalances. It taps into the right hemisphere of the brain, that of creativity, synergy, and coproduction, bringing communities together collaboratively. Participants speak of feeling energized and engaged in coproduction and vision. This approach levels the playing field, unlike traditional methods that may breed competition and apathy. While traditional approaches have their place, creative placemaking engages both the heart and mind, motivating and inspiring people. The Place Planning Partnership greatly values its contribution.'

Jamie Ferguson,
Chair,
Dumfries and Galloway Place Planning Partnership

'The creative placemaking approach supports us to reach seldom heard voices within a community when designing to boost our local economy and regenerate our places. This is invaluable as those voices are often the ones most in need of the benefits economic development projects aim to deliver. The conversations held through creative placemaking bring vibrancy to a process that can be seen as corporate, process driven and inaccessible. In my experience, approaching regeneration conversations through this approach generated fresh ideas and better designed responses to local issues. As an added benefit the process leaves a legacy of capacity and empowerment in communities who complete the process. Communities are left more confident and able to take ownership of their place's regeneration.'

Sarah-Jane Allsopp,
Economic Development Officer,
Strategic Economic Investment,
Dumfries and Galloway Council





Case Study NW Dumfries

Lochside is a housing estate in Northwest Dumfries with the highest Index of Multiple Deprivation in the region, in top 5% nationally. In response to the stigma associated with being labelled a 'deprived community' local 'Lochsider' Angela Gilmour started putting on events and activities to celebrate and showcase what her community had to offer. LIFT D+G (Lochside is Families Together D+G) was founded in 2016 with the aim of creating positive memories for the residents of Lochside, bringing people together and starting to use and create spaces that could help foster a sense of real pride in their community.

Through The Stove's What We Do Now (WWDN) project, LIFT D+G hosted three creative practitioners and supported them to work with residents from their local Dunlop Road flats, regarded by the local housing association as the least desirable accommodation they own. Residents there typically have significant issues with disability and/or social anxiety. Careful and patient community engagement gradually drew residents into a trusting relationship with the WWDN creative practitioners and there followed a series of residents' meetings around a homemade tattie (potato) oven. These sessions resulted in visions from residents for their own community space at the foot of the flats. The WWDN team were able to negotiate the gifting and siting of a portacabin for residents which is now being creatively converted into a community space by LIFT D+G and Lochside residents with continued support from WWDN team and a programme of creative activity is being delivered from 'The Cabin'.

The portacabin acts as a prototype for LIFT D+G for a brand new creative placemaking hub that they would manage and run for their community. WWDN is currently working with LIFT D+G to incorporate this idea into the regeneration plans the housing association (Wheatley South) and DG Council have for Lochside. The ambition is that Lochside will have a high-quality cultural space in the heart of its community, a place that people from outside the community will also want to visit and take part in, giving a new message that Lochside is a place to come to rather than leave from.



Outcomes: Personal growth and increases in wellbeing for local community members, community voices being heard in local decision making, increased capacity/experience/skills for community groups, and community enterprises being developed by community groups.

'I have gained massive confidence in my own abilities as an artist, and that's been really important. I've also regained my confidence in the power of good long term art projects that are engaged with and deeply committed to the communities in which they're happening.'

Rosie Giblin,
Artist in Residence in NW Dumfries.

'With our pop-ups we were able to create a personal hub of warmth, food, art, and conversation in a way specific to that place. People were touched by these elements together, and they each had a part to play by just being there. The whole was greater than the sum of the parts, and this part remained in folks' minds and hearts after the tent was cleared away.'

Andy Brooke,
Artist in Residence in NW Dumfries.



The Opportunity



Adopting a creative placemaking methodology presents significant opportunities both for the communities/creative sectors and as a structure for other sectors such as health/wellbeing, education, regeneration, local economies, and just transition to Net Zero.

By adopting this approach to growing capacity and collaboration within communities and across sectors, places can develop the skills, knowledge and understanding required to connect existing initiatives/capacity and create region-wide place-based strategies that are joined up as well as responsive to the different and diverse approaches needed within communities. Supporting community organisations, other partners, and creative practitioners to work together within communities on process-led programmes can significantly contribute to delivering on social benefit and sustainable economic impact at scale. Building connections across programmes and community-driven activity can be part of forming the infrastructure required to catalyse this approach for the long-term benefit of our communities and places.

Community-led initiatives can often feel isolated and under-resourced. Development of more strategic and collaborative work can be a strain on the capacity and resources of smaller groups and organisations. Support agencies and region-wide bodies require the information and local knowledge that these groups and organisations can gather but often ask it multiple times in the same place, working in isolation from each other. While understanding, this repetition dilutes community enthusiasm for engaging with support agencies and region-wide bodies. A joined-up approach is needed to work better and smarter within our communities and to support the connections, knowledge and resource sharing required to ensure sectors are working in alignment with each other and the needs of local people.

Taking a region-wide commitment to creative placemaking builds the collective capacity and expertise across an area that can be drawn back into communities enabling them to take forward regeneration and place-development work (community visioning, place plans, economic development) for themselves and inform the work of regional and national strategies.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been identified through the research and stakeholder engagement that has informed this document. This is not an exhaustive list and is shared here as a foundation from which to evolve regional approaches to creative placemaking that are responsive to the unique and individual needs of communities, projects, and organisations and the places they work. Actions are not meant to be led by one group or organisation but developed in partnership with those active across places and communities (as shown in Knowing Your Landscape).

- Strengthen relationships within the Cultural Sector and consider how the cross-sector opportunities of creative placemaking could address some of the Cultural Sector's investment and development needs.
- Explore a networked approach to working with communities to deliver creative placemaking and build/ share resources and capacity.
- The dispersed nature of communities and resources in rural areas and the place-based emphasis of creative placemaking suggests that networks appropriate to the geography/culture would be beneficial in developing the potential of this Creative Placemaking Approach.
- Establish a region-wide consultative group for creative placemaking to foster collaboration and develop shared objectives and implementation strategies.
- Build a resource of case studies in creative placemaking and community-led regeneration to tell the story of activity to potential partners.
- Develop and build relationships with cross-sector partners and initiate demonstration and strategic projects in creative placemaking with focuses like place planning, net zero and community wealth building.
- Support Local Authorities to develop frameworks for commissioning creative placemaking services..
- Support the development of skills and knowledge for practitioners, community groups and strategic partners in creative placemaking practice and approaches.
- Connect to regional Culture Strategies and processes of development and feed in evidence for championing creative placemaking.
- Seek out and establish connections with research partners to evidence and evaluate the short and long-term impact of this work.

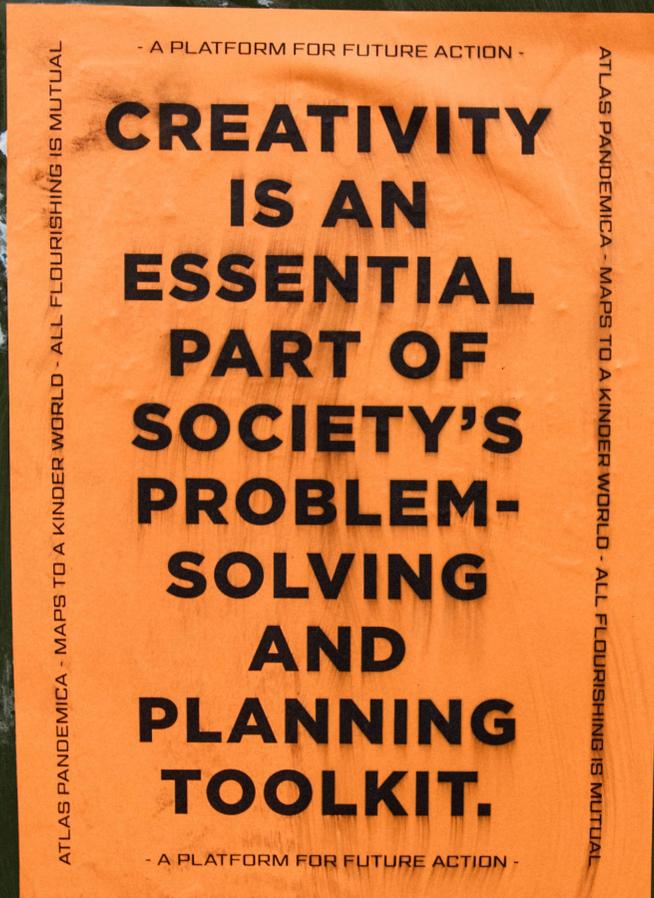
This document was produced by The Stove Network, with feedback through considerable consultation and shared practice with others. We would like to give our thanks to all those who have contributed and all those that continue to further the practice of creative placemaking as a grassroots approach for community-led change.

Thank You

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'Creative projects hold spaces for the formation of new individual and social identities. When (during Remembering Together) people told us 'nothing joins us' across the Borders, they meant that government boundaries don't align to a sense of common history or purpose, nor to the intertwined landscape, biodiversity, and people. Creatively exploring these fosters opportunities to strengthen the bonds between people, and to surface and share their diverse experiences.'

Alister Lownie,
Artist and Academic,
Two Destination Language.



Appendices

- Influences; Projects and Organisations
- Midsteepie Quarter Case Study
- The Policy Landscape
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Photo Credits

'This has been a very different way of working. We've always had artists that have worked in A' the Airts as a centre but we've never had artists work with us for so long. And what that has meant is that they've got to know the local people, people understand what we're trying to achieve, and it's also given our young people time to get to know and build that trust...It's been wider than just two artists being parachuted into a community, they really got to know everybody.'

Yvonne Barber,
Centre Manager at A' the Airts, Sunquhar.



Influences Projects and Organisations

The following organisations and projects represent some of the significant creative and community embedded work across Scotland that has helped to shape, form and influence the Creative Placemaking Approach shared in this document.

WHALE ARTS, Edinburgh – a community-led arts charity and anchor organisation for Wester Hailes, working towards a vibrant, thriving community through the delivery of projects, programmes, events and building connections with local and national partners. - www.whalearts.co.uk

The Barn, Banchory - collaborating with artists, makers, and audiences to develop arts experiences which grow environmental awareness, cultivate action and create the conditions to explore alternative ways of learning and living on earth. - www.thebarnarts.co.uk

Stellar Quines, Edinburgh - an intersectional feminist theatre company using theatre as a force for change through programmes that aim to enrich the conversation about gender equity in Scotland. - www.stellarquines.co.uk

Rig Arts, Greenock – bringing artists and communities together in collaborative and creative ways through a programme of projects, workshops, training, exhibitions, public artworks, community spaces, public events, and festivals. - www.rigarts.org

Northlight Arts, Dunbar – delivering innovative projects and educational initiatives, focused on environment, that seek to generate new ways of engaging with community and actively develop opportunities that connect artist's, organisations, specialists, and people of all ages to act as a catalyst for change. - www.northlightarts.org.uk

North Edinburgh Arts, Edinburgh – a cultural centre and hub of activity using art to positively change lives and providing a safe environment to meet, exchange and try out new things, exploring ideas and taking creative risks. - www.northedinburgharts.co.uk

M:ADE, Moray - establishing projects that address local issues in communities driven by the ethos of having a positive social impact through grassroots collaboration and the aim to build, adapt and respond creatively with and for local people. - www.morayartsdevelopmentengagement.org

Lyth Arts Centre, Caithness - practices radical localism and challenges conceptions about what it means to be 'rural' through a programme of performance, visual art, and participation in educational and socially- engaged arts projects led by local creatives. - www.lytharts.org.uk

Govanhill Baths, Glasgow - a grassroots activist-based organisation delivering health, wellbeing, arts, environmental and heritage projects through a programme of events, activities and social initiatives. - www.govanhillbaths.com

Glasgow Life Artists in Communities, Glasgow - a programme which aims to transform lives through engagement and participation in creative and cultural activity, in local communities across the city.
- www.glasgowcan.org/who-we-are

Findhorn Bay Arts, Moray – delivering transformative and experimental regeneration projects to resonate locally and inspire nationally, and support dialogue between residents and artists to explore how creativity can amplify voices, find solutions, and develop connections. - www.findhornbayarts.com

Deveron, Huntly - using the 'town as a venue' and connecting artists, communities and places through creative research and engagement to inhabit, explore, map, and activate their place through artist driven projects.
- www.deveron-projects.com

Cultivate, by Creative Dundee, Dundee - a regional leadership programme for creative practitioners and local communities to collaboratively explore new ways of embedding creativity at the core of grassroots collective action for climate justice. - www.creativedundee.com/cultivate

Connecting Threads, Southern Uplands Partnership, Lindean and Kirkgunzeon – using culture and creativity to celebrate, protect and enhance the environment and culture of the river Tweed as part of a five year development programme along the river Tweed.
- www.sup.org.uk/projects/connecting-threads-tweed-river-culture/

Circus Artspace, Inverness - committed to building broader access to contemporary visual arts across the Scottish Highlands through a programme of events and creative learning built on the core principles of collaboration, conversation and supporting emergent practice. – www.circus.scot

ATLAS Arts, Skye - work with artists and local residents to have conversations that are rooted in place and time through a programme of screenings, gatherings, residencies, meals, workshops and sharings.
– www.atlasarts.org.uk

Art 27, Edinburgh – an arts and human rights organisation working towards the right of everyone (Article 27 Article 27 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights) to freely participate in the culture of their community articulated through great art and great stories. - www.art27scotland.org

Alchemy Film and Arts, Hawick – working with artists and communities across local, national and international contexts, using film as a way to come together, have conversations and strengthen community.
- www.alchemyfilmandarts.org.uk

Creative Placemaking in Dumfries High Street and the founding of the Midsteeple Quarter Initiative

The Stove Network was started, in 2011, by a group of local creative practitioners who had an idea that creativity could play a part the future of Dumfries town centre. The High Street was already in decline and the key idea was to establish a place in the heart of Dumfries driven by local people. First and foremost, The Stove set out to be a place that was accessible to everyone, somewhere that listened and was run by people who saw their role as facilitators of ideas brought by local people.

The Stove started its process through 'invitation' – public events and collaborative projects with local groups that explored attitudes to the identity of Dumfries. These activities were hands-on and participative (people were part of making them rather than passive spectators) and made space for the exchange of ideas around an inherent question: 'what is important about Dumfries and what should a future Dumfries be like?'. Examples included a pop-up T-shirt printing factory, crowdsourced charter for the town, video projection on High Street buildings and a new community river festival staged around an unlikely river race from the sea to the centre of town.

From conversations within early activities and projects it became clear that the most pressing issue for people was the state of the town centre itself. This early work set an agenda and a way of working for The Stove of:

- To create opportunities for people to do things for themselves and see the effects of that.
- To involve people and organisations seen as 'having power' and use The Stove's work as a platform for people to come into contact with power to demystify decision making and how things get done in our community
- To focus our work around developing a community-led vision for the town centre, at both a strategic level and through practical action by starting groups and initiatives.

From here on the focus of the question The Stove asked with its projects became 'What should the future of Dumfries look like and how could you be involved in making this happen?'

The Stove itself became part of the re-imagining of Dumfries, and a place associated with energy and vibrancy. The Stove became the place you go to find out what was going on and to be part of it, and it became a centre of gravity for the region's creative sector, creating jobs and learning opportunities for people through creative, community engagement activities. In particular, young people were drawn to activity and opportunities around The Stove and this encouraged their return to the region after work or higher education courses.

A growing consensus emerged around the kind of Dumfries that people would like to make, a vision of a mixed town centre, not solely dependent on retail, but inclusive of places to learn, services, leisure, culture, and enterprise. Somewhere that new local businesses could start and grow and, crucially, somewhere that was built around principles of community wealth building, retaining the prosperity generated for the local population. The number one priority to emerge was the idea of bringing people back to live in the town centre; once a centre of population for Dumfries, the town centre had become de-populated as national chain stores took over the High Street in the 1970s-80s. All the upper floors of the High Street were now empty and, consequently, the town centre became a ghost town after 5pm.

The Stove commissioned local filmmaker John Wallace to create a documentary about the evolving story of the High Street and why people didn't live there anymore. This film was called A House on the High Street³⁷ and was shown on a loop for 2 weeks at The Stove. A special screening was staged for key local 'movers and shakers'. At the end of this screening the audience of councillors, housing associations, heritage people and architects looked out of the window and resolved to 'get people living in 107-109 High Street' (107-109 is the most prominent empty building near the iconic Midsteeples building). The idea of Midsteeples Quarter as a community-led regeneration project to breathe life back into the town centre was born, evolving to include a whole town block defined by a row of 8 underused High Street buildings. Initial design works suggested that high-quality rented housing for up to 200 people could be created in Midsteeples Quarter.

Visioning work was taken back to the people at an event called 'Chapter One'. This two-day event was attended by over 500 people many of whom signed 'The Dumfries Pledge' to be an active part of making this vision happen. The Stove, with the Glasgow Institute of Architects, staged a national architectural competition to put forward ideas for the development of the Midsteeples Quarter. Over 20 Scottish practices entered and designs were exhibited at The Stove with a public invitation to vote for the 'people's choice'.

Throughout this work The Stove was well supported with advice from national agencies such as Development Trust Association Scotland, Community Land Scotland, Scotland's Towns Partnership, SURF (Scotland's Regeneration Agency) and Scottish Communities Alliance. The Stove became the first Development Trust in the UK to be led by artists and won the Creative Regeneration category of the Scottish Regeneration Awards in 2016.

'Midsteeples Quarter' was also receiving enthusiastic support from Dumfries and Galloway Council and Scottish Government who saw the project as a key national example of community-led regeneration in an urban context, one that could be followed by

the many other Scottish towns struggling due to the downturn in High Street retail. A grant of £100,000 from Dumfries and Galloway Council's 'Town Centre Living Fund' supported The Stove to lead business planning and a Community Asset Transfer for 135-139 High Street (the northernmost building within Midsteeples Quarter), with support to set up a new community organisation to take the project forward.

More than 200 people had signed The Dumfries Pledge in support of "Midsteeples Quarter" and a Community Benefit Society was created to carry the project forward. A Community Benefit Society is a form of organisation that is 100% community controlled and akin to a traditional 'mutual' or 'building society'; its members are all part owners of everything the organisation owns and does. A public launch (April 2018) facilitated by The Stove and produced by artist Kevin Reid featured protest signs, a public soapbox for speeches, and street entertainers. With over 150 people signing up that first day, the organisation was well on its way and now has over 700 members at the time of writing (Jan 2024).

Through the early stages of the Community Benefit Society, The Stove continued to support the development of Midsteeples Quarter, led by Stove CEO Matt Baker until February 2020 including the recruitment of a Creative Producer to curate events in 135-139 High Street, the development of the Midsteeples Quarter 'Blueprint', the asset transfer of 135-139 High Street, fundraising £3M for its redevelopment and sourcing revenue funding for a project team to continue with the projects delivery. The Stove and Midsteeples Quarter continue to collaborate on joint projects working towards a shared vision of a locally-led and diverse town centre that truly supports the needs and aspirations of everyone in our community.

Five out of the eight properties originally targeted are now in community ownership. A £7M re-development of one the properties will be complete in Spring 2024 with 7 new flats for rent and 350 sqm creative enterprise space. The other four properties are in mixed meanwhile uses prior to refurbishment and rebuilding.

³⁷ <https://vimeo.com/160872735>

The Policy Landscape

Local and national governments are engaged in policy development and action to support global imperatives such as the just transition to net zero and addressing wealth and wellbeing inequalities.

A whole place approach to thinking about services, work and development in our communities is central to the Scottish Government's **National Performance Framework**³⁸, the **Place Principle**³⁹ and now also in committing to taking a **Community Wealth Building**⁴⁰ approach to developing our local economies.

A Place-based Approach

The **Place Principle** is designed to support a collaborative cross sectoral approach to services and development in a place. Community engagement and co-design are central to place-based working giving communities more power when it comes to how we manage and develop our places.

The Place Principle builds on the **Community Empowerment Act**⁴¹ (Scotland 2015) which extended the **Community Right to Buy**⁴², made it possible for communities to request asset transfers, and required local community planning partnerships to develop **Local Outcome Improvement Plans**⁴³ with agreed priorities and actions.

Communities in Scotland are now in the position of being able to bring forward Local Place Plans⁴⁴ which have statutory status in **Local Development Plans** as defined in National Planning Framework⁴⁵. **Local Place Plans** are proposed not just as a way for communities to take a more leading role in local development but also to develop a deeper sense of connection, collaboration, and positive community identity – thus connecting with wider aims of Wellbeing and Community Wealth Building.

A Wellbeing Economy

Scotland's **National Strategy for Economic Transformation** (NSET) lays out a vision for a **Wellbeing Economy**, to deliver 'prosperity for all Scotland's people and places'⁴⁶ and commits to 'taking a broader view of what a successful economy, society and country is, and putting people and the planet at the heart'.

To achieve this the Scottish Government points towards **Community Wealth Building**⁴⁷ as a practical approach to achieve this Wellbeing Economy and a new approach to economic development that will 'enable more local communities and people to own, have a stake in, access and benefit from the wealth our economy generates'⁴⁸.

³⁸ https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/sites/default/files/documents/NPF_A4_Booklet.pdf

³⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/place-principle-introduction/>

⁴⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building/>

⁴¹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/community-empowerment-scotland-act-summary/>

⁴² <https://www.gov.scot/policies/land-reform/community-right-to-buy/>

⁴³ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/improving-public-services/community-planning/>

⁴⁴ <https://www.ourplace.scot/home/local-place-plans>

⁴⁵ https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1005759/NPPF_July_2021.pdf

⁴⁶ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/scotlands-national-strategy-economic-transformation/pages/2/>

⁴⁷ <https://cles.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/CWB2019FINAL-web.pdf>

⁴⁸ <https://www.gov.scot/policies/cities-regions/community-wealth-building/>

Community Wealth Building

Community Wealth Building (CWB) is a policy framework which focuses on growing the influence communities have on the economy and ensuring communities receive more of the benefits from the wealth they help to generate. CWB is designed to harness the economic leverage of local 'anchor' organisations (councils, health, universities, colleges, housing associations, or large local private sector employers) to tackle long standing systematic challenges and structural inequalities within communities.

There are five CWB pilot regions in Scotland; Clackmannanshire, Western Isles, Fife, Glasgow, and South of Scotland, with North Ayrshire acting as the pathfinder and first place to produce a full CWB Strategy. CWB is still a new area of policy in Scotland with great scope for the development of approaches which embody the CWB Principles but do so in innovative ways which respond to the needs of our communities.

A Role for Culture

A national outcome for culture was added to Scotland's National Performance Framework⁴⁹ in 2018. The **Culture Strategy for Scotland** (2020)⁵⁰ sets out a vision of strengthening, transforming, and empowering through culture, aiming to 'place culture as a central consideration across all policy areas' and recognising the empowering potential of culture in Scotland.

The **National Partnership for Culture** was established in 2020 as an interdisciplinary voice to advise on the delivery of the Cultural

Strategy and its cross-sector potential. The Scottish Government's current action plan refresh for the Culture Strategy has integrated Community Wealth Building and Creative Placemaking as part of delivering on culture's cross-sector contribution to society.

National and local government are committed to creating thriving local economies, empowered communities who are active in local decision making, and a vibrant cultural landscape. Culture and creative industries are poised to play a significant role in this with programmes like **Culture Collective**⁵¹ and **Creative Communities**⁵² paving the way for a new approach to creative working in communities.

Culture Collective⁵³ is a national programme coordinated by Creative Scotland⁵⁴ to establish a network of creative practitioners, organisations, and communities to respond to the impact of COVID-19 by providing employment opportunities and actively engaging people in shaping the future cultural life of their community. Initial investment from Scottish Government of £6M saw the support for 26 projects around Scotland (initiated in March 2021), with a further investment of £4M allowing the continuation of these projects through to October 2023.

⁴⁹ <https://nationalperformance.gov.scot/national-outcomes/culture>

⁵⁰ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/culture-strategy-scotland/pages/1/>

⁵¹ <https://culturecollective.scot/>

⁵² <https://www.creativecommunities.uk/>

⁵³ <https://culturecollective.scot/>

⁵⁴ <https://www.creativescotland.com/news-stories/latest-news/archive/2021/02/culture-collective-recipients>

The Policy Landscape

Health, Wellbeing, and Participation

Wellbeing and the importance of growing connections and relationships within our communities are part of Scotland's nine **National Health and Wellbeing Outcomes**⁵⁵ which focus on 'the needs of the individual to promote their health and wellbeing, and in particular to enable people to live healthier lives in their community'.

Nurturing relationships and building community-based connections and solutions in a holistic and inclusive way is promoted by health professionals in Scotland as a means of integrating health and social care services within communities, a Scottish Government policy for many years. A recent review⁵⁶ of health and social care integration highlights the importance of 'place' to move towards a fairer Scotland where everybody thrives, emphasising:

- the importance of conversations about the values and outcomes that matter to individuals and communities,
- the fact that every community is different,
- the need to take time and build trust,
- the value of curiosity, reflection, and learning.

People, Jobs, and Skills

Central to developing a Creative Placemaking Approach is the attraction, development, and retention of a skilled and diverse workforce. The Scottish Government published **Employment: Our Vision**⁵⁷ in December 2022 laying out its mission to ensure the Scottish Labour Market and its workforce:

- is agile, resilient, and productive
- has a skilled and inclusive workforce ready to meet the demands of an ever-changing economy and society
- embodies a culture of fair work and rewards workers with the security they need to develop and plan for their and their families' future
- is representative of society and provides opportunities for all

The Vision is underpinned by the **five dimensions of Fair Work**⁵⁸ which amplifies the key social, cultural, and economic values and principles inherent to delivery of creative placemaking. The Scottish Government is currently engaged in a review of Post-School Education, Research and Skills functions and remits of national public bodies. This review places Equality, Opportunity, and Community at the heart of its **Purpose and Principles**⁵⁹ framework. **Skills Development Scotland**⁶⁰ is the national skills body that supports people and businesses to develop and apply their skills across Scotland.

⁵⁵ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/national-health-wellbeing-outcomes-framework/pages/1/>

⁵⁶ <https://research-portal.uws.ac.uk/en/publications/health-and-social-care-reform-in-scotland-what-next>

⁵⁷ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/employment-our-vision/pages/vision/>

⁵⁸ <https://www.fairworkconvention.scot/the-fair-work-framework/>

⁵⁹ <https://www.gov.scot/publications/post-school-education-research-skills-purpose-principles/pages/1/>

⁶⁰ <https://www.skillsdevelopmentscotland.co.uk/>

Net Zero

The climate crisis and the importance of resilience, sustainability, and working towards **Net Zero**⁶¹ inform and influence many policies and strategies, particularly in terms of economic development. The Scottish Government's five-year programme of action to prepare for the challenges we will face as our climate continues to change is laid out in **Climate Ready Scotland**⁶² across seven outcomes aimed to integrate adaption into other policy areas. Outcome One states that 'Our communities are inclusive, empowered, resilient and safe in response to the changing climate' and utilises placemaking as a theme to strengthen both social elements and the built and natural environment of places. It is widely acknowledged that creative and innovative solutions are required to address the climate crisis: Creative Placemaking provides a framework for integrating the creative sector into the just transition to Net Zero.

Within this national context, the contribution of placemaking, the creative sector and community organisations are paramount. Situated at the heart of communities, local groups and organisations connect strategic action with local knowledge, skills and opportunity and offer a conduit for conversations between formal governance structures and community networks.

⁶¹ <https://www.netzeronation.scot/#%3A~%3Atext%3DScotland.%2Cactions%20you%20can%20take%20now>

⁶² <https://www.gov.scot/publications/climate-ready-scotland-second-scottish-climate-change-adaptation-programme-2019-2024/pages/4/>

Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder Engagement

This piece of work has been informed by drawing on engagement activity, research, and development conversations in creative placemaking in the South of Scotland including public events, group sessions and discussions, and individual conversations with key stakeholders across relative sectors (health, economic development, community learning and development, arts and culture, education and employability).

kNOw One Place

The Stove hosted Scotland's first ever creative placemaking forum, **kNOw One Place**⁶³, in Dumfries, September 2022. kNOw One Place was an ambitious, future-thinking discussion on how communities can use creativity to lead the development of their places. Through a mixture of open space discussion and expert reflection over two days of activity, it brought people together from public, private, independent, and charitable sectors to share and co-create an agenda for creativity and placemaking for the future.

Over one hundred people attended from local, regional, national and international locations.

The values, principles and delivery challenges of creative placemaking work within communities were explored through the themes of: **People and Power, Society and Activism, Communities, Space** (Physical and conversational) and **Creative Practice**. The discussions and learning that came out of this event were captured through notetaking, recordings⁶⁴, and documentation, and written up into a Summary⁶⁵ for future development.

WWDN Pilot

The What We Do Now (WWDN) pilot was an ambitious approach to creative placemaking in partnership with creative practitioners and community groups and organisations across Dumfries and Galloway (Sanquhar, Langholm, Stranraer, NW Dumfries, Castle Douglas and Lockerbie) that ran from May 2021 to Oct 2023. By engaging directly with less-heard sections of communities, local people were supported to develop projects/initiatives/groups/enterprises to improve their own situation and use the collective resource of the WWDN network to grow the capacity within their communities to deliver outcomes imagined by local people.

Community Organisations (place hubs) and creative practitioners were supported to initiate programmes of engagement with local communities with the aim of engaging groups that were less represented in local decision making (young people, disadvantaged and marginalised communities) and co-develop new projects and ideas.

A total of 58 freelance commissions were awarded through WWDN, including 14 long-term creative commissions (12-18 months). Phase one of the project (Aug 2021-July 2022) delivered 123 artist/place hubs events with approximately 3000 active participants across the region.

An evaluation process embedded through the project gathered insights and feedback from the creative practitioners, community organisations and participants involved. Methods included one-to-one interviews with practitioners, place hubs and partners at key stages through the project, group development sessions, reflective blogs, participant sessions, and qualitative documentation⁶⁶.

To understand the financial value of the social impact of WWDN for those involved the project was run through a Social Value Engine⁶⁷ tool that Dumfries and Galloway Council use to ascertain this with WWDN shown to return just under £4 for every £1 invested. This is an interesting model that could be explored further with indicators more precisely tuned to creative and cultural work.

⁶³ <https://whatwedonow.scot/about/know-one-place/>

⁶⁴ <https://whatwedonow.scot/news/know-one-place-live-stream/>

⁶⁵ <https://whatwedonow.scot/about/know-one-place/>

⁶⁶ Reflective Blogs and other documentation from the WWDN pilot are available from <https://whatwedonow.scot/latest/>

⁶⁷ <https://socialvalueengine.com/>

Art, Communities and Place

Arts, Communities and Place⁶⁸ was a daylong event (March 2023) in Galashiels that brought people together to discuss art and culture's important contribution to place-development and regeneration in the context of the Borders. The event was co-hosted by **The Stove** and **Connecting Threads**⁶⁹ with support from **Creative Arts and Business Network (CABN)**⁷⁰, **Alchemy Film and Arts**⁷¹, **Creative Coathanger**⁷², and **OutPost Arts**⁷³. Just under 50 people attended the event ranging from creative freelancers, both established and emerging, arts and culture organisations and micro-businesses, local authority, and South of Scotland Enterprise representatives.

Discussions were shaped around three main questions, following a series of Pecha Kucha presentations by hosting organisations on their activity in this area. Discussions were captured through notetaking shared in a Summary⁷⁴ post event with further feedback invited from those who attended. The key learnings from the event were distilled down across the three questions asked⁷⁵.

- How can we all share learning about creative, collaborative work with communities as part of place development/regeneration?
- How could more cross-sector working, and collaboration be supported/facilitated?
- What support is needed for those involved (Community groups, Creative Freelancers, Organisations) to help this work happen?

Other Stakeholders

A significant part of developing this Creative Placemaking Approach was to consult with those from across sectors inviting them to give feedback through development and help identify areas of cross-sector opportunity and alignment as well as areas of tension to be considered. Individuals and representatives were identified across the areas of health, economic development, planning, creative industries (including freelance representatives within this sector), academia, further education and skills development, community learning and development and third sector agencies supporting communities as well as arts and culture workers from organisations working with a community focus. Geographically, the scope of conversations encompassed those working in relative sectors in Dumfries and Galloway and/or the Scottish Borders along with agencies and third sector organisations working regionally and nationally.

Participants were asked to reflect on creative placemaking as an approach to working towards shared agendas, identify aligned outcomes with other sectors, and feedback on how a networked approach to delivering creative placemaking might support collaboration and a more holistic approach to supporting places.

⁶⁸ <https://www.cabn.info/spotlight/blog/arts-communities-place/>

⁶⁹ <https://sup.org.uk/projects/connecting-threads-tweed-river-culture/>

⁷⁰ <https://www.cabn.info/>

⁷¹ <https://alchemyfilmmandarts.org.uk/>

⁷² <https://www.creativecoathanger.org/>

⁷³ <http://outpostarts.co.uk/index.html>

⁷⁴ <https://www.cabn.info/wp-content/uploads/2023/04/arts-and-communities-report-May-2023.pdf>

⁷⁵ <https://www.cabn.info/spotlight/blog/arts-communities-place/>

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Page 4: Jane McLachlan (2012) *Well Kent Faces*, Colin Tennant

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Page 9: The Stove (2016) *Chapter One*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 10: The Stove (2022) *What We Do Now Stranraer*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 11: The Stove (2022) *What We Do Now Stranraer*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 13: The Stove (2016) *Square Go*, Sebastian Summers

Page 14: Environmental Arts Festival (2013) *Sound Nature Dark Skies*, Colin Hattersley

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Page 29: The Stove (2012) *In-between: Dumfries (Lost Supper)*, Colin Tennant

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Page 35: The Stove (2022) *Conversing Building - Creative Spaces*, Katie Anderson

Page 36: The Stove (2019) *Art in Public Space*, Jan Hogarth

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Page 38: The Stove (2023) *What We Do Now NW Dumfries*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 39: The Stove (2023) *What We Do Now NW Dumfries*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 40: The Stove (2015) *Open House*, Katie Anderson

Page 42: The Stove (2022) *Atlas Pandemica – Paste Ups*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 43: The Stove (2023) *What We Do Now NW Dumfries*, Kirstin McEwan

Page 55: The Stove (2023) *What We Do Now NW Dumfries*, Kirstin McEwan

Graphics and design created by Alice Griffin.

.. FUTURE VISION ..

.. THESE WORKSHOPS COULD RESULT IN COMMUNITY GENERATED PUBLIC ARTWORKS, EVENTS AND OUTCOMES SUCH AS:

LONG TERM, LEGACY

- REVITALISATION PROJECT, EXPLORING AND EXPRESSING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RESIDENTS AND THEIR BUILT ENVIRONMENT.
- BUILDING ENGAGEMENT, SKILLS AND ENCOURAGING CITIZENSHIP, SENSE OF OWNERSHIP AND EMPOWERED COMMUNITY
- LIFE-ENHANCING FOR RESIDENTS
- POSITIVE ASSET FOR LIFT + DGHF
- PROGRAMME OF ONGOING ARTISTS RESIDENCIES, WITH SUPPORT OF STOVE



SPRAY PAINTING



PAINTED



A SERIES OF HUGE TEMPORARY + PERMANENT EXTERIOR ARTWORKS ON THE WALLS THEM... BEAUTIFUL AND POSITIVE MESSAGE.



GIANT BANNERMAKING



INTERIOR DECOR AND SIGNAGE

The development and articulation of this Approach has been supported by:



