



# OUR BRIGHT FUTURE

End of Funding Report 2021



# Transforming young people's lives through a CREATIVE PATHWAY

**“ The course has been good for building my personal confidence. It has helped me develop my interpersonal skills, and allowed me to take a leading role in a group setting, which I would never have expected myself to take.**

Creative Pathways Young Participant

In North Lanarkshire the young people designed an eco-friendly greenhouse on wheels, made entirely of plastic bottles at Summerlee Heritage Museum. The young people also helped to create a wheelchair accessible path within the gardens for the public to use and set up an environmental Instagram page.





## Creative Pathways Environmental Design Programme

Creative Pathways is a 12 week employability programme for 16-26 year olds.

The programme supports them to progress along the employability pipeline using creative approach to environmental work and design which creates a fun and engaging space for learning.

Young people who complete our programmes are:

- more engaged with learning,
- more engaged with the environment,
- learn new skills and
- progress onto positive destinations.

The programme provides a diversionary activity for young people who experience multiple barriers to education and employment and provides them with valuable life skills in order that they can realise their potential and improve their life chances.

# IMPACT ARTS OBF LOGIC MODEL

Inputs	Activities	Outputs	Outcomes	Impacts
Staff Training Management & Supervision	Recruitment Staff Support and Supervision	10 Staff recruited 10 staff trained	Increased Staff Capacity, knowledge & Skills	Long term environmental aims and focus of the organisation is embedded and supports sustainable practice and development
Networks	Network Development Partnership Development	100 days of training 600 hours of support and training		
Funding	Programme Development Fundraising Activity Marketing and Promotion Campaign/Public Awareness Activities	£500k of match funding secured 8 match funding sources  1000 Information flyers/leaflets produced 20 blog posts 20 press releases	Project Delivery secured and sustained (via match funding) Increased public and professional awareness of programmes & outputs	THE GREEN ECONOMY CAN GROW Future workforce is environmentally aware, is focused and can engage readily with, contribute to and develop the green economy
	Campaign/Public Awareness Activities	600 Young people engaged 600 young people participating in Creative Pathways programme 600 Creative Pathways programme delivered	Communities/the public are better engaged and/or have better awareness of environmental issues	Policy re freenworkforce is influenced by the Creative Pathways delivery model
		30 Environmental projects completed	Communities engage more with their local environment	Increased awareness, protection & sense of ownership of the local & global environment from/by communities
Materials IT equipment Infrastructure Support	Youth Engagement Youth Support Skills Development Accredited Training Progressions Support Community Engagement	300 Young people gain accreditation 300 Young people progress to positive destinations  6 Youth-led campaigns created	YP develop: • new skills, condense, ambition & positive aspirations • Qualifications • Increased knowledge of environmental topics • Awareness & engagement with the green economy YP progress to positive destinations YP engage with their local environment	Young people & communities continue to have a voice and influence matter which are important to them and their environment
Governamance		30 Community consultations delivered 30 Greenspaces/sites created or improved 15 Public art projects completed 15 Public events held		
		30 Environmental partners engaged 30 Community partners engagd 10 Public sector partners/agencies engaged	Local Environments are improved Local environs & biodiversity is better protected	
		20 Knowledge and learning events engaged 20 Knowledge and learning events hosted		

# EVALUATION METHODOLOGY

## Structure

- Centralised Recording
- Training
- Multi-team approach
- Feedback loops

Impact Arts' evaluation framework has two core values:

### **Structure** and **Dynamism.**

**Structure** - Our approach to evaluation is supported by a clear and robust structure - providing validity and consistency to our impact reporting and continuous learning processes - which includes:

**Centralised recording** - We utilise a tailored Salesforce database, and secure central file server for all staff, volunteer and participant records - this allows for real-time, accurate reporting on performance and impact

**Training** - All staff receive systems training to ensure consistency of practice and quality; key staff have received dedicated (often advanced) evaluation training

**Multi-team approach** - Various teams across Impact Arts contribute to the evaluation of programmes, from front-line staff to our dedicated Evaluation Coordinator and Senior Management Team

**Feedback Loops** - A key element of Impact Arts' Listening Policy, we work to ensure that evaluation is a two-way process where participants and stakeholders are a continuous part of the evaluation. Evaluation findings are shared, and feedback from groups and individuals is specifically addressed, with further contributions sought on recommendations or other plans for service development

*Our evaluation methods are fluid, and allow for flexibility and evolved during the life of a programme. We constantly ensured that they were fit for purpose, and that they gave us the data that we needed in order to continue to learn from, and improve the programmes that we offer. The use of different online platforms has allowed us to explore other ways of collecting this data, and ensuring that we are using platforms and tools which are easily accessible to the people we are seeking to support.*

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

## Dynamism

- Engaging in External Research
- Adapting Systems
- Understanding differences

Impact Arts' evaluation framework has two core values:

### **Structure** and **Dynamism**.

**Dynamism** - We are able to adapt our evaluation methods in various ways to respond to needs, new research questions, new reporting processes, and to engage in external research activities. Key elements of our dynamic approach, include:

**Engaging in external research** - Impact Arts' work is often the subject of research carried out by consultants, researchers, academics and students - most often on behalf of a grant-making body or higher education establishment. This research provides valuable, highly-efficacious findings and learning

**Adapting Systems** - As part of various developments (e.g. launch of new programmes) and engagement in various initiatives (e.g. Climate Challenge Fund; Kick the Dust - National Lottery Heritage Fund; and, naturally, Our Bright Future) has required our teams to adapt evaluation systems to capture new data and reflect on new areas of research. This experience has allowed us to advance our core evaluation systems - capturing data on a greater number and wider-reaching outcomes - and to understand our impact in different ways

**Understanding differences** - As an organisation committed to equality and inclusion, we are flexible with the methods by which we measure outcomes - using visual tools/methods where communication (speech/language) are a barrier to engagement; and continually demonstrating our value of Creativity, by capturing moments and evidence in unique ways (through images/film/poem/song/etc.)

# EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

## Feedback loops

- User informed
- Continuous learning
- Responding to Needs & Aspirations

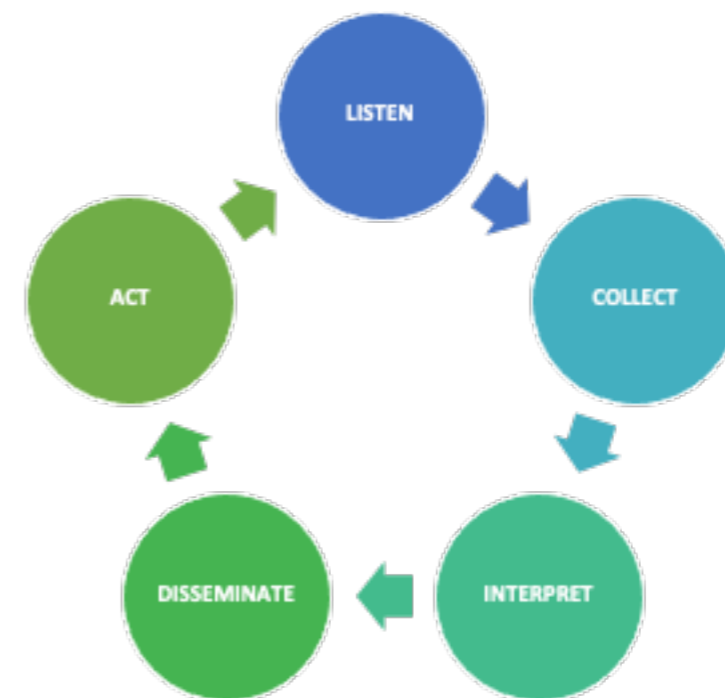
Impact Arts' wider approach to organisational service improvement and evaluation is captured by our continuous learning and feedback cycle.

We understand that this ensures that everyone involved in our services, (in particular beneficiaries), are able to articulate their opinions about the programs that target them.

Feedback is used, not only as evidence, but also to redefine our services and is seen as a critical ingredient for improved results in community-based, targeted services.

We aim for all services to be user-led and to achieve improvements in service delivery in partnership and in response to the needs and aspirations of supported individuals.

We achieve this through the feedback loop illustrated below:



# EVALUATION & RESEARCH

There were a number of research areas explored through our OBF evaluation:

- support and development of young people
- engagement and regeneration of communities
- engagement with and positive impact on the environment.

Throughout the delivery period we both adapted and utilised our core evaluation structure, and utilised a wide range of tools to capture and present data including:

- Case Studies
- Development Webs
- Individual Development/Progression Plans
- Participant/Stakeholder/Community feedback
- Registers/Workshop records
- Creative outputs - e.g. images/video/spoken word/music





# EVALUATION & YOUNG PEOPLE

Our work with young people is well-established. As such, we have several core outcomes and systems in place for evaluating our impact on young people. These include

## **Interpersonal Skills/Personal Development -**

We use a structured evaluation framework to measure the confidence, communication skills, and team working skills -

We utilised tools/research/models (e.g. Skills 4.0 A Skills Model for the Future, the GIRFEC Wellbeing Indicators (SHANARRI), and the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (WEMWBS), to develop an outcomes and indicators framework. This was measured through a combination of observation by coaches/tutors and the scoring of young people against key indicators.

The **development of practical skills** was measured in the same way, alongside the demonstrable evidence of the programme outputs and records of achievement/award.

We adhere to the **SQA and Arts Awards accreditation-verification frameworks** that ensures quality throughout the assessment, coordination, recording and verification processes.

In order to comprehensively **establish the needs of the individual**, and the most **suitable routes to progression**, we:

- Develop needs and skills assessments (at referral/registration and induction stages)
- Provide support for:
  - Goal-setting
  - Progression planning
  - Individual development plans
- Undertake Vocational profiling - which allows our delivery team to spend time understanding each participant
- Our Opportunities Coordinator supports and verifies the creation of individual plans for all participants in line with SQA/SDS requirements

# EVALUATION & THE ENVIRONMENT

Having experience in delivering and evaluating environmental projects, Impact Arts has experience of adapting evaluation systems to capture relevant data on the impact of the project on environmental themes.

**Impact on Environment** Our focus remained on tangible changes in the short-to-medium-term that were a direct result of the project. As such, key indicators against which we captured data, included:-

- No. of sites improved
- No. of new greenspaces created
- No. of events (litter picks; bio-blitzes; use of public greenspaces)

**Education and Campaigning** - We measured the number of campaigns created and the extent to which they reached audiences. Key indicators included:-

- No. of distinct environmental campaigns created
- No. of educational/information resources created (e.g. magazines/Zines; films; leaflets)
- No. of people reached online
- No. of people reached through public (in-person) events

**Connection to Green Economy** - As part of the individual and collective support for young people's progression, we focussed on the level of engagement young people had with green economy jobs and businesses. Key indicators included:-

- No. of green economy businesses engaged
- No. of environmental partners engaged
- No. of information/learning/consultation sessions delivered by environmental/green economy partners
- No. of green economy employment progressions
- Type of job progressions (i.e. employer/job role)
- No. of progressions to volunteering with environmental groups
- Type of volunteering progression/activity

# OUR EVALUATION JOURNEY

Impact Arts engaged with the Our Bright Future based on a theory of change that focussed on the development of young people, the engagement of the community, practical changes to local environment, and the sharing of voices. This model provided us with a clear approach to measuring the short-to-medium-term impact of our work. We were able to adapt and utilise existing tools and processes for this.

Upon reflection, we recognise:

- that this was a suitable approach
- longer-term impacts will only be realised beyond the 5-year programme period
- that the focus was on engagement, attitudes, and behaviours, rather than a hard carbon reduction targets;
- the indicators we set out to measure were realistic and achievable.

Although we had experience of measuring carbon reduction, and had an interest in this field, it was recognised that trying to undertake this whilst supporting young people was tricky. We felt it would have adversely affected and detracted from other elements of our evaluation, and the beneficiary experience/learning journey, and would have been undertaken at the expense of other activities (such as awareness raising campaigns)

This meant our evaluation framework was **facilitative rather than directive** – i.e. our planned activities remained people- and community-led, rather than target-led.

We were able to adapt our systems quickly to ensure inclusion, and capture, of all intended outcomes and indicators.

In the early stages, our whole team approach saw the involvement of: the following Impact Arts Team members who designed and agreed the evaluation structure.

- Tutors, managers
- Our Evaluation Coordinator,
- Senior Management Team

In years 1-3, our evaluation tools and methodology remained largely the same, whilst providing significant flexibility, and dynamism. e.g.:

- using creative and engaging feedback methods at community events;
- creating film, images and reports that demonstrated the impact, on and of, young people in visually engaging ways
- gathering feedback from a wide array of stakeholders, including partners, funders, and decision-/policy-makers.

# SIGNIFICANT REVIEW

In year 3 of the programme we had a radical review of our data collection methods – primarily the surveys and questionnaires used with young people and communities. Key changes that were made included:

## **The listening Project**

Year 3 of the programme coincided with Impact Arts undertaking an ambitious Listening Project. This focussed on developing the listening practices of the organisation as a whole (i.e. at all levels – from Board members and Senior Managers, to front-line and core support staff). The project produced an Impact Arts Listening Policy, Listening Toolkit, and engaged young people from across Impact Arts’ programmes, but primarily young people engaged with Sketchy Youth, the Impact Arts’ youth steering group.

**The youth steering group** was initially set up in 2017/2018 as part of the Our Bright Future programme of activities, to provide an ongoing platform for young people to influence our work, and to develop key messages, policy, and project designs intended to support positive environmental change.

The environment remains a key focus for this group, but the group has grown to explore Impact Arts’ work with vulnerable children, care experienced young people, and heritage.

This group supported the review of our data collection methods and listening practices.

## **Capturing a greater level of background/equalities data –**

We recognised a need for deeper understanding of the demographics behind the young people we engaged and the variety of achievements/outcomes between the various groups.

## **Reducing outcome-related questions –**

We recognised that primarily the same indicators could be used across multiple outcomes, or where questions were very similar

## **Capturing greater level of data**

We adapted our Salesforce database to capture greater level of data – e.g. expanding on equalities and demographics monitoring data.

# LISTENING PROJECT

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# EXPLORING NEW TOOLS

- Increased use of Survey Monkey
- Use of Digital Tools
- Young-Person led Consultation
- Feedback loops

Over the 5-year OBF programme - as a result of internal development and our experience with external researchers - we were able to explore, test and introduce new tools to support our evaluation. These included:-

**Increased use of Survey Monkey** - this created efficiencies in our data collection methods via surveys/questionnaires, by reducing multiple entry of data, reducing the amount paper-based collection methods, and increasing our ability to collate and analyse quickly and effectively

**Use of alternative digital tools** - we had the opportunity to test Impactasaurus and Padlet to capture feedback and monitoring data. These tools, namely Padlet, have provided us with greater interaction with participants in evaluation and knowledge sharing processes, creating spaces for dialogue and reflection, beyond only providing one-way, static feedback

**Ongoing young person-led consultation** - beyond the evaluation of the programme, in identifying the needs of communities and local environments, our young people created numerous tools for capturing the views of people and communities. From visual boards and low-tech interactive mapping tools, to designing and distributing surveys for community groups, schools and the wider population young people - we have experienced significant pride and excitement with each of our groups in fully understanding the scope of their individual and collective aims, and refining their tools in line with good evaluation practices (e.g. taking real account of the type and scale of evaluation methods, whether they were suitable for the intended audience, whether they were balanced, and whether they would capture the desired data). The tools created by young people provided inspiration, and influenced (to varying degrees) Impact Arts', and other cohorts of young people's, ongoing evaluation practices.

# SOME FINDINGS

- Increased confidence & resilience
- Improved mental & physical health
- Young-People better engaged in matters of importance to them
- Young people more engaged in learning,

In addition to the outcomes achieved, which are demonstrated in the form of case studies below, we found that young people engaged on our programmes demonstrated the following:

**Increased confidence and resilience** - Young people reported feeling more confident in areas such as group work, public speaking, using technology and practical skills.

**Improved mental and physical health.** Young people reported an improvement in their wellbeing, both physically and mentally. Engagement with nature, reduced isolation and improved confidence all contributed to this.

**Young people were more engaged in matters of importance to them.** By creating a participant-led programme of activity, guided by skilled facilitators, young people were able to explore what was important to them and activities were based around that.

**Participants are more engaged with learning.** Using non-traditional, non-classroom-based style of learning, young people feel more at ease, more able to communicate with their peers and with their tutors, and as such remain more engaged with learning. Nearly 70% of all participants on Creative Pathways progressed to further education, employment or training.

The use of different online platforms has allowed us to explore other ways of collecting this data, and ensuring that we are using

# PROGRAMME OUTCOMES

Impact Arts identified **8 outcomes** that we work towards with the young people engaged on our programmes. The outcomes complement one another and improve both the lives of our participants and the communities in which they live.





# YOUNG PEOPLE PROGRESS TO POSITIVE DESTINATIONS: EMPLOYMENT, TRAINING, EDUCATION

**Creative Pathways is an employability programme. Its core aims are to progress young people along the employability pipeline and to improve their life chances by providing them with the necessary skills and qualifications to enter positive destinations. It is also a creative, safe, nurturing environment where young people can be themselves, make friends and learn about the environment in a creative and engaging way. As well as gaining skills and qualifications, participants also report improved confidence, improved resilience, and improved health and wellbeing.**

When Yvonne started with Impact Arts she had little confidence especially with reading and writing. Yvonne wanted to gain new skills to help her decide the next steps to help her decide on a career path. She had a huge barrier with theory, reading and writing which had come from very negative experiences from school. Impact Arts team offered lots of positive feedback and spent time with Yvonne on a one to one basis. Yvonne would laugh in disbelief when we gave her positive feedback. With time she then started to believe in herself and her success.

Yvonne participated in the John Muir award working in outdoor spaces, exploring, discovering, conversing & sharing her experiences. While working with the Park Rangers they made Yvonne aware of her local heritage, and some of the wildlife we saw ranged from swans, ducks, a Great Spotted Woodpecker and otters. Yvonne attended outings to a range of different venues: Apple, modern art gallery, a local potter, photographer & artist. Yvonne gained lot of inspiration and potential work experience at these venues.

Yvonne has celebrated passing all three SQA employability units and was overwhelmed to receive her first trophy of achievement. This has given her some confidence in her abilities. She also completed the John Muir award and displayed her certificate proudly at her showcase to staff, friends and family.

Yvonne was a huge influence to the class during the John Muir award, she was confident in answering all questions the Holyrood Park Rangers asked. She was great at encouraging the group to participate, which helped with the quieter members in the group, and she showed empathy to her peers and made sure no one was left out. Yvonne has learnt that being outdoors helps with health and wellbeing and she gained environmental skills & knowledge of local heritage. She is definitely a team player and a pleasure to have in class

# YOUNG PEOPLE LEARN NEW SKILLS:

DESIGN, ARTISTIC,  
SCULPTURAL,  
PLANNING,  
ENVIRONMENTAL

**As well as accredited learning, young people also gain valuable creative, environmental and practical skills during their time on Creative Pathways. Young people often work in groups to complete a project all within a non-traditional, non-classroom based setting. This approach sees young people realise skills they didn't know they had as well as learn new valuable, practical skills. It helps them to gain confidence, improve their wellbeing and find creative ways of expressing themselves.**

Colin came from a disadvantaged home where no one worked and therefore he lived below the poverty line. When it came to taking part in workshops Colin would often make excuses and would try to do minimum work. This appeared to come from a lack of manual dexterity. However when given a little more encouragement and one to one support Colin would be proud of the work he would complete or participate in. The more he participated the more his confidence grew along with his creative skills.

Colin took part in the planning and organising of a community garden makeover. When it came to working outdoors on the garden Colin's attendance appeared to improve as well as his timekeeping, he was also more eager to get to work appearing more alert and less tired. He gained lots of new skills whilst working in the garden. He used hand power tools, mixed cement, created a hopscotch using slabs, dug up an area for a path, made raised beds, erected climbing posts, put up a fence, planted shrubs and bulbs and helped make a large bug hotel. He learned to use hand and power tools and learned all about environmental issues. Colin also gained SQA units in employability and enterprise.

Colin's confidence in his own abilities, physical health and personal hygiene had improved massively throughout the 18 week programme. As he is a huge supporter of Celtic we recommended that he apply to employability and fitness course ran at Celtic park. He was very eager and excited about the prospect of this. He went along for the interview and was successful.

# YOUNG PEOPLE GAIN ACCREDITATION

**Every young person who engages with Creative Pathways is supported to complete a qualification. Most young people gain the SQA Employability Award and work towards units such as Problem Solving, Preparing for Employment and Personal Development. We have also supported young people to gain Arts Awards, John Muir Awards and the Dynamic Youth Award. By embedding learning into creative and environmental projects, and basing our projects in a non-traditional, non-classroom based setting, young people remain engaged, enthusiastic and passionate about learning.**

At the time of his engagement with us, sixteen year old Kevin lived with his mum in the east end of Glasgow. He began the Creative Pathways course in the summer of 2016 after a short spell of being unemployed after dropping out of college. Kevin had been at college studying plastering but he wanted to get in to outdoors work and had a particular interest in forestry. Kevin was really quiet and closed off when he first started and displayed intimidating body language. He had difficulty speaking clearly and displayed signs of being inwardly aggressive, and outwardly disruptive due to lack of confidence.

At the beginning of the 14 weeks, Kevin found his place within the dynamics of the group, and fitted in well amongst his peers, although was found to be easily distracted and detached from tasks set to the group. Kevin found it hard to be creative in the class, and was drawn towards physical tasks such as clearing the drive, wood work, and tasks aimed more towards his interests. By week 3, Kevin had created a bird house made from wood, and seemed excited to begin working with wood and screws, as apposed to paint and paper. Being visibly proud of this piece of work, week 4 was a turning point in Kevin's attitude towards being productive, as he began to understand the importance environmental art in the community. Kevin's confidence grew and he displayed great social skills improving his verbal communication. His body language changed as he felt more settled and he began to look relaxed and happy. He gained confidence in the validity of his ideas and suggestions, and recognised his importance within the group to the extent he was able to work unsupervised with no worry of being disruptive.

Kevin worked hard on his SQA paperwork throughout the project and gained a full Employability Award, he also built up a really exciting portfolio of work and gained his Bronze Arts Award. Kevin applied for a job with Cadder Housing Association in week ten and was successful in securing the position. He started with Cadder before the Creative Pathways project finished and is thoroughly enjoying the work, which is focused around landscaping and the upkeep of the social housing. Kevin will also have the opportunity to attend college through his employment to build upon his skills.

*"I am confident Kevin will feel welcome in his position with Cadder Housing Association, and recognises this as a valuable stepping stone to reach his end destination as a tradesman"* Calvin Downie, Tutor

# YOUNG PEOPLE ENGAGED IN CREATIVE PATHWAYS PROGRAMME

Over the course of the past 5 years, and with funding secured through Our Bright Future, Impact Arts have supported almost **600 young people** to complete a Creative Pathways programme.

Through creative engagement, we have supported participants to **engage with their communities, learn about the environment and improve their surroundings.**

We have also secured almost **420 positive destinations** for young people and supported with the completion of over **360 qualifications.**

Sixteen year old James lives with his mum in Bridgeton, Glasgow. He was excluded from mainstream schooling at the age of 14 and hadn't been doing anything since. Unemployed James showed no aspiration of finding a career. He had no sense of which direction he would like to move in. When he started the Creative Pathways course he was very withdrawn and lacked confidence. He had his dark hair swept over his face and wore dark clothes, he kept his head down and his shoulders slumped.

Initially an outsider to the rest of the group, James consciously continued to exclude himself in order to read alone. Wearing completely black outfits, with black hair covering the majority of his face, James appeared to be more introverted than his peers. He had very poor attendance in the first week due to his shyness. In week 2 James gained access to the music materials available at Impact Arts and showed great interest in re-tuning the electric guitars. He began to open up about himself and his love for music. Over the course of the programme and with the help from our Employability advisor James learned about all the opportunities available to him. He attended a week long 'Introduction to Music' course, returning to Impact Arts with a more optimistic outlook on life.

***"When I was excluded from school I didn't think I would have a chance to do anything with my future, my friend is into multi-media so I got interested in that too. I like it, but now I'm thinking that I could do something with guitars and art, I didn't even know there was such a thing as a guitar-making course."*** - James

James was chatty and had changed from his black clothing to grey. His hair was out of his face and he was smiling and making eye contact. James developed his portfolio of work around his interests, including Japanese anime artists, guitar influences, and potential ideas for developing his guitar interests such as alginate, plaster and latex moulds. James worked hard and began socialising within the group. His confidence continued to grow and he applied for and NC in Music at the Academy of Music and Sound.

James was successful at his interview. He started his course at The Academy of Music and Sound in week 10 week of Creative Pathways. James visited Impact Arts weekly to seek help on applying for a bursary. James's aesthetic continued to change as he became surrounded by like-minded musical people.

**James' Future Plans :** James whole demeanour seems brighter. He is excited to share his new routine in college with his peers and tutors. Wearing bright blues, reds and soft greys, James returned on the day of the showcase to accept his certificate with an inspirational attitude and a clear idea of how this NC would act as a stepping stone to advance to his HNC, and furthermore his BA (Hons) in the future.

*"I painted one of my walls in my bedroom, but I was too lazy to do the rest of my bedroom walls. But after being on this course I've decided to start painting the rest of my walls."* - James

# URBAN AND GREEN SPACES TO BE TRANSFORMED

During the past 5 years, Impact Arts Creative Pathways programme has been involved in numerous community projects, examples of these include murals on community building, transforming play areas and community gardens and art installations within heritage sites and waterways.

Billy had recently moved to Barrhead with his dad following his parents' separation. He knew nobody in the area when he joined Impact Arts' Creative Pathways programme.

Billy had a number of issues holding him back from employment. He mentioned at the beginning of the programme that he and his Dad sometimes had to rely on foodbanks to eat. The centre where the project is based contains a food bank, and Billy would be encouraged to take food home with him - but he often refused, feeling too proud to do this. The tutors would also make toast in the morning for the group, but again Billy was reluctant to accept. It was also clear initially that he lacked confidence in his abilities.

The first few weeks contained a number of ice-breaking and skill-building activities, and through these Billy began to open up a lot more. He told of how he volunteered at a farm and part-owned a horse due to his long time service. Through sharing details of his life, he became more comfortable with the group and tutors, and over time became more comfortable accepting help and food.

Billy was heavily involved in the Creative Pathways' projects final piece of artwork: a large, colourful environmental-themed mural for the side of a local community centre. He took part in the planning and organisation, and when it came to painting the wall he enjoyed getting stuck in, no matter the weather. He learned how to freehand draw the design onto the wall, and how to mix and use external paint. He used Photoshop and inDesign when helping the mural's design and planning.

By the end of the programme, Billy had a 100% attendance record. His physical health had improved through activity and routine, and he was eating more to sustain energy throughout the day. Upon encouragement from his tutors, he had also decided to register with a doctor - something he originally was adamant would be a "waste of time". His confidence and employability skills had also improved massively, and following the programme's conclusion he started a stage 3 employability programme with Rathbone - something he was very happy about.

# SITES TRANSFORMED INTO ACCESSIBLE, BIODIVERSE AND EDUCATIONAL SPACES

Using public art as a platform for discussion and a method of self expression has been successful in finding out how the next generation feel about their immediate area and has made for some really interesting and creative community art and improvement of community spaces.

Over 12 weeks in 2017 Impact Arts, Youth Ambassador Natasha DeVries engaged with 51 pupils across 3 schools in Dennistoun (Haghill Primary, Golfhill Primary and Whitehill High) as part of the Our Bright Future Project. The purpose of the project was to create a piece of public art for Dennistoun working with members of the local community. Impact Arts offered a series of free community arts sessions to explore important, local environmental issues.

We wanted to involve the community in the collaborative creation of a piece of public art to improve and positively communicate their feelings of Dennistoun. Through a series of 20 workshops Natasha explored themes identified by the children and young people using mapping, quick drawing and collage. Each participant selected a photo of Dennistoun and blocked out areas they didn't like and added things in that they wanted to see.

The young people also expressed that they would like more inter-generational spaces. Places that the older people in the community can go and the younger people can interact with them more naturally so they "can learn and do activities and the older people don't get lonely"

The young people created a large map made up of lots of individual squares which people could then interact with and take a piece home so that the legacy of the art work is then within individual homes in the community. The idea is that it then connects people to a place in time where they collectively made a piece of public art. The project has helped expand definitions and understandings of public art and has made it more inclusive to the public of Dennistoun.

It has given the young people an opportunity to express themselves creatively; it has opened up discussions and allowed them to share their work. It has empowered them to use their voice and speak up about what matters to them in their immediate environment.

# CHILDREN AND ADULTS INVOLVED IN CREATIVE CONSULTATION COMMUNITY SPACES

As part of our Creative Pathways programmes, young people had the opportunity to consult with various groups on creative projects. We also involved the wider community in these consultations and worked with existing groups to learn about what their community means to them and how we can use the arts to improve community spaces.

Kendall dropped out of school very young after experiencing severe bullying to the point where she struggled to get out of bed in the morning. Upon leaving school, Kendall became reclusive and shut herself away from her peers, fearing any further taunting. At this point in her life, she turned to alcohol and drugs for comfort, eventually abusing substances to the point of overdose. As a result, she was thrown out of her home by her Mum and eventually settled with her Gran after months of staying with friends.

Although on the face of things she is a lovely girl with a bubbly outlook, this masked a sadder side. Kendall has suffered from severe anxiety, depression, panic attacks and has spoken often about having suicidal thoughts.

To begin with, it was clear that Kendall was finding it difficult to work with others in a group context. She had been so used to her own company that social anxiety had become a barrier to her participating in anything.

Eventually, as part of the course, she visited several places along with the group, including the Camera Obscura exhibition in Edinburgh, Rouken Glen Park, Glasgow's Museum Resource Centre and the Letraset Exhibition at the Lighthouse in Glasgow.

Kendall started to become more accustomed to being in company and began to interact freely and ask questions at visits. She began taking more care in her appearance and told us that she was socialising at weekends instead of shutting herself away. Her confidence was bolstered by the friends she was making in the group and the different experiences she gained visiting new places. She began to see herself as the kind, bubbly character the artists and fellow participants knew her as.

As part of their SQA Enterprise unit, Kendall and her group were asked to plan, design and create a wall mural for Barrhead's Auchenback Resource Centre. This took a lot of research, planning and liaising with the centre staff and users to come up with a design that was suitable for everyone. This process helped Kendall develop a variety of skills including painting, drawing, communication and social skills.

***"It's the best thing I've ever done in my life. You work with the best people - you couldn't meet better people. It's really nice to be a part of something and do something nice for the community. Being on the course has helped me to feel like myself again."*** Kendall

# COMMUNITY CELEBRATION EVENTS HELD

At the end of each Creative Pathways we celebrate the success of our participants with a showcase event. These events are a chance for us to celebrate the work of the young people, and to thank the local communities that we have worked with. During 2020 these events had to be done online, and while we couldn't come together as a group to showcase the wonderful work of the participants, we were able to reach more people through our online showcases.

Clark (16) lives at home with his mum, sister and nephew. His step-dad is currently in prison and his father died in 2017. He feels this has affected his mental health and that this manifests as anger - he has participated in an Anger Management course and has tried counselling via his GP but feels these did not help to fully resolve his issues at that time.

Clark was referred onto Creative Pathways West Lothian from SDS having left school in December 2019. SDS reported that Clark had great potential to achieve qualifications, however due to the bereavement and the state of his mental health he was not able to study or sit exams and therefore, left with no qualifications.

It was clear from day one that Clark was challenging himself in trying something new. Starting a new course meant he had to adjust his routine and practice good time management. At first Clark struggled with this, however he worked hard and managed to regulate his attendance and punctuality. Developing this new routine and continuously practicing good time management, provided him with more structure which he remarked helped him to feel more stable.

Tutors initially observed that Clark found it difficult to relax and struggled to settle and focus on tasks. However, Clark's ability to engage and hold conversations improved over time and he began to enjoy the time he spent with his peers, making and establishing new friendships and becoming a valued member of the group. As his confidence appeared to improve so too did his ability to reflect and evaluate positively on his creative process, experiences and personal development. Clark became noticeably more vocal during ideas sessions., regularly giving both verbal and written feedback about his feelings and daily experiences at Creative Pathways.

Clark produced a varied portfolio of work and displayed a selection of his art at the Creative Pathways showcase. AND expressed a desire to take more of a lead role in this event. He spent time practicing his role as the stage host, taking the advice and opinions of others to improve upon his delivery. On the day of the showcase Clark did well in introducing the event and creative activities, he spoke into the microphone and engaged with the audience and .interacting with guests, for example - answering questions from SDS and young people about his experience at Creative Pathways. Clark also took part in a showcase tour with the Cultural Minister for Scotland and posed for many photographs with the Creative Pathways team.



**TRANSFORMING  
YOUNG  
PEOPLE'S LIVES  
BY GIVING THEM  
A VOICE**



**"If you ever get the opportunity to go to Impact Arts, I'd say definitely take it. It's not just about getting you out there - it also boosts your confidence, it's really helpful and it's a good laugh as well."**

