

Developing a People-Centred, Place-Led Approach: The Value of the Arts and Humanities



AHRC Place-Based Research Programme Report, June 2023

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Our last, but certainly not least, thanks go to the teams working on the amazing Knowledge Exchange (KE) Projects. Your commitment to both your projects and the Programme along with your resulting innovation(s) has inspired us throughout and leaves us confident as to the inherent value of the arts and humanities within place-based work and optimistic about what can be possible in the future.

Authorship

This publication is the result of close collaboration between the Place Programme team and the KE project teams.

The Place Programme team (Madgin and Robson) are lead authors of the overall content, with the MAP exemplar sections prepared based on information authored by the individual KE Projects in response to key questions posed by the Place Programme team (KE project lead indicated in each case in the text).

We thank those who reviewed earlier drafts for their constructive and insightful comments on the content and the individuals/institutions credited for the use of their images. Design elements were prepared by Creative Triangle.

All views and any errors contained in this report are the responsibility of the authors.

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Place

Place is a high priority within a UK policy and practice landscape that is focused on improving outcomes for people in place and redistributing resource to those places most in need. Alongside this, place is a strategic priority for UK Research and Innovation (UKRI).

The Arts and Humanities Research Council (AHRC) is one of seven research councils that, along with Research England and Innovate UK, make up UKRI.

The AHRC has a sustained track record of contributing to place-based work, including supporting and developing work within creative industries and communities, health and well-being, cultural placemaking, architecture, design innovation and sustainability.

Each of these areas connect to place-based agendas and are the subject of long-term investment by AHRC. The Place-Based Research Programme is a key aspect of AHRC's programme of research investment and knowledge exchange.

What is the AHRC Place-Based Research Programme?

The Place Programme evidences the contribution that arts and humanities approaches make to place-based policies and practices and uses this evidence to develop innovative approaches to achieving a people-centred, place-led approach. We work in partnership with disciplines across and beyond the arts and humanities, as well as with the public, private, third sector and community groups who engage in place-based working at a local, national, and international level.

Four Pillars

- Build a programme around new and existing investments in place-based research and knowledge exchange.
- Support partnership working to ensure that the arts and humanities is well represented throughout place-based policies and practices.
- Learn from and share best practices at a local, national, and international level.
- Develop, with partners, a people-centred, place-led approach.

Key Facts

- **Phase One:** October 2021 – March 2023;
Phase Two: March 2023 - March 2027
- Nine Knowledge Exchange Projects (January 2022-April 2023)
- Online Place Programme Hub:
www.gla.ac.uk/place

Programme Team

- Programme Director: Professor Rebecca Madgin, University of Glasgow
- Post-Doctoral Research Associate: Dr Elizabeth Robson, University of Glasgow
- Knowledge Exchange, Communications and Engagement Officer: Ieuan Rees, University of Glasgow

Place Matters

Place is the foundation stone of individual and collective life and a repository of emotions, experiences, meanings, and memories.

Places are where life courses are shaped, social networks are formed, and the sites of lived and felt experiences. Place is also a geographic location where economic resource is allocated, boundaries are mapped, and data is collected. Understanding place as somewhere with lived and felt as well as geographic and economic dimensions is crucial to the pursuit of better outcomes for people and place.

Within the AHRC Place Programme, we catalyse research, support knowledge exchange, and nurture partnerships that together can advance an understanding of a people-centred approach to place-based work. **A people-centred, place-led approach** is one that holds the lived, felt, geographic, and economic dimensions together to ensure that place-based policies and practices are developed in equitable partnerships with individuals, communities, and professionals. In so doing, our aim is to ensure that the intimate, everyday, and embedded relationships that people have with their places are centred within place-based policies and practices.

This document is for all those interested in advancing a people-centred, place-led approach.

The arts and humanities have a sustained track record of place-based work that has resulted in positive impacts for people and place within the UK and internationally.

We draw on some of that work within this document to showcase the value of the arts and humanities and to stimulate further conversations on how we can all work in equitable partnerships to realise the full potential of place, as a lived, felt, geographic, and economic reality.

We feel that the time is right for these conversations to take place. We are inspired by the richness of people-centred, place-led work that we have seen across the nations and regions of the UK and beyond.¹ We are also encouraged by an evolving policy and practice landscape that is explicitly recognising the need to balance the traditional focus on the geographic and economic dimensions of place with the lived and felt.

We can see this in the ways that ‘social fabric’, ‘social infrastructure’, ‘pride in place’, ‘belonging’, and ‘satisfaction’ are being explored within a UK Government context.² We can also see this with an ever more explicit recognition from organisations across arts, heritage, planning, design, and the built environment that people need to be at the heart of place-based decision making.³

Finally, a range of different overarching approaches, financial packages and regulatory mechanisms, such as the Place Principle, Community Ownership Fund and Local Place Plans, have been introduced to support active involvement from place-based communities. However, challenges remain, particularly in terms of systems, structures and ways of doing, as well as being able to produce meaningful data that can speak to the lived and felt as well as the geographic and economic dimensions of place.⁴

Within this evolving context we know that the arts and humanities have much to contribute to how we might achieve more people-centred, place-led approaches and in so doing overcome some of the perceived barriers and challenges within existing systems and practices.

The Place Programme has identified three components that we see as fundamental to this work and which are encapsulated in the acronym MAP.

Introducing MAP

A people-centred, place-led approach results from:

1. Foregrounding place as a centre of **meaning**;
2. Embedding creative **approaches** within place-based work; and
3. Developing inclusive **processes** based on equitable **partnerships**.

Each aspect of **M**eaning - **A**pproaches - **P**rocesses (**MAP**) adds a powerful dimension to place-based work. When taken together, we believe there is real potential to create people-centred change that is responsive to the full range of the geographic, economic, lived, and felt dimensions of place.

We are deliberately connecting here to the notion of maps as place-based tools. However, whilst we recognise that traditionally a map is thought of as something that privileges the geographic dimension of place, it is also a representation of meaning, for example, through the naming practices highlighted, as well as the memories it evokes of the cumulative lived and felt experiences it enables. A map also highlights the economic dimension of place, as key administrative locations, resources, and infrastructure are often prominent features. In addition, whilst a map can be a functional aid, it is also a creative work of art.

There are many different kinds of maps. Maps can be based on journeys through, stories of, and connections between places. Finally, maps can be generative of shared and future understandings of place.⁵

We believe MAP is a feature of impactful arts and humanities place-based research but that consideration of the three interconnected aspects can be equally valuable in work that is led by other disciplines, practitioners, or sectors.

A note on language:

What one individual or organisation means by **'people-centred'** or **'place-led'** may differ from another. Finding a shared language for such conversations takes work. We have tried to be internally consistent within this document in full anticipation that our shared terminology may shift in future.

Evidence Base

We identified the three aspects of MAP from an evidence base that was drawn from both existing and newly created data. Within this we conducted an analysis of:

1. AHRC-funded projects from 2011 to 2022 that had a focus on place. We identified over 2500 records from three different datasets: Gateway to Research and REF 2014 and 2021 Impact Case Studies databases;
2. Responses to an open call for evidence, which generated 42 responses between November 2022 and February 2023 from a mixture of participants working in universities and research organisations, the public sector, community and volunteer groups, arts and cultural organisations, and creative practice; and
3. The work of nine Place-Based Knowledge Exchange (KE) projects that have been supported as part of the Place Programme since 2022.

Our analysis of this evidence base shows that impactful arts and humanities place-based work is largely based on working creatively and collaborating with a range of partners to understand the many layers of meaning within place and how these differ both between people and across time and place. Arts and humanities researchers use a place-based lens to explore key aspects of our society, economy, and environment.

These include the quality of communal and individual life, how we organise and live together, and how we collectively respond to challenges and threats. Some of those threats relate to environmental challenges and changes, but place-based research also explores how environmental conditions and services support our lives and lifestyles, as well as drawing on the environment as a source of inspiration and ideas (scientific, commercial, and creative). Arts and humanities place-based research also offers insights on economic practices, economic opportunities and values (including non-financial values), and industrial and commercial networks, legacies and identities. Taken together, it is clear from the evidence that the arts and humanities have a deep and wide-ranging knowledge of issues pertinent to place and a sustained track record of contributing to people-centred understandings of place and to place-based policies and practices.

Structure of the Report

In the following sections of this document, we will outline each of the three aspects of MAP, illustrating these throughout with examples drawn from the nine KE Projects and the call for evidence data. We then identify some key considerations and questions around how, together, we can realise the full potential of a people-centred, place-led approach. We conclude with further details of the nine KE Projects, as exemplars of the integrated MAP way of working and the opportunities it generates.

The Place Programme Knowledge Exchange Projects



1 Art is Everywhere

Art is Everywhere in North Lanarkshire. Not just in galleries and on walls, in books and frames. Art isn't just a place you go to or a thing some creative people do. It's in every relationship, every conversation. It's what makes us human. Art is process. Art is Activism.

2 City Change Through Culture: Securing the Place Legacy of Coventry City of Culture 2021

Coventry, UK City of Culture 2021 has generated a substantial array of data relating to cultural engagement, participation, and city change, offering new possibilities for knowledge exchange, place-shaping, and local/regional decision making.

3 City of Caves - Regenerating the Heart of Nottingham through 'Hidden Heritage'

Making 'hidden heritage' visible and meaningful to residents and visitors is central to successful place-making in urban regeneration projects.

4 Creative Peninsula

This project showcases a transferable model of collaborative partnership working, with a focus on 're-telling the stories of place' through co-creation and community-engaged arts programming.

5 Cross-pollination: Growing Cross-sector Design Collaboration in Placemaking

Creating places where people have the opportunity to come together to share their skills, ideas and resources in an open, playful and equitable way, can help build confidence, connectedness and a legacy of collaboration in local places.

6 Design Innovation and Cultural Resonances (Resonance): Place-based Collaboration

Through creative engagements and co-created films, Resonance revealed the cultural knowledge of project partners, stakeholders, communities and practitioners as place-based cultural assets.

7 Feeling Towns: Place, Identity and Local Governance

Understanding pride in place requires site-specific co-production and creative methodologies.

8 People, Heritage and Place: Using Heritage to Enhance Community and Well-being in Saltaire, Bradford

This project pioneered use of a 'digital twin' to link tangible and intangible heritage, explore placemaking, inform place management, and engage public audiences.

9 Roots and Futures: Scaling Up and Sustaining Co-produced, Place-based Heritage with Underserved Communities

If research is created together in truly equitable place-based partnerships with researchers, policymakers, and diverse communities, we can better understand how and why heritage policy and practice has underserved so many, and create meaningful and lasting change that ensures everyone feels visibility and belonging in the places they live.

Meaning

Within the Place Programme, we start from the position that people-centred, place-led work needs to be cognisant of how and why places become meaningful for individuals and communities.

Central to this conceptualisation is that meaning is derived from our lived and felt experiences of place, defined simply as ‘the ways in which our place-based experiences influence how we feel in and about places and the felt relationships we have to and within place’.

This understanding is informed by an established body of work across a range of academic disciplines that has sought to understand the tangible, intangible and relational aspects of place. This work has largely sought to uncover why place matters from a social, existential, and emotional point of view and has, in different ways, and to differing degrees, rested with a combination of the socio-physical aspects of place.⁶ Within this we align with definitions that see place as “spaces which people have made meaningful”⁷ Together there is a substantial body of information that helps us to understand why and how people develop felt relationships with place as well as an understanding of the consequences of geographically informed policies and practices that are not people-centred or place-led.⁸

Work within the arts and humanities encompasses a number of different facets of meaning:

- 1. Plural:** Meaning is not singular or unitary. Each of the KE Projects worked with, and helped to support the production of, multiple meanings in place and between people in place.

For example, the **Creative Peninsula** project is re-telling stories and surfacing new stories of place that showcase the multiple meanings that exist across the far South West of England. By working in partnership with academic researchers, arts organisations, creative practitioners, and local authorities across the region, multiple stories and meanings of place are emerging. Key thematic areas include Outdoor Cultures, Queer Peninsula, Atlantica/Black Atlantic, Intergenerational Ruralities, and A Parliament of Waters.



Creative Peninsula 'Salmon Run' – 25 September 2022, performance at a site along the River Exe, led by Tidelines; photo credit: Jenny Steer.

These themes are developed and reflected through artistic commissions, such as Field Day - a site-specific performance at a community farm, which took participants on an immersive journey through the seasonal cycles, growing cycles, and life cycles of historic and contemporary food production in the Penryn valley; and Salmon Run - a community relay event that included pop-up performances and story-telling to connect people and places along the banks of the River Exe, mirroring the migration undertaken by the Atlantic Salmon.

We recognise that multiple meanings can often be contested within space and over time. Creative approaches can both access these multiple and conflicting meanings of place and ensure that each is validated. For example, the Cross-pollination project demonstrates the value of design innovation in securing an approach that is rooted in valuing what everyone can bring to a discussion.

Other KE Projects that explored the plural meanings and experiences of place included Art is Everywhere, through artist commissions and work with a range of communities in North Lanarkshire from early years to school children, college students to healthy aging demographics, multiple ethnicities, people in care and others; and Feeling Towns, which used a variety of strategies to understand how grassroots expressions of pride differed from formal narratives around place.





People, Heritage, and Place: Artwork from years 2,3 and 5 at Saltaire Primary and Wycliffe CE Primary Schools displayed within the roof space of Salts Mill adjacent to David Hockney's iconic 'A Year in Normandie'; photo credit: Visualising Heritage / University of Bradford.

2. Fluid: Meanings change over time and between people, as shown by several of the KE Projects. For example, some worked with archaeological, heritage, and historical material to explore meaning in the present through the lenses of change over time and perceptions of the past. Change can bring fear and a sense of loss. Giving people the capacity and capability to discuss potential changes and have a say in future development plans can result in more positive emotions and provide opportunities to amplify the values and assets that are important to people's sense of place.

Projects such as **People, Heritage and Place** show how arts and humanities research can help meet a wide range of change management needs, from condition surveys of historic buildings in the Saltaire World Heritage site to aiding simulations with the use of the 'digital twin' of how future transport strategies might affect air quality. Community involvement is fostered through close collaboration with local schools on creative learning, community-interest groups, businesses, residents and newcomers to the city, and the development of a digital 3D representation of Saltaire. Work developing the model has increased knowledge of Saltaire and will offer efficiencies in monitoring the condition and fabric of the site. In so doing, the project recognises that people of all ages ascribe meanings to place, as well as recognising that the change management strategy will enable new meanings to be created over time.



City of Caves: Tour of the cave system during the 2022 Being Human Festival; photo credit: University of Nottingham.

Other KE Projects that seek to understand the meanings of place for different communities include City Change through Culture, which focuses on providing an evidence-based place legacy of Coventry City of Culture 2021; and Resonance, in which a series of civic exchanges allow each community to explore how their local knowledge and cultural assets could support the future of their communities when faced with changing social, environmental and economic conditions.

3. Hidden: Meaning is often elusive and can remain 'hidden' in official narratives of place. Uncovering these hidden stories lay at the heart of a number of the KE Projects.

For example, the **Nottingham City of Caves** project reveals the stories and meanings within the previously 'hidden heritage' of the Broad Marsh, an area that from the 1970s until recently was occupied by a shopping centre but which was once a dynamic waterfront area at the heart of the medieval townscape. A dense cluster of medieval streets and subterranean built heritage (caves) were buried when the shopping centre was constructed. Now the area is being redeveloped, research is helping people rediscover the characters and stories associated with this area and Nottingham's history of urban change. The project team have carried out extensive work to identify gaps in historical and archaeological understanding. Through this work, the City of Caves project has uncovered hidden areas of Nottingham and a rich collection of hidden meanings of place in ways that can support a major urban redevelopment initiative.

Across each of these three facets of meaning there is an explicit recognition that arts and humanities approaches, including historical, archaeological, poetry, stories, and digital, allow “*people to articulate their knowledges and experiences in more diverse manners*” (Participant 1). This works at several different scales, some ensure that meaningful engagements with place are grounded in hyper-local experiences, whereas others transcended spatial and temporal boundaries:

“ For some participants, who were recent migrants to the neighbourhood, engagement with archaeological objects (images of) opened up points of place connection which were otherwise missing in the modern built environment. ”

(Participant 36)

Work in the Place Programme also illuminates the **uneven and unequal ways** in which plural, hidden, and fluid meanings can be expressed by those people who are deeply invested in their places. This is acknowledged for example in the Roots and Futures project, which worked with underserved communities to ensure a more inclusive approach to the development and delivery of Sheffield City Council’s Heritage Strategy. Not all place-based policies and practices to date have been truly people-centred. We need to move beyond conducting ‘consultation’ exercises with often heard voices to an approach that fully validates the expertise within all communities and situates this alongside that of professionals involved in place-based work. This was expressed across the KE Projects through an ethos of co-creation.

Co-creation also **requires a more equitable understanding of communication and expression of meaning**. A people-centred approach to place-based work enables multiple meanings to be expressed in the language and medium that people feel most comfortable using – it is not about asking people to respond to a pre-determined set of questions but empowering people to convey what is meaningful to them in ways that have meaning for them. The process of understanding people’s meanings within place is important, as is re-telling them in meaningful, inclusive ways that respect the different experiences and perspectives being shared. Whose voices are heard and who has control over the telling and re-telling of those narratives is especially important. Within the KE Projects a range of different approaches were taken to enabling this, including poetry, oral history, digital mapping, emoji-mapping, art, performance, and film.

What’s Next and What’s Possible?

It is increasingly recognised in UK policy and practice that place is comprised of lived and felt as well as geographic and economic dimensions. However, a number of challenges remain in ensuring that this knowledge is applied in ways that can centre the meanings of place. Firstly, regional development strategies are not often set up to prioritise the intimate, everyday, and embedded connections between people and place in the conception, delivery, or evaluation of geographically determined policies and policies. Secondly, a question remains concerning how to balance the need for external investment with the internal investment needed to sensitively nurture the existing meanings of place. Last but not least, questions remain as to the ways in which primarily qualitative data about the meanings of place is both seen as valid and able to be incorporated within existing systems and structures.

An understanding of the meaning of place can be considered alongside economic statistics, spatial visualisations, and administrative data, but a detailed picture of place cannot be collaboratively drawn using a singular source or communicated only in ways that place-based professionals feel most comfortable with. Data about place can only be truly meaningful when it reflects the lived and felt experiences of people who want to share why place matters to them and who are deeply invested in where their place goes next.

A clear finding from the Place Programme is that arts and humanities work offers lots of methodological innovation in terms of being able to both understand and communicate the multiple, fluid, and hidden meanings of place. It is also clear that more support is needed if all those involved in place-based processes are to be able to access, understand, and work with this knowledge.

Approaches

Centring meaning requires innovative approaches to place-based work. Every discipline has established methods, from archival to archaeological, performance to practice-based, theoretical, and empirical.

These are well documented within disciplinary literature, and we do not attempt to catalogue them here. Instead, in the sub-sections that follow we discuss four approaches that are evident across arts and humanities place-based research projects. These approaches help us to understand **how people experience, connect to, and feel about place** in ways that respect the plural and contested, fluid, and hidden ways in which meanings are constantly made and remade.

1. Creative: Creativity, creative-practice, and making as ways of knowing are key approaches within the arts and humanities. Creativity is apparent in place-based research 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.

Several of the KE Projects commissioned artists, often local to the places and part of the communities with which they were working. Their work illustrates how creative, arts-based methods, and in particular co-created and socially engaged practices, provide the means through which the meanings of place can be negotiated and generated.

For example, the **Art is Everywhere** project commissioned artists who worked with communities using dance, theatre, photography, film, fine art, digital art, made murals from upcycled materials, podcasts and more. The content of these works and the locations of practice and performance show that meaning and connection can derive from everyday encounters, familiarity, and intangible aspects of place just as much as physical, built, or tangible aspects.

The eight artist commissions in the Art is Everywhere project resulted in works on place-based issues such as social and environmental justice, experiences of class, aging, and ‘forgotten people’.



Art is Everywhere: Holly Worton and Yas Mawer are multi-disciplinary and performance artists respectively. Working C(Lasses) is a site-specific performance art piece exploring stories of working class women across the North Lanarkshire area; photo credit: Photo by William Topping / Sean Kerwin Productions.

A similarly wide range of contemporary place-based issues are referenced through the creative practices seen in Creative Peninsula, which included several creative commissions, and in Feeling Towns, which used emoji mapping and poetry.

Crucially, all the KE Projects appreciated that creative practice is a process as much as an output and thus recognised the significance of what was happening **during** the creative process. They exemplify how “we can think through art” and how these active practices allow participants, artists, audiences, and researchers to “share processes of thought and creativity” (Participant 29). For example, the Resonance project uses films and film making to record and share the lived and felt experiences of individuals and as a means of co-analysis and relational sense-making.



2. Experiential: The arts and humanities are **about understanding and enriching individual and collective human experience**. Place-based projects often focus on building connections and empathy, helping people to access and articulate their shared histories, cultures, experiences, and meanings.

The KE Projects have implemented meaningful and inclusive creative design processes, bringing place-based communities together around shared assets, values, and knowledges, and catalysing community-led actions.

For example, in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales, the **Cross-pollination** project brought different partners together including the local council, local housing associations, and other groups interested in wellbeing, arts, and the environment. This discussion resulted in a focus on the ward of Gurnos and engagements with local residents about their place and its assets. Bringing people together and focusing on local experiences and knowledge of place, generated ideas and connections for collaborative projects, feeding into the plans of local organisations.

Throughout the Programme we have recognised the power of the arts and humanities to also **generate experiences** through creative practices, and digital and physical interventions or events. These can have a powerful impact on the experience of a place, connecting people to past uses and/or creating new ways of seeing the landscape.

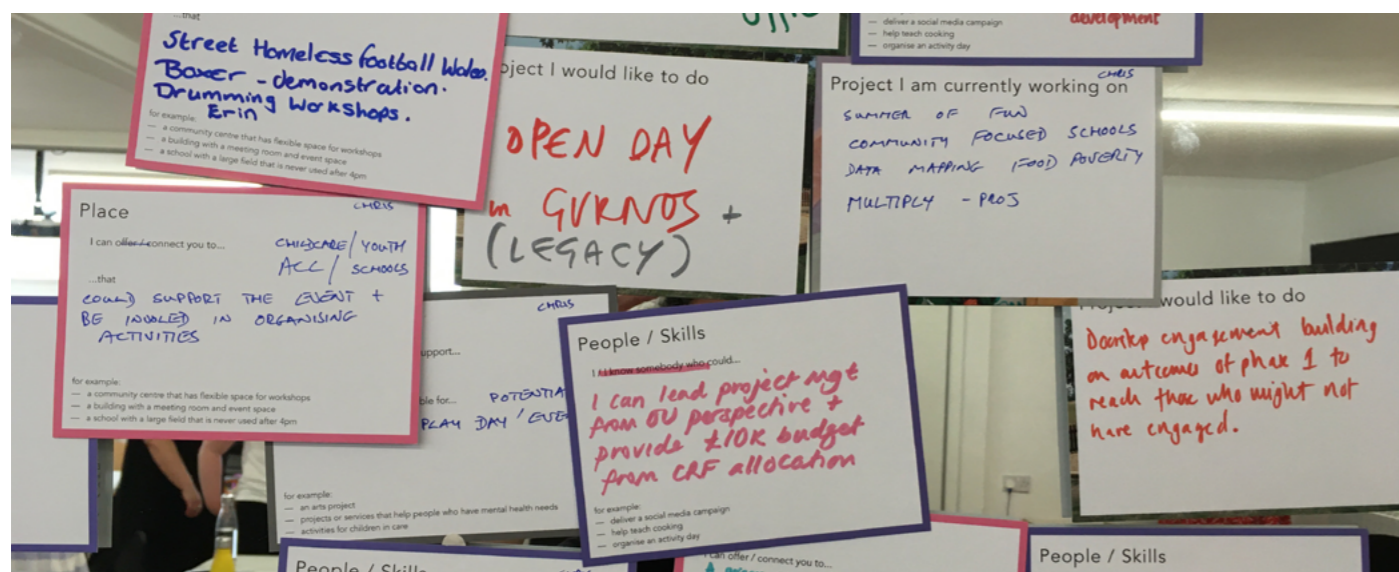
“the arts gets you down to the human experience in a way that nothing else does.”

(Participant 4)

3. Digital: Digital platforms, virtual models, and augmented or mixed reality offer new ways to understand existing, and create new, meanings in place.

For example, the **City Change through Culture** project provided new ways to learn about Coventry, using an immersive space that people could walk through to present some of the data insights, historic photographs, and videos collected over the years. The City of Culture generated a significant amount of data over the year, much of it digital. The project brought this data together and increased access for a wide range of people. This digital innovation did not just focus on the city in retrospect but also looked forward to consider the ways in which this data could be used to shape decision making and secure better outcomes for people in place.

In other projects, digital models are facilitating virtual access to places, such as 3D models of the cave systems in Nottingham completed by the City of Caves project, or the ‘digital twin’ of Saltire World Heritage site produced by the People, Heritage and Place team. The online space can also be one of connection, interaction, and contribution, as is demonstrated by the Interactive Creative Asset and Story Map for North Lanarkshire, developed as part of the Art is Everywhere project, which explores the creative people, inspiring places, community hubs, cultural and green spaces that local community members have identified as contributing to creativity in North Lanarkshire.



Cross-pollination: Cross-pollination cards from a design day in Merthyr Tydfil, Wales. Photo credit: Cross-pollination project.



City Change through Culture: Walking Through Coventry Data; photo credit: Si Chun Lam.

4. Narrative: Many place-based projects use stories and storytelling as ways of understanding, conducting, or conveying their findings. The narrative, qualitative methods associated with the arts and humanities were particularly valued in this regard, especially when placed alongside quantitative metrics, to understand “*the stories that numbers can’t tell, or the stories behind the numbers*” (Participant 3).

For example, the **Roots and Futures** project in Sheffield demonstrates the significance of the past in building a sense of belonging, rooted in a shared sense of place at the neighbourhood scale. At a city-level, Sheffield’s reliance on white, northern heritage narratives has created barriers to members of other communities engaging with traditional heritage-focused spaces and activities. The Roots and Futures project used participatory action research methods to work with Sheffield’s diverse communities to ensure that the multiple memories, meanings, and stories of Sheffield’s past were heard as the city developed its Heritage Strategy. The perspectives of more than 500 people from communities underserved by heritage policy are included in a Community Voices booklet that communicates the needs of marginalised communities and their priorities for the heritage sector to address.



Roots and Futures: Consultation and cook out at Park Library, Sheffield, attended by over 100 people from the local African and Caribbean community; photo credit: Roots and Futures Project.

A tension remains over the extent to which narrative, qualitative material is impactful with policymakers, but it is critical for effective place-based working. A familiar problem is that places are seen in a singular and reductionist way, for example you can quantify how far away a community centre is, “*it’s a 5 minute walk down the road, so [people] should be able to use it, but then you layer over that people don’t feel a sense of ownership because there’s some kind of invisible boundary there, or for whatever reason*” (Participant 20).

Drawing out the stories and meanings of place can thus help to understand behaviours and why, for example footfall is lower than envisaged or crime is higher than expected. An understanding of the place-based narratives of different communities is essential within planning and public service provision. Through expanding and changing the narratives about a place, it is possible to work with a more inclusive understanding of the lived and felt realities, opening up new possibilities and potential futures.

Working with creative methods and practice, focusing on experiences, innovating with digital, and privileging narrative accounts of place offer four ways of ensuring place-based data is meaningful to the people who are deeply invested in their places.

What’s Next and What’s Possible?

Allowing the space and time for a generative process, in which different meanings and types of knowledge can be heard is central to these approaches as is recognising the value of *doing* as much as validating the outputs from the approaches.

The above approaches to working with place engage with the ongoing need to centre different voices and lived and felt experiences within place-based policies and practice. As we move towards seeing people as “experts by experience”,⁹ we need to embrace different approaches that can recognise the full depth and richness of this expertise and ensure it becomes a central part of future place-based policies and practices.

Processes

How place-based work is conducted – with whom and through which forms of collaboration and/or partnership – has a direct bearing both on the resulting knowledge of place and on the types of policies and practices implemented. Ensuring that place-based work is built on equitable partnerships is a crucial element in developing a people-centred, place-led approach.

Place-based work engages with a wide range of different communities, organisations, and stakeholders. They are all part of the **place ecosystem**, the diverse range of tangible and intangible factors that contribute to place and which include human and non-human life, social and cultural practices, institutions and industries, the built environment, and blue and green infrastructure. The complexity of the place ecosystem, and the multi-layered, at times overlapping local, regional, and national policy landscape, makes equitable partnership working an imperative when addressing place-based issues and agendas.

Within this we recognise that long-term partnerships are crucial in building the broad-based support often needed to translate place-based research findings into integrated, sustained initiatives that benefit places and people in place.

“ Ideally, it’s a very long-term process and place is the way to kind of define it. Because if you’re in a place over a long period of time, then you can really kind of go into depth and build those relationships. ”

(Participant 24)

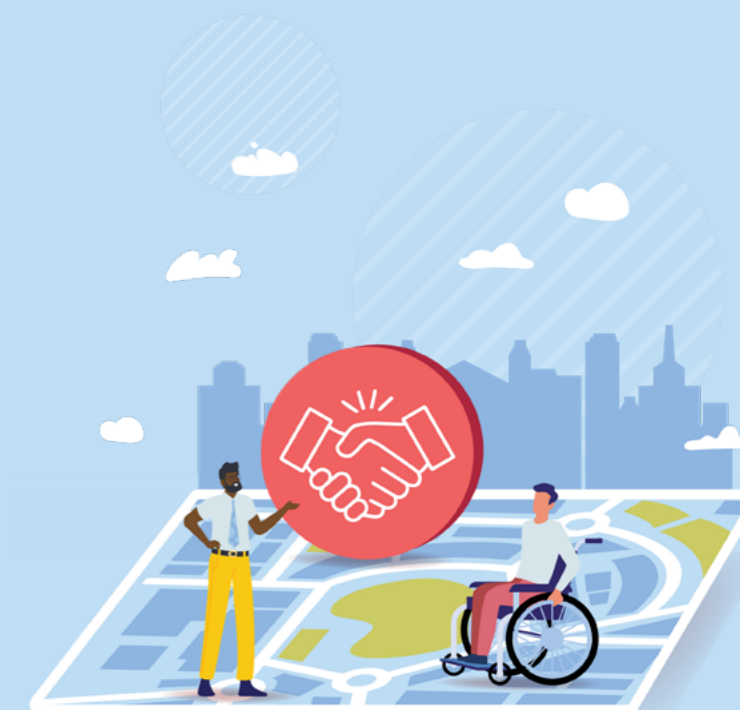
For those partners and institutions with a place-based remit, the reasonable expectation of a continuing, longer-term presence could be a basis for partnership commitments that transcend specific funding or planning cycles.

Across the Programme we identified innovation in terms of forming and sustaining equitable partnerships, developing arts and humanities informed policies and practices, as well as supporting place-specific understandings that could also be transferred to other places.

1. Equitable Partnerships: Partnerships are at the core of generating and sustaining both positive place-based research impact and people-centred place-led policies and practices. We saw within the KE Projects some of the many different types of partners and partnerships needed to support place-based work.

The KE Projects each worked with a wide variety of partners, from individual artists to local government and small businesses to large institutions. Although there are a range of different approaches, the KE Projects all share an approach to partnership that is underpinned by a commitment to equitable relationships. This applies to close partnering with local government, as seen in the People, Heritage and Place and City of Caves projects, and in collaborations with community and cultural organisations, as in Creative Peninsula and Roots and Futures.

In the case of Cross-pollination, a longstanding strategic relationship with a national-level practitioner partner underpins the development of place-based partnerships at the local-level. In all cases, there are instances of shared operational and thought leadership, with activities undertaken jointly or led by project partners. This contributes to the ownership and uptake of research findings by partners and incorporation into place processes: *“we’re swapping ideas, we’re swapping skills, we’re helping each other. And we’re probably working tighter on bids and things like that”* (Participant 22).



We also need to recognise that partnering with large institutions, such as Universities, is not always an easy or painless experience, particularly for independent researchers, creative practitioners, and smaller organisations with limited resources. One result of this is that “lots of unpaid knowledgeable societies and groups [are] left out of conversation” (Participant 25).

If place-based policies and practices are to be people centred, then a diversity of voices should be actively engaged in the process. However, it is not enough just to include more voices without collectively hearing and respecting the expertise that comes with lived, felt, and professional experience.

Place-based work has to be a meaningful process for those people who are deeply invested in place, ensuring that they have some ownership over the process and that it is of benefit to them.

2. Policies: The Place Programme has been working with policy makers at various levels, helping to identify where new knowledge is needed, how to think differently about the ways policies are generated and evaluated, and centring human experiences in policies, in practice as well as in theory.

For example, the Art is Everywhere project has seen North Lanarkshire Council create the area’s first ever strategy for the arts, putting art and creativity at the heart of their work, connecting education, employability, social justice, health, planning and regeneration, and other sectors. The Roots and Futures project has brought the experiences and voices of previously underserved communities into Sheffield’s heritage strategy, and the City Change through Culture project has provided input into the commissioning and early-stage planning of City of Culture 2025 and Department of Culture Media and Sport policy on cultural interventions at scale and Cities of Culture policy in particular.

The drive for **evidence-based policymaking** has often led to qualitative, contextualised data being seen as secondary or disregarded in favour of quantitative metrics. While recognising the usefulness of numerical analysis, arts and humanities place-based research provides a way of thinking about data differently, including reflecting critically on what evidence is collected, who by and for, and how it is used within and beyond the project.

“ People who know the places the best need to be part of (and in many instances empowered to lead in) these conversations. ”

(Participant 41)

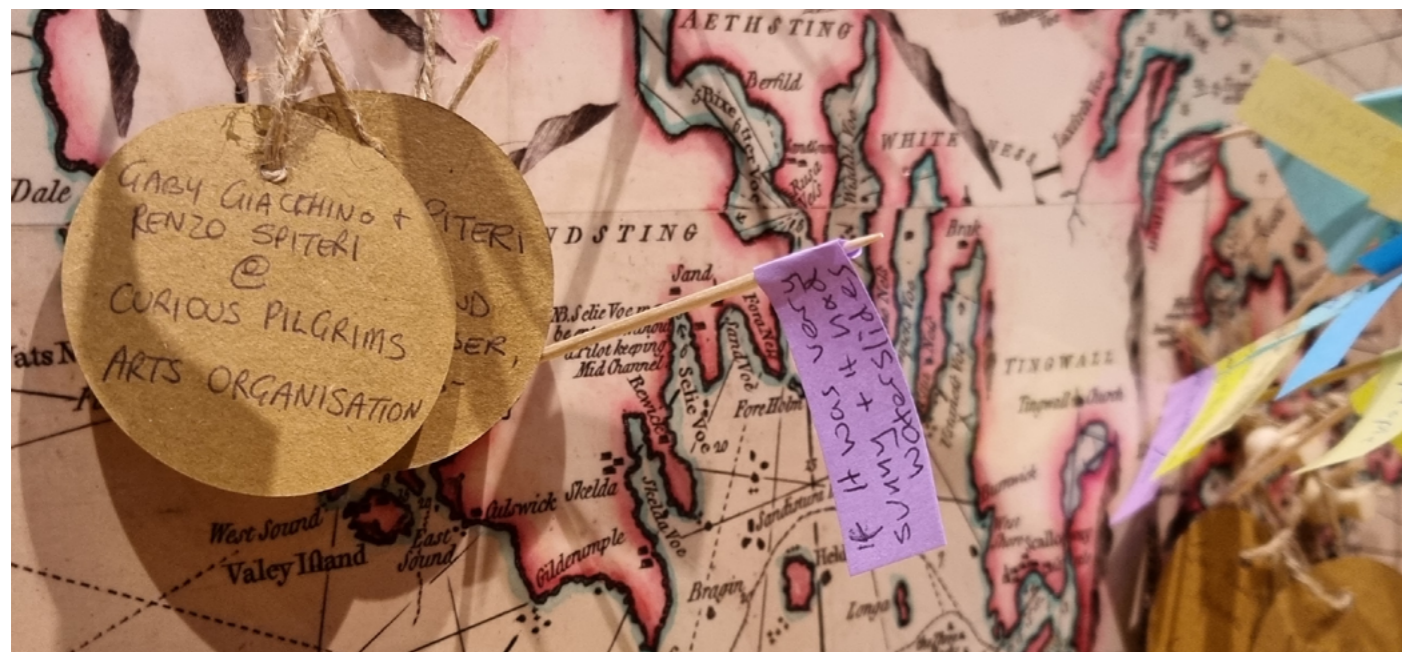


Feeling Towns: Poetry from Ledbury; photo credit: Feeling Towns team.

For example, the **Feeling Towns** KE Project has hosted a series of discussions between heritage practitioners (Historic England) and policy makers (Department of Levelling Up, Housing and Communities) about the existing, largely quantitative, metrics and proxies for measuring pride in place. The project is advancing understandings of how to approach pride in place and complicating notions of what pride is. They are achieving this through adopting a range of creative methods, including poetry and emoji mapping and working with people on the meanings and felt experiences associated with local places in Hereford, Darlington and Southampton. In so doing, Feeling Towns have moved beyond a simplistic and uncontested definition of pride that can be quantified in numerical terms and towards a rich account of the multi-layered fluidity of pride in place.

3. Practices: Many place processes are concerned with managing or responding to change, whether that is the physical deterioration of buildings, changing uses of space and needs of communities, or new developments and opportunities. Change at any scale is complex and non-linear and it is not necessarily clear what the positive and negative implications might be for different people.

For example, the **Resonance** Project convened a series of civic exchanges with creative practitioners and creative and cultural organisations in Shetland, Scotland. Through a focus on local knowledge, cultural assets, and shared values, the exchanges supported the development of socio-cultural and economic collaborations, which contributed to community strategies and development plans. The project also enabled the development of innovation capability, capacity, and place-based collaborations, allowing for wider engagement and impacts at a regional scale. The work in Shetland has led to future work in the Scottish Borders and in Northern Ireland.



Resonance: Final Knowledge Exchange Event at Shetland Arts Development Agency: Mapping cultural assets; photo credit: Zoë Prosser.

4. Place Specificity and Transferability:

Place-based work can and does span different geographic areas and scales. Indeed, the majority of the KE Projects worked with people in multiple locations. Key to working across multiple locations is isolating what works in place and what could work for different places. In other words, what is specific to place and what could be transferable to other places.

Within this, spending time with people in each place was seen as crucial:

“ The benefit of just being in a place and sort of embedding yourself insofar as it is possible in a place and then seeing what arises from that, which you can't really do just via desk work online or talking to relevant stakeholders. You need to just get in there and then you find, and it was obviously, it was really productive, and it was fascinating responses, and you got a real sense of on the ground feeling about [a place] that you wouldn't get from the official documentation. ”

(Participant 20).

In addition, there are a number of practices that can and are being transferred both within the UK and internationally. All the KE Projects are finding creative ways to share their experiences, including films, blogs, and podcasts, so others can learn from and build on their work. Several have shared the core aspects of their approaches as guidance for practitioners looking to adapt the approaches in other contexts. These include: the Cross-pollination Resource pack, created in order to help cascade and enable cross-pollination across locations, disciplines and sectors; ‘Understanding Pride in Place’, a place-based creative think kit from Feeling Towns; a toolkit that examines the relationship between heritage festivals and community engagement from the City of Caves project; a think-kit from People, Heritage and Place, to showcase the importance of early engagement of visual artists within place-based education; and a report from Creative Peninsula that explores different models of partnership working.

However, across the Programme, there is an explicit recognition that any replication of policies and practices across geography through a standardised, one-size fits all approach, without consideration for the widely differing histories, current experiences, embedded meanings, and future needs of people in place, is unlikely to result in genuine people-centred, place-led policies and practices. Within this, both the Cross-pollination and Resonance KE Projects provide models of design thinking that can lead to innovation and improvement in working in and across place. Many of the other KE Projects demonstrate the close partnership working, flexibility, responsiveness, and creativity that are required when adapting processes to a specific place-based context.

What's Next and What's Possible?

A place is not a static entity, it is constantly renewed and reimagined. Arts and humanities disciplines, from philosophy to film, architecture to the performing arts, offer ways to reflect on present realities and imagine **possible futures**. The arts and humanities are also key to realising the deeper potential that is inherent in place, for people to feel a sense of ownership, belonging, and to have the ability to shape their own places. This requires a more profound engagement with the ideas and processes of place and asking, as one project participant expressed:

“ How [do] we create places, places that empower people to create their own place, so there's a feedback loop. ”

(Participant 16)

The generative potential of place-based work that is done in equitable partnership with people, is that it can **seed self-sustaining processes** of knowledge sharing and activity that engage with the ideas of what a place is and could be - reflecting on past and present challenges and using this to shape people-centred, place-led policies and practices.

The Place Programme has begun to explore what might it mean, and what it would take, to further embed approaches from the arts and humanities throughout place-based processes. Key to this is shifting away from a dualistic way of thinking about place policies, which puts social and cultural placemaking on the one hand and physical interventions and economic investments on the other, towards seeing the lived, felt, geographic and economic dimensions of place as indivisible. Adopting a more holistic view of place, which puts people at the centre, creates far more opportunities for integrated and mutually reinforcing interventions that realise the potential of place for all.

Considerations and Questions

The three aspects contained within MAP (Meaning – Approaches – Processes) offer a way of working and thinking about how we realise people-centred, place-led work. We suggest that each of the aspects are important within place-based work but that together they can ensure that a people-centred approach to place is embedded throughout research and knowledge exchange, as well as in the conception, implementation, and evaluation of place-based policies and practices.

We propose that meaning needs to be centred throughout place-based work, from the approaches that we choose to the processes that we adopt. Within this, the approaches need to be able to hold multiple, fluid, contested and hidden meanings, and the processes need to be based on equitable partnerships that respect the lived, felt, geographic, and economic dimensions of place.

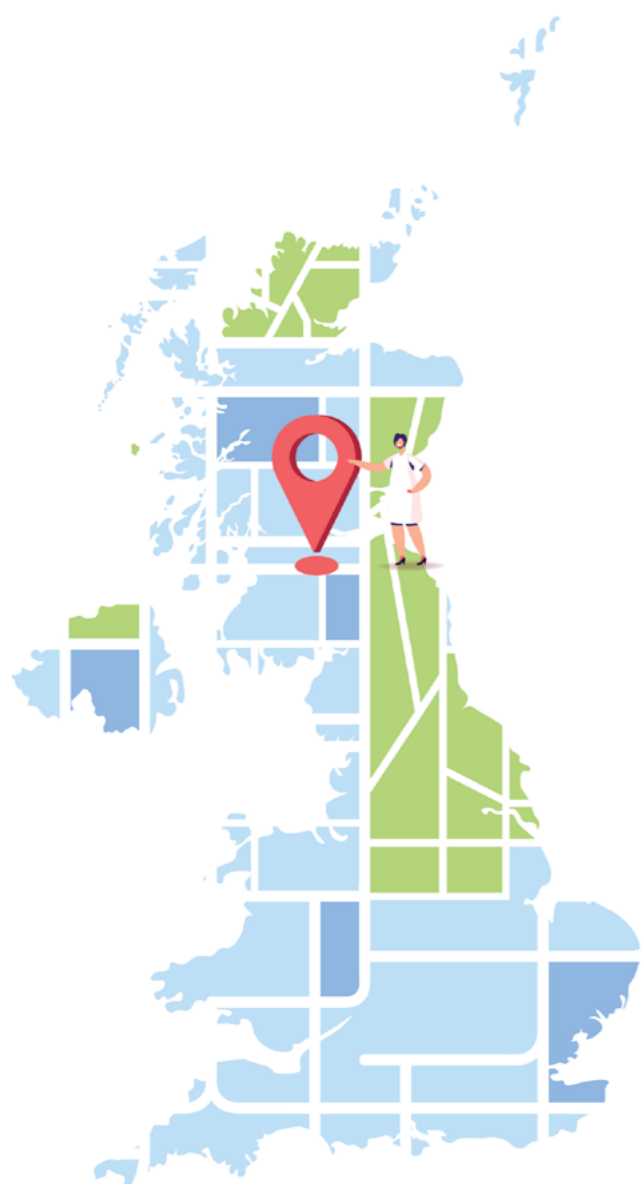
We see this document both as the start of a conversation around the potential of MAP and, crucially, the continuation of a current trajectory. It is based on a track record of exciting arts and humanities work that is moving us towards a fuller understanding of place, as a lived, felt, geographic, and economic reality. Collectively, we have the knowledge and the opportunity to make a unique contribution to place. We look forward to working with you over the coming years to put this thinking into practice.

We hope that this document stimulates conversations around the opportunities and challenges to achieving a people-centred, place-led approach. Within this conversation, we suggest that there are some key questions for the future:

1. How do we further develop and embed MAP as a way of thinking about and working in place across a range of different sectors and at different scales?
2. How can we better value, create and support more equitable place-based partnerships and relationships?
3. How do we ensure that engagement with arts and humanities place-based work is supported across, and is supportive of, activities in the public, private, third and community sectors?
4. What are the remaining barriers to working with qualitative data based on lived and felt experiences of place as a valid and vital aspect of place-based policies and practices?
5. How can we learn from international approaches and work with global partners to open up new research questions and deliver place-based policies and practices that are genuinely people-centred?



MAP Exemplars – The Place Programme Knowledge Exchange Projects



Art is Everywhere

Led by Dr Marisa de Andrade
(University of Edinburgh)

The Arts Development team at North Lanarkshire Council co-led the project with the University of Edinburgh and allied with key strategic partners including Edgehill University, NHS Lanarkshire, Scottish Community Safety Network, Youth Theatre Scotland, Voluntary Action North Lanarkshire, and Tron Theatre.

This project was developed as a response to the post Covid-19 Futures Commission call to adopt a social prescribing approach to healthcare as a priority. Using a range of arts-informed approaches, we engaged with communities in North Lanarkshire to address inequalities through the arts. The project builds on an ongoing programme of research called Measuring Humanity, which is working to influence policy and practice at local, national and international levels.

We know there are no easy, simple solutions and are committed to getting to the root causes of issues by recognising that our environments are dynamic and change is inevitable. The process of learning and change in organisations is not linear, but rather is characterised by cycles of:

- Inputs (information, experiences and feedback), this is being gathered and shared by the Arts team as part of their daily practice;
- Processing (interpreting and making sense of the inputs), this is happening through ongoing conversations, structured and informal meetings with the Arts team in collaboration with community members, academics and other multi-sectoral partners; and
- Outputs (new actions and behaviours based on processing the inputs), this will lead to new insights within the Arts team and the co-designing of activities that support this process.

By focusing on and understanding the processes of learning and change in North Lanarkshire Council, rather than performance measures, we nurtured relationships and systems that are facilitating continuous learning cycles for sustainable growth.

A key project impact was co-producing North Lanarkshire's first ever strategy to tackle health inequalities through the arts (2023-2028), which is currently being embedded across Council departments. The Strategy outlines six strategic aims and, for each aim, learning cycles are being co-produced.

Amongst other outputs, our project has provided training for Council staff that were previously not engaging with the arts to tackle inequalities in areas including social justice, community learning, and health.

Art is Everywhere is now part of North Lanarkshire Council's Planning and Regeneration vision, which recently secured funding from Historic Environment Scotland and National Lottery Heritage Fund to develop plans for *Rediscovering Airdrie: the heritage-led regeneration of Airdrie town centre*. This project will connect Airdrieonians with their history and use investment in the town's heritage and its people as a catalyst for economic, physical and social regeneration. Building on our place-based findings, we will integrate the arts into future plans for the region using our mobilised community of artists and partners.

The project continues to grow, engaging with hundreds of community members across the socio-economic spectrum, community organisations, North Lanarkshire College, local artists working across every medium, and more. We are connecting directly with marginalised groups to co-produce interventions that are led by people with lived experience and raising awareness of the agency they have to make North Lanarkshire a place they want to live.

As part of our legacy, we're producing a graphic illustration of 'value' in relation to arts-informed place-based approaches, policies and practices that moves away from traditional conceptualisations of 'toolkits' to processes that are more meaningful for communities, commissioners service providers.



City Change Through Culture: Securing the Place Legacy of Coventry City of Culture 2021

**Led by Professor Nick Henry
(Coventry University)**

This project is a collaboration between Coventry University and University of Warwick. Other partners included Coventry City Council, especially the Insight team which oversees the provision of city related data to support citizen engagement and policy making, the Coventry City of Culture Trust, West Midlands Combined Authority, and the Department for Culture, Media and Sport.

The project was designed to deliver on new possibilities for knowledge exchange around a substantial new array of research and evaluation data on cultural activity and participation, the UK City of Culture 2021 (UK CoC 2021), and the city of Coventry. These exchange possibilities built on the partnership activities generated by UK CoC 2021 and sought to reach - and embed data and findings within - local/ regional decision making and structures.

Coventry's year as the UK CoC 2021 generated an unprecedented amount of quantitative and qualitative data and studies relating to cultural engagement and city change. Collected across the city's neighbourhoods and communities and combined with longitudinal non-cultural data this has made Coventry into a data-rich place for cultural research and inquiry and place-shaping.

Project activities were designed especially with Coventry City Council partners to highlight the types of place-based data available to inform proposals, services and decision making, as well as to highlight trends and raise general awareness within the city around culture and cultural activity.

The project:

Gathered the multi-stranded programme of UK CoC 2021 research and evaluation outputs together in a single website ('portal'), to act as a single place for interested stakeholders to find reports, access exchange activities and other outputs;

- Provided new ways to learn about Coventry through the use of combined data insights, images, and videos of Coventry (including an immersive experience);
- Found innovative methods other than reports to share findings and raise awareness, including lightning talks, data workshops connected to stakeholder bidding processes, roundtables, peer support, webinars, and an animated series of reflections from the monitoring and evaluation of UK CoC 2021; and
- Held a cultural hackathon, utilising cultural and non-cultural data made available through public and private sector partners, where participants were asked to develop evidenced ideas and concepts that had the potential to 'make life better in Coventry'.

The project has played a significant role in providing an evidence-based place legacy of UK CoC 2021, supporting data insight and intelligence for Coventry City Council, local institutions and stakeholders, and central government and building and solidifying foundations for ongoing collaboration. There is now greater awareness of city-related and cultural data and how it can support place-based activity. The project has been a key enabler and influence for an ongoing legacy of cultural strategy and place partnership activity within Coventry. This includes a refreshed city cultural strategy, and joint investments by the City Council and two universities.



City of Caves - Regenerating the Heart of Nottingham through 'Hidden Heritage'

**Led by Dr Chris King
(University of Nottingham)**

Named project partners: The Nottingham Project, Nottingham City Council, National Justice Museum, York Archaeology

Community partner: Nottingham Historical and Archaeological Society

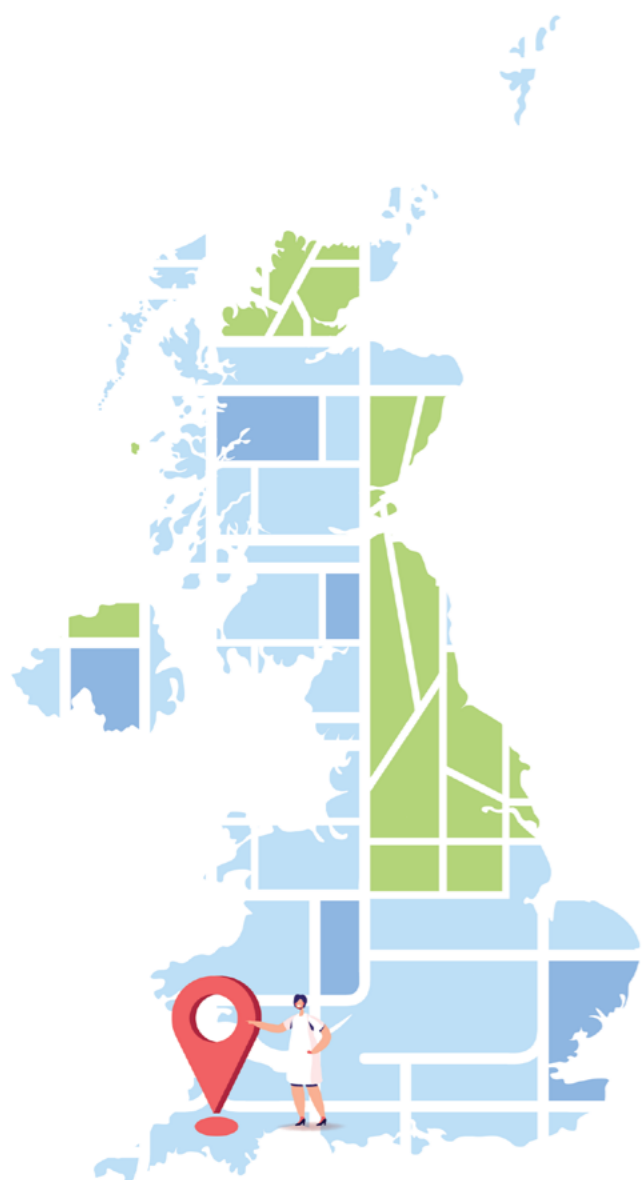
Nottingham's 'hidden heritage' is exemplified by the Broad Marsh, a dynamic waterfront area once at the heart of the medieval townscape but controversially swept away in the 1970s for the construction of the Broadmarsh shopping centre. The area includes networks of sandstone caves, part of a unique legacy of over 870 extant or recorded underground spaces in the city, many of which are still used for a variety of commercial, community and private functions.

This project brings together archaeologists and experts in urban history and landscape, to work with the consortium of partners currently leading a multi-million-pound redevelopment of the 20-acre Broad Marsh area following the demolition of the shopping centre and unveiling of a new 10-year vision for the area. The public consultation on the future of the Broadmarsh site identified heritage as a key priority. This project is therefore responding to the unique opportunity to put arts and humanities research at the heart of the redevelopment programme and demonstrate the historical, cultural and economic potential of 'hidden heritage' to engage citizens and visitors with an exciting and dynamic experience of Nottingham as an historic place.

The project's mission is to make Nottingham's famous underground caves a signature feature of the new development and to highlight Broad Marsh as a leading example of how academic research can inform a high-quality heritage and place-making agenda, making a vital contribution to the cultural and visitor experience of the site. Broadmarsh is unlikely to be the last shopping centre to disappear in the UK, and this redevelopment will be an exemplar for other cities negotiating the shift from retail to experience as the driver of the 21st-century urban economy.

The project team have carried out extensive work on historical records and maps, archaeological data, laser scans, photographic archives, and oral histories, to identify gaps in historical and archaeological understanding and bring new characters and stories to the fore. Through an extensive programme of knowledge exchange, we have drawn in the expertise and experience of key stakeholders and local community groups and societies, enabling us to bring together disparate archives and create new narratives of meaning and engagement. Public outreach has been a hugely important component, raising awareness of the city's hidden heritage and creating a momentum for heritage-led place-making in this new chapter of Nottingham's ongoing story of urban change.

Through working closely with project partners, we have successfully embedded the project in the regeneration masterplan, ensuring a high-quality, research-informed experience is provided within currently accessible cave sites and as sites become accessible through the redevelopment, with the 3D laser scans of the caves offering the potential for a new, immersive, virtual reality experience.



Creative Peninsula

**Led by Professor Tom Trevor
(University of Exeter)**

Partners:

- **Local authorities:** Cornwall County Council; Devon County Council; East Devon District Council; Exeter City Council; Plymouth City Council; Torbay Council
- **Museums, heritage and arts organisations:** CAST (Helston); Cornwall Museums Partnership; Eden Project; Exeter Culture; National Trust (South West); Plymouth Culture; Royal Albert Memorial Museum (Exeter); Tate St Ives; The Box (Plymouth)
- **Universities:** Exeter; Falmouth; Plymouth
- **Voluntary sector / artists' networks / community groups:** Art Week Exeter; Auction House (Redruth); Black Atlantic Innovation Network; Black Voices Cornwall; CAMP (artists network); Charles Causley Trust; Flock SW; Food, Farming & Countryside Commission; Inland Art Festival; Maketank; Queer Kernow; Plymouth Art Weekender; Small Acts; Tidelines

Creative Peninsula is a knowledge exchange project on the theme of place, exploring collaborative approaches to culture-led regeneration and development in Devon and Cornwall. The project focuses on increasing access and exchange between urban, rural, and coastal communities, celebrating the region's distinctive landscape and Atlantic coastline, whilst investigating its complex social histories, through community-engaged arts programming and cultural enquiry.

Creative Peninsula builds on the cultural partnership model explored by Creative Arc, a collaboration between the University of Exeter and Exeter City Council, as well as previous AHRC-funded research into outdoor performance. Creative Peninsula extends these models more widely to Devon and Cornwall, developing relationships between academic researchers, arts organisations, creative practitioners and local authorities across the region. The project aims to establish an ongoing partnership approach in the far South West, to help influence policy and to co-create a platform with communities for re-telling the 'stories of place', working to overcome barriers to social justice, health and wellbeing, and environmental sustainability.

Re-telling the stories of place involves:

- Co-creation with local communities, incorporating diverse voices, and surfacing hidden stories;
- A holistic partnership approach, working with the wider ecology of arts, heritage and cultural institutions, as well as local authorities;
- Identifying the distinctiveness of 'place', our shared attachments to it, and mutual connections (cultural, economic, social, environmental);
- Making connections through intangible heritage along with natural and cultural assets; and
- Commissioning new creative works (three to date, which have taken the form of artist-led community participation projects).

In November 2022, the Creative Peninsula summit brought together a broad range of partners and disciplines, around a shared commitment to place. Through this process, a number of themes emerged which form the basis of an ongoing programme of community-engaged arts programming and cultural enquiry: namely, Outdoor Cultures, Queer Peninsula, Atlantica/Black Atlantic, Intergenerational Ruralities, and A Parliament of Waters.

In the longer-term, the project will work with specific communities to develop distinctive network activities around the themes and to co-create culture-led regeneration projects. Starting from the 'hyper-local', place-based cultural enquiry, it will build regional and transnational dialogues between communities of shared interest; place to place, and people to people.



Cross-pollination: Growing Cross-sector Design Collaboration in Placemaking

Led by Professor Katerina Alexiou (The Open University)

Strategic co-design and co-delivery partner:
The Glass-House Community Led Design

Local partners:

- Edinburgh: Edinburgh Voluntary Organisations' Council (EVOG)
- Glasgow: Many Studios, DTA Scotland, Glasgow Community Food Network
- London: Becky Lyon and London National Park City
- Merthyr Tydfil: Wellbeing Merthyr, Merthyr Valley Homes, Health Hillside, Merthyr Tydfil County Borough Council, The Open University in Wales
- Sheffield: Gleadless Valley Partnership, Sheffield City Council

Advisors: Brian Evans, Glasgow Urban Lab; Michael Judd, Clapham Junction BID

The aim of this project was to grow capacity for cross-sector design collaboration through a creative design-based approach called 'cross-pollination'. Cross-pollination was developed and used in a variety of research and practical projects where it proved successful in bringing people together to share and connect their assets and aspirations, and to form partnerships with the capacity to lead design initiatives. The project focussed on cascading and scaling-up collaboration by providing spaces and resources that can enable and empower placemaking actors (local authorities, civic sector organisations, community groups, academic institutions, cultural institutions and businesses) to develop their network/partnerships and their own ways of working collaboratively in placemaking projects.

Current models of support and funding often create a culture of competition. Cross-pollination promotes a shift in mindsets and mechanisms by providing the space, time and resource to support collaborations rather than projects. Cross-pollination does not promote a specific agenda but provides an opportunity for people to define their own agenda.

Cross-pollination relies on the existence of 'place agents' or 'champions', i.e. individuals or organisations that can act as connectors and can convene different people together around a common theme or place. Cross-pollination supports the work of those champions by providing a framework for exploring people's

(broader) assets, by promoting experimentation and by enabling action through small steps. By collaborating in small projects, people are able to develop a capacity/a legacy of collaboration without investing too much too early, so collaboration continues to grow.

Impacts have included: shifting perspectives and attitudes towards cross-sector collaboration to support the creation of more inclusive, democratic and sustainable places and place-based services; empowering individuals and community groups to lead design initiatives to address complex challenges (housing, environment, education, regeneration) within and across places; developing people's skills and confidence to facilitate collaborative design work; and growing social connections, sense of pride and wellbeing.

The Cross-pollination Resource Pack was created to help cascade the approach - it provides a brief introduction to the process, example case studies, and some practical tools to help others use cross-pollination in their practice. The Resource Pack is complemented by a series of films, telling the story of cross-pollination as has been applied to different locations (in Merthyr Tydfil, London and Edinburgh), capturing participants' voices and illustrating impacts. One of the films provides a step-by-step guide to running a cross-pollination workshop.



Design Innovation and Cultural Resonances (Resonance): Place-based Collaboration

Led by Professor Lynn-Sayers McHattie (The Glasgow School of Art)

Resonance was conceived and shaped in collaboration with project partners: Shetland Arts Development Agency (SADA), Shetland; A' the Airts, Sanquhar, Dumfries & Galloway; and North Down Borough Council in Northern Ireland.

Resonance choreographed a range of creative practitioners and cultural organisations in a series of productive civic exchanges centred on capturing, amplifying, and sharing nuanced local knowledge and cultural assets. The exchanges were orientated towards informing hyper-local decision-making, community development plans and building place-partnerships, thereby enabling the development of innovation capability, capacity and place-based collaborations that also allowed for wider socio-cultural and economic impacts at a regional scale. Through a series of creative engagements and a co-created impact film, 'Places of Possibility', together we revealed the cultural knowledge of project partners, stakeholders, communities and practitioners.

Five themes have been drawn out as 'shared values' aligned to cultural asset development:

- Collective wellbeing through creativity and connection to place;
- Supporting sustainable communities and land practices;
- Documenting and sharing knowledges and practices belonging to place;
- Developing enterprise leadership and creative employment;
- Valuing creativity and communities of practice.

Resonance focussed on knowledge exchange within the creative and cultural economy with a longer-term view for evidence-based research to contribute to local regeneration, development of the creative economy and cultural strategies. Throughout, Resonance has foregrounded direct impact for the communities involved through the identification, exploration and articulation of cultural assets related to people, place and creative practice.

Participatory filmmaking has evolved as a method of capturing the lived and felt experiences of individuals and communities who have actively engaged with the Resonance project. In doing so, the film has been co-created with participants and wider communities, which has resulted in a more expansive definition of creative practice. Engaging with creative practitioners in this way has involved them in peer-researcher roles that have extended to the shared synthesis of insights related to cultural assets, co-analysis and relational sense-making.

We are currently tracing the 'difference made' in alignment with Shetland Arts Development Agency's Social Outcomes Framework. Through testing the shared values of cultural asset development with community organisations in Sanquhar, Dumfries & Galloway, and Northern Ireland, we have begun to shape their role as metrics and indicators for planning, decision-making and evaluation.



Feeling Towns: Place, Identity and Local Governance

Led by Professor Nicky Marsh (University of Southampton)

Partners: Historic England, Darlington Town Council, Southampton City Council, Hereford Towns Board and Ledbury Poetry Festival, Dorchester Town Council

The Feeling Towns project sought to collaboratively produce new understandings of the complex roles that pride, belonging and place attachment play in local government regeneration strategies. We sought to explore creative methods and qualitative metrics for monitoring, evaluating and reporting pride. We worked across the multiple policy realms, in order to disseminate and share these findings and to influence policy.

The project has co-produced new methods of understanding and representing the place-specific nature of pride in place.

- The first stage involved working with local partners to understand their needs, which led to site-specific engagement with communities identified as not sufficiently understood by, or represented within, the council or town board. A parallel process involved hosting a series of conversations, formal webinars and informal seminars with academics, heritage practitioners and policy makers about the existing, largely quantitative, metrics and proxies for measuring pride in place.

- The second stage of our project involved feeding back to our partners and critically reflecting on our methodologies: producing reports that could feed directly into professional practices and fundings bids and developing a qualitative tool kit for measuring pride in place in site-specific locations. We focused on a number of methods, emoji mapping, photo elicitation and the production of a collaboratively written poem about place became especially significant to the project
- The final phase of the project involved reflecting on how place specific pride can be represented – given form, language, narrative, texture – within the confines of the policy space. This involved creative engagement with poet and animator to represent the tensions between the languages of the lived experience and those of policy makers in measuring emotions.

We have influenced a number of organisations regarding how they approach pride in place: these include local authorities, heritage organisations, policy makers. Our conversations with each are continuing to have momentum and develop.

We have produced reports for each partner, that includes a collectively written poem for each place (Hereford, Darlington, Southampton, Dorchester, and the Isle of Wight); a toolkit for measuring pride in place in site specific locations; and a film that critically reflects on the policy agenda.



People, Heritage and Place: Using Heritage to Enhance Community and Well-being in Saltaire, Bradford

Led by Professor Andrew Wilson (University of Bradford)

Partners: Bradford Council, education institutions, community and refugee action groups

The People, Heritage and Place project was designed to support management and development of Saltaire World Heritage Site (WHS), encouraging public engagement with planning needs for the site, raising awareness for newcomers to the city, stimulating tourism for the Bradford district, and enhancing education resources and opportunities for creative learning. Community involvement is fostered through close collaboration with local schools, community-interest groups, businesses, and residents as part of the development of a digital 3D representation (or 'digital twin') of Saltaire.

Saltaire was inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2001 as a model industrial village in recognition of its international influence on town planning. The village takes its name from Sir Titus Salt who relocated his business manufacturing fine woollen fabrics to the area and built a village of more than 800 houses and amenities to house his workers. The intact nature of the historic fabric of Saltaire and its contextual landscape setting continue to serve as a valuable testbed for the project team's approaches to digital documentation, visualisation and dissemination.

Developing assets linked to the digital twin increased knowledge of the site and allowed for a more efficient way to record the condition of the built heritage within the site. It responds to the aims and aspirations of the Saltaire WHS Management Plan, enabling a 'dynamic' approach to condition monitoring of built heritage and consent processes. 3D content adds to 'Virtual Bradford', an open-access 'digital twin' for the City of Bradford, developed in a collaboration between the University of Bradford and Bradford Council. It supports data-driven decision making, such as the new Active Travel Neighbourhood and its impact on air quality.

This project built on the pre-existing strong partnership with Bradford Council and involved other public and community organisations, all of whom shared the belief that the health and wellbeing of our young people is rooted in community, belonging and place. Saltaire is a globally unique site, however the project approaches have proven to be highly successful and have significant potential to be transferred to a range of other contexts.



Roots and Futures: Scaling Up and Sustaining Co-produced, Place-based Heritage with Underserved Communities

Led by Dr Elizabeth Craig-Atkins
(University of Sheffield)

The project worked with seven Sheffield-based partners representing local government, heritage strategy, community anchor organisations, community groups and schools.

Roots and Futures is a place-based heritage project in Sheffield that has brought together communities, researchers, local policymakers and heritage groups in equitable partnerships to design and deliver creative conversations that ensure everyone has a voice in telling their history and creating the future of their city.

Our project has three core aims that address a particularly local challenge in Sheffield, but also reflect the Place Programme's shared vision for place-based research. These are:

- To develop, test and share an effective collaborative approach to build mutually beneficial and constructive partnerships with organisations who represent groups who have been underserved by current heritage strategy and policy. In Sheffield, Black, Asian and other minority ethnic groups have felt invisible, and that their story is not part of the city's official heritage narrative.

- To better understand the ways in which histories and stories about themselves and the city are meaningful to people who are marginalised within current heritage narratives, and how far those perspectives are currently represented in the places around them.
- To create a platform among heritage policy- and strategy makers for these communities' ideas for making heritage activities and policy more accessible to, and reflective of, themselves.

Inspired by participatory action research methods, we have co-designed our project's objectives, consultation activities and project outputs with community partners. This has led to strong, supportive partnerships which will endure beyond the current project phase and inspired an array of creative consultations with diverse communities from across Sheffield. Our outputs have been designed to suit our partner's priorities, and so have ranged from oral history to school displays to a city-wide festival.

Throughout, we have worked with Sheffield City Council and Joined Up Heritage Sheffield to ensure policy- and strategy-makers are engaged with the needs and priorities underserved communities have shared, and to build a lasting dialogue that ensures tangible change that will enable every resident of Sheffield to see their heritage around them and feel like they belong.

Roots and Futures champions the value of heritage-based engagement and representation as a foundation for wellbeing through its exploration of identity, place and belonging. Impacts have included: providing an evidence base to support the adoption of a grassroots-led heritage strategy by Sheffield City Council; creating new equitable and enduring partnerships to engage with issues of heritage representation across the city, linking different communities together and creating a platform for underserved communities with local heritage policy and strategy-makers; and supporting a partner organisation, Sheffield-based Roma charity Care For Young People's Future, to win their first major funding award.

A project toolkit will ensure researchers and heritage organisations can build on Roots and Futures approaches to working equitably in partnership with diverse kinds of community groups to address inequalities in their work.

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The AHRC Place Programme Team and KE Project Teams
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