

# CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

## TOOLS FOR POLICY ENGAGEMENT

SUSSEX CO-LAB AT UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX,  
WITH HOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT,  
JUDITH RICKETTS, QUIET DOWN THERE,  
SEW FABULOUS, DR CARA COURAGE  
AND LAURENCE HILL



This Sussex Co-Lab is led by the Economic & Social Research Council Impact Acceleration Account at the University of Sussex.



## FORWARD

Sussex Co-Lab is a creative placemaking initiative which evolved out of a need for innovative forms of engagement between local authorities and local stakeholders, such as residents, community organisations and businesses; recognising the tensions that can emerge between the different groups and the impact this can have on evolving place. Its goal is to support a method for engagement with communities that goes beyond public consultations, and instead co-creates with constituents of place.

In the autumn of 2022, the Sussex Co-Lab was established through the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account at the University of Sussex. A call for Expressions of Interest was issued to Sussex creatives, businesses and community organisations to be part of this Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC)-funded residency programme that had the aim to explore creative interventions in sustainable city planning and form ideas around how city spaces can be utilised, repurposed, and reclaimed.

Through a competitive process three residencies were selected, supporting cross-sector partnerships that creatively addressed the needs of a community in a place, and which, guided by placemaking practices, encouraged participation of underserved groups by amplifying voices, aesthetics, and creative visions.

Our thanks go to all those involved with this project; for believing in what we were trying to achieve and working with us to translate an idea into the projects so beautifully encapsulated in this workbook. Our thanks also extend to the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), who through the Impact Acceleration Accounts, enabled us to fund this experimental, transdisciplinary project.

This Workbook tells the story and learning from the funded projects to help local government, funders and commissioners engage with communities of place, whether as residents or as users of a place, and in planning and policy processes.

**DEBBIE KEELING**  
**DEPUTY PRO VICE CHANCELLOR OF KNOWLEDGE EXCHANGE**  
**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX**

**DR ALEJANDRO EZQUERRO-NASSAR**  
**ESRC IMPACT ACCELERATOR ACCOUNT,**  
**UNIVERSITY OF SUSSEX**

Co-Lab emerged in the context of simultaneous social and ecological emergencies, where new ways of working are urgently needed to ensure that places where people live measure up to the challenges of the day. As funders, we are aware of the need for platforms that support residents to become active and collective participants in addressing local challenges and in the shaping of their spaces; and for these platforms to equally learn from deeply invested communities.

**DR CARA COURAGE**  
**CO-LAB PLACEMAKING LEAD**

Each of these projects exemplifies what makes placemaking the unique, radical and transformative embedded way of working that it is: they are all a grassroots approach and hold the sacrosanct belief that people are the experts in the places in which they live. They are a starting point for conversation about current development and future planning – and this Workbook is both the story of the Residencies as well as a vital addition to that local, national and global community of practice .

**LAURENCE HILL,**  
**CO-LAB CURATOR**

These projects are place-based. They draw on participants' local knowledges, memories and wishes; on databases of historical information; and on hidden or lost histories, to reimagine both the present and the future of their urban environments. In showcasing the messiness of human knowledges, memories and desires, the resulting exhibition was a powerful counterpoint to an understanding of planning as top-down and controlled.

This Workbook is written for anyone wishing to understand or commission placemaking as a way towards effective co-created community engagement and local policy. Reflecting on the stories and voices of the Residencies of the Sussex Co-Lab we have drawn together our learning into a suite of considerations, stipulations and coda to bring into your own context.

**SECTION 1**

The Sussex Co-Lab model and context, the commissioning process and decision-making matrix, pages 4 to 8.

**SECTION 2**

Residencies practice and process, in their own words, pages 9 to 15.

**SECTION 3**

Curatorial challenges and resolutions, pages 16 to 19.

**SECTION 4**

The commons themes and what they mean for placemaking practice, the positive loop of placemaking, placemaking horizons and values, and a framework for collaboration, pages 20 to 26.

## SECTION ONE

# ABOUT CO-LAB

Sussex Co-Lab is a creative policy decision-making initiative, based on the collaborative and democratic values of socially engaged art, led by the ESRC Impact Acceleration Account (IAA) at the University of Sussex.

Its mission is to focus on supporting local community- and creatively-focused partnerships to co-determine and then address in action their local place issues. This mission is anchored in the principle of improving access to and representation in local planning so that place-based policy is inclusive, collaborative, and sustainable.

The goal is to support community engagement modelled on collaboration across all place stakeholders from the moment of conception, through design, implementation, delivery, and evaluation.

## THE UNDERSTANDING WE WORKED TO

Anchored in placemaking practice, and leaning towards the process of socially engaged art, Sussex Co-Lab fostered its own contextual coda to frame the Residency commissioning process:

### FOR PLACEMAKING:

- There is no such thing as one 'community' in a place
- The people of place are front and centre of the projects at all times
- The people of place are acknowledged as equal stakeholders in place and as the experts in 'living' their place
- Placemaking is about strengthening physical, social, economic and cultural connections
- Successful placemaking is by its nature inclusive by supporting the engagement with and use of a place by all members that place

### FOR SOCIALLY ENGAGED ART:

- Socially engaged art is a means to gather, to imagine and to make material, social and economic change
- Its processes are focused on engagement, human interaction, and social discourse stimulated by the art of participation
- The focus of the 'work' of socially engaged art is to create a social circumstance that includes people and that has a call to action to the lived experience of people
- The socially engaged artist holds a special, but equal to all role, in the process of a project
- The aim of the socially engaged artist is to help the community work towards a common material, environmental, social, economic, political or psychological goals

## THE CO-LAB RESIDENCIES

The three micro-scale Residencies all sought to explore creative interventions in sustainable city planning and form ideas around how city spaces can be rethought and reclaimed.

Proposals were welcomed from partnership cohorts of creative practitioners, businesses and community organisations, with a particular interest in proposals from partnerships newly formed for this opportunity, and/or where there was a mutual benefit from the transfer of skills and knowledge between partners.

## PROPOSALS WERE ASKED TO:

1. Focus on sustainability and address the urgency of meeting national Net Zero targets
2. Be led by placemaking and socially engaged art principles and processes
3. Actively include the people of place and a wide range of differing perspectives
4. Be delivered through and/or across any creative form
5. Be formed of partnerships where the majority partner(s) have been based in the Greater Brighton City Region for at least 5 years
6. Demonstrate a practice in/understanding of/willingness and ability to work collaboratively
7. Be able to adapt their work dynamically on-the-go
8. Include any access requirements for engagement

# OUR COMMISSIONING MATRIX

CRITERIA	CRITERIA 1	CRITERIA 2	CRITERIA 3	CRITERIA 4	CRITERIA 5	CRITERIA 6	CRITERIA 7	
	Skills and background of the team match the project being proposed	Partnership is complementary in a way that is relevant to the proposal	Presents a sustainable vision and approach to delivery	Alignment with socially-engaged art principles	Project is adaptable and has considered challenges	Timeline of Activities aligns budget and residency period	Suitable to be exhibited in a central location	
	CRITERIA 1 SCORE	CRITERIA 2 SCORE	CRITERIA 3 SCORE	CRITERIA 4 SCORE	CRITERIA 5 SCORE	CRITERIA 6 SCORE	CRITERIA 7 SCORE	TOTAL
PROJECT 1								
PROJECT 2								
PROJECT 3								
PROJECT 4								
PROJECT 5								

This is the matrix scoring framework used in the commissioning process, designed to work to the seven factors influencing the decision-making. The criteria are real; the scores fictional. You can see what the commissioned projects scored particularly well on in the pages following.

## INSTRUCTIONS

- Use a scale of 1-6.
- Define your must-haves. See Co-Lab Call for Creatives.
- Determine the scale to use for the weights (5-10).
- Assign objective rankings for how each option satisfies each criteria.
- Perform a gut check to make sure the result feels right.
- Check the winning option against the must-haves if they were not included as criteria.
- Document the process and results.

# OUR COMMISSIONING MATRIX

CRITERIA	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>1</b> Skills and background of the team match the project being proposed	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>2</b> Partnership is complementary in a way that is relevant to the proposal	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>3</b> Presents a sustainable vision and approach to delivery	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>4</b> Alignment with socially-engaged art principles	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>5</b> Project is adaptable and has considered challenges	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>6</b> Timeline of Activities aligns budget and residency period	<b>CRITERIA</b> <b>7</b> Suitable to be exhibited in a central location
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	CRITERIA 1 SCORE	CRITERIA 2 SCORE	CRITERIA 3 SCORE	CRITERIA 4 SCORE	CRITERIA 5 SCORE	CRITERIA 6 SCORE	CRITERIA 7 SCORE	TOTAL
PROJECT 1	4	2	2	4	2	3	5	22
PROJECT 2	5	5	3	3	4	4	5	29
PROJECT 3	5	5	5	3	5	5	5	33
PROJECT 4	4	3	4	2	3	4	4	24
PROJECT 5	5	4	4	4	4	5	5	31

In this fictional scoring, projects 3 and 5 score the highest, and project 2 the lowest. In a commissioning round of three opportunities, projects 2, 3 and 5 would be selected. However, you may also want to add a weighting to the criteria, or a minimum score eligibility. Once tallied with other reviewer scores, those with the highest scores would be selected; in the case of a tie, weighting scores is useful.

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# OUR LEXICON

Through the Residency process, a number of terms were used to ensure we had a shared understanding in our conversations.

**Creative (noun)** Any person with creative ideas and skill.

**Co-Creation** A process by which creators and the community in question engage in a continuous dialogue from beginning to end of a project to evolve it through an active response to new inputs and lessons learned.

**Appreciation of Difference** The acknowledgment of contrasting points of view as a strength, representing an opportunity to honour different world views, respectfully combine aesthetics, and generate new dialogues.

**Sustainability** Beyond the environmental to also encompass the social and economic.

**Net Zero** The cutting of greenhouse gas emissions to as close to zero as possible, with any remaining emissions re-absorbed from the atmosphere, by oceans and forests for instance.

**Resilient Places** Places that have the ability to absorb, recover and prepare for future economic, environmental, social and systemic shocks, to benefit all citizens' wellbeing and health, based on an inclusive and creative approach to planning.

**Cross-sector partnership** As between creatives, businesses and third sector organisations and intrinsically holding the largest potential in knowledge exchange.

**Community organisation** Organisations working to make desired improvements to a community's social health, wellbeing, and overall functioning and involve a process of people coming together to address issues that matter to them.





## SECTION TWO

# THE RESIDENCIES

**HOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT** is a community arts organisation based in Newhaven which works with local people to reimagine their town. For this project the group looked specifically at live design projects in the Local Plan.

**URBAN FABRIC** was formed from two organisations, Sew Fabulous and Quiet Down There, both based in Brighton's Open Market. They collaborated with local people to develop a fabric representative of people's feelings about the area.

**JUDITH RICKETTS** is a digital artist and senior lecturer at the University of Brighton. In collaboration with the Centre for Memory Narrative and Histories, Judith developed Xr-H, a first-stage augmented reality app which uncovers Brighton's hidden histories, both real and imagined.

## HOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT

**HOSPITABLE ENVIRONMENT** is a community arts organisation based in Newhaven, East Sussex. Its team is comprised of a socially engaged artist and therapeutic wellbeing practitioner trained at the Institute of Art in Therapy and Education; an artist and secondary school teacher in Art and Photography; a maker, editor, writer and facilitator; and for the residency, it partnered with an Action Researcher.

Hospitable Environment's work is interdisciplinary and it works in collaboration with various organisations and individuals, including a community centre, a food coop and the local council.



# PRACTICE

1. Art – as socially engaged artists using a therapeutic, research-informed approach to practice. People are encouraged to be playful, creative and curious in exploring issues affecting them and their local environment.
2. Sustainability – as place-based and environmentally conscious, using materials that are reused, recycled and repurposed as far as possible and partnering with local food charities to divert surplus food from going to landfill.
3. Community – as a relational approach that is people-based and place-based. An open invitation is made to participate in co-creating community action, providing a listening forum, empowering people to articulate their views, experiences and needs.
4. Hospitality – offering food as an integral part of its events, helping to tackle food insecurity and social isolation in a non-stigmatising way.

## SCORING

Hospitable Environment scored highest on:

### Criteria 1

Skills and background of the team match the project being proposed.

### Criteria 2

Partnership is complementary in a way that is relevant to the proposal.

### Criteria 4

Alignment with socially-engaged art principles.

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*"For this residency we hosted three public facing events. We drew on our existing Soup and Social projects and the wayfinding work we have been undertaking with Lewes District Council.*

*We opened with a Soup and Social in early January; a free, open invite shared meal and community conversation, exploring and mapping people's favourite places in and around Newhaven Town.*

*We followed this with two free creative 'Dreamer, Editor, Maker' workshops, where residents were invited to create their dream townscape, first through shared conversation and drawing and then through 3-D modelling one of their ideas to add to the map.*

*A second Soup and Social pulled together the threads from the two workshops and the previous Soup and Social allowing new people to interact and see the ideas that had already emerged, and to add their own.*

*We have used an action research approach which has involved planning, running, and reviewing each event with a focus on continuous improvement. This has meant that each event is enriched by and builds on what has gone before and informs the work that has yet to come.*

*Through this residency we have evidenced how working as an established and trusted community group can feed into and inform the planning and placemaking process. We have facilitated genuinely place-based research, through socially-engaged community forums and events."*

## URBAN FABRIC

**URBAN FABRIC** was a collaborative and co-created project from Sew Fabulous and Quiet Down There.

Quiet Down There is a charity that produces socially engaged work in Brighton and around the UK, offering people routes to expressing and developing their own creativity outside of the traditional structures of the arts. It is led by the ethos of offering something that builds trust, to then move towards creativity together.

Sew Fabulous CIC (Community Interest Company) has a mission to increase sewing skills and knowledge of sustainability and textile waste. It delivers creative, affordable and accessible classes, courses, workshops and events for children, adults and communities.



# PRACTICE

*Quiet Down There* was founded by three arts professionals who felt that the majority of the creative outreach work happening in the southeast was unambitious and disconnected. Alongside its national work it runs a 'wash and create' space in Brighton Open Market, offering a free wash and dry alongside creative activities, cups of tea and conversation. This service is open four days a week and to anyone who doesn't have access to affordable laundry and lives, works or shops on London Road.

Based in a studio in Brighton's Open Market for the last nine years, *Sew Fabulous* was set up as a direct response to the lack of affordable access to textiles education, and to provide a positive solution to the environmental impact of the textiles industry. Its students come from all over the city. Some of the work is fully funded, and all of classes are subsidised for those on a low income. It welcomes collaboration with their community, arts organisations and institutions.

## SCORING

Urban Fabric was scored highest on:

### Criteria 2

Partnership is complementary in a way that is relevant to the proposal.

### Criteria 4

Alignment with socially-engaged art principles.

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*"We sought to work with people who don't usually engage with the planning process to create textile artworks that respond to conversations about the changing face of London Road in Brighton.*

*Across the Residency, we co-created 60 individual textile artworks, which were digitally curated by Sew Fabulous, to create one fabric that visually represented the composite parts of our community and wider city. 22 of the participants returned to the second phase of the project and stitched four aprons from the fabric over three sessions. These aprons were taken into the market and were modelled by 15 traders in their units.*

*The fabric is a creative response to a difficult set of questions and represents the creative instincts of many women and children who were being asked questions about their environment for the first time. By taking the aprons into the market the project started to locate those creative instincts in our public space.*

*The final artworks are powerful visuals which support the consideration of people's thoughts, feelings and creativity in the public realm.*

*The work in Brighton is long-term and has been grown in a meaningful and lasting way – and Urban Fabric is the beginning of a longer piece of work for Sew Fabulous and Quiet Down There."*

## XR-H

**JUDITH RICKETTS MA., MSC.** is a first-generation African-Caribbean born in the UK. Judith grew up in a space which denied her Britishness in association with her Blackness.



id: 34,

People enslaved: 191  
Compensation: £3,579.00  
Money's today: £581,802.20

# PRACTICE

The gatekeepers of the past were human, now it is algorithmic spaces online, programmed not to see me, or hear me, in a bid to maintain my silence. The extension of this in urban spaces and virtual spaces online, is the politics of the unremembered, the act of actively forgetting.

## SCORING

Xr-h scored highest on:

### Criteria 1

Skills and background of the team match the project being proposed

### Criteria 5

Project is adaptable and has considered challenges

### Criteria 6

Timeline of Activities aligns budget and residency period

# IN THEIR OWN WORDS

*"Xr-h is a playful and disruptive digital artifact that challenges and reshapes the boundaries of how people think about and negotiate Blackness in urban and virtual spaces. It aims to encourage discussions about its histories and connections to the Brighton region, exploring the beliefs, values, and assumptions that underpin them.*

*My motivation for applying to the Sussex Co-Lab residency was to develop a sustainable version of creative placemaking influenced by my experiences and the realisation that there are no records of Black contributions in this region, a region which flourished during the Georgian period at a time when the transatlantic slave trade was at its heart. These hidden histories of people and place should be considered in the process of planning to prevent further erasure.*

*Overall participants expressed satisfaction with the workshop, and some even said they would participate in similar workshops again. Some participants suggested other potential use cases for the app, which will be explored in future workshops.*

*The long-term aim of the project is to connect the Brighton region to the Americas and the African continent with the origin stories of the people involved in building this region illustrated in another iteration of work.*

*In the short term, Xr-h will become a mobile walking app with the addition of wayfinding to develop broader experiences. In addition, this creative placemaking model will be applied to urban regeneration projects in the region."*

## SECTION THREE

# THE EXHIBITION

### **CURATORIAL CHALLENGES**

The curation of the Co-Lab exhibition posed some universal challenges: that of ensuring the individual voices of the projects in an overall coherency in the exhibition, and working to avoid what might be perceived as an exhibition of random and unconnected objects.

### **RESOLUTIONS**

The key for me as curator was to be involved from the project start, in the selection, by participating in knowledge sharing events, and being alongside the Residencies throughout. Having that overview gave me a deeper understanding of the projects, a gap if I'd been recruited at the end to make an exhibition.

On a practical level, working to showcase each project as unique and to contextualize what people could see in the exhibition:

- 1.** Each area of the exhibition looked different, but were united by a uniform font and graphic design
- 2.** There was an overarching exhibition introductory text panel that presented the themes that united each of the three projects, in each of the exhibition spaces
- 3.** Residency exhibition panels were written by each project, in their own voice

The selection of foamboard as a material for artwork and panels was deliberate: it supported the coherency across the exhibition, and importantly, were reusable by each of the teams, critical in terms of legacy by offering a substantial set of assets to under resourced organisations and individuals.

To avoid an exhibition that appeared to be a random collection of objects, my brief to the teams was to think about how we might present the totality of their projects, not just in words but in the artworks that we were showing. Through sound and visuals I wanted to be able to tell the story of the projects, making the processes and the journey visible, not just the end results.

Equally, as a reflection of the socially-engaged practices of the teams, it was important that exhibition visitors were encouraged to participate through certain calls to action, responding to questions related to the projects and providing feedback.

**LAURENCE HILL**  
**CO-LAB CURATOR**

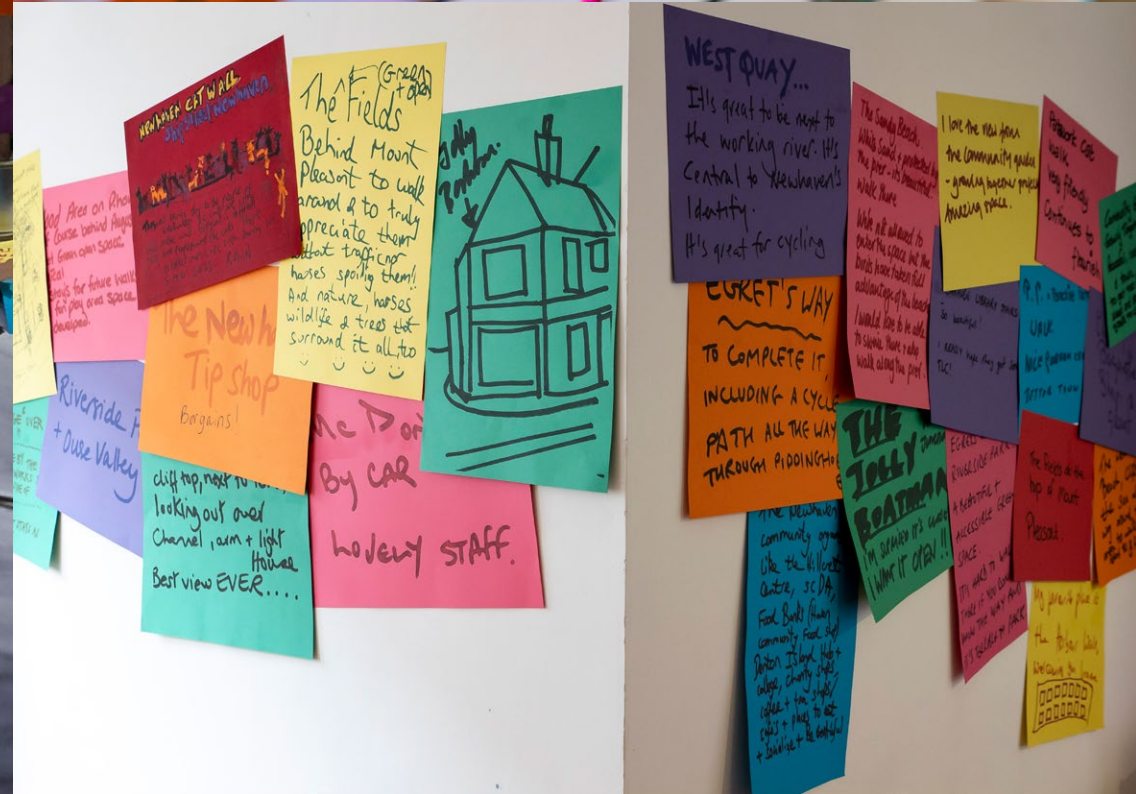


# Greater Brighton

Number of owners? people enslaved? compensation?,







## SECTION FOUR

# A CALLING TO ACTION

### **A SOCIAL PROCESS TO UNDERSTAND PLACE**

The Residencies exemplified a core tenet of placemaking, that of understanding place in the first person, and with that understanding, that material processes of placemaking can happen.

We had confirmed things that we already knew – a worthwhile underlining of practice tested in different contexts – and surfaced new things altogether – the value of bringing an existing practice to new people and places to try things in different ways.

Coming to an understanding of the Residences in this two-fold underlining and surfacing from the places of Brighton & Hove and Newhaven, we can add depth to placemaking as a social process with social and materials outcomes.



The Residencies shared a inventory of intentions that informed their objectives and processes through their projects.

## **INTENTION 1 - STICK WITH THE PROCESS**

1. Be brave and trust the process – it may look messy, it will feel unknown, but trust this as necessary and allow it to unfold.
2. Review, learn, re-learn and improve: build in time for reflection as a focused part of the process; include all stakeholders; adapt to different learning styles and paces; use what you learn to benchmark and improve projects; and share and celebrate wins of all sizes; share obstacles, setbacks and failures to build trust.

## **INTENTION 2 - EXPERT CO-LOCATION**

3. The experts in the place are the people that live in the place. Work with the community as equals.
4. Work with community organisations and artists as knowledgeable and skilled partners in policy and planning: these people can open up a depth and breadth of conversation that 'as usual' consultation can't.

## **INTENTION 3 - WORK ALONGSIDE, NOT OVER**

5. This starts with the invitation made to the community – 'we're in this together – lets find out together what we want this place to be.' Don't make assumptions about what the community will say, care about, or suggest about their place.
6. Offer something of value (money included) in return for people's time, creativity, knowledge and opinion.

## **INTENTION 4 - SERIOUS PLAY**

7. Allow time and space for serious play – it encourages curiosity, creates a space and time for difficult questions to be asked and considered, leans into peoples intuition about their place, surfaces the unexpected issues and solutions, and supports a talking across difference and consensus-building.
8. Hold a low expectation of people's confidence with creative processes, but always be assured that there will be a high quality of content.

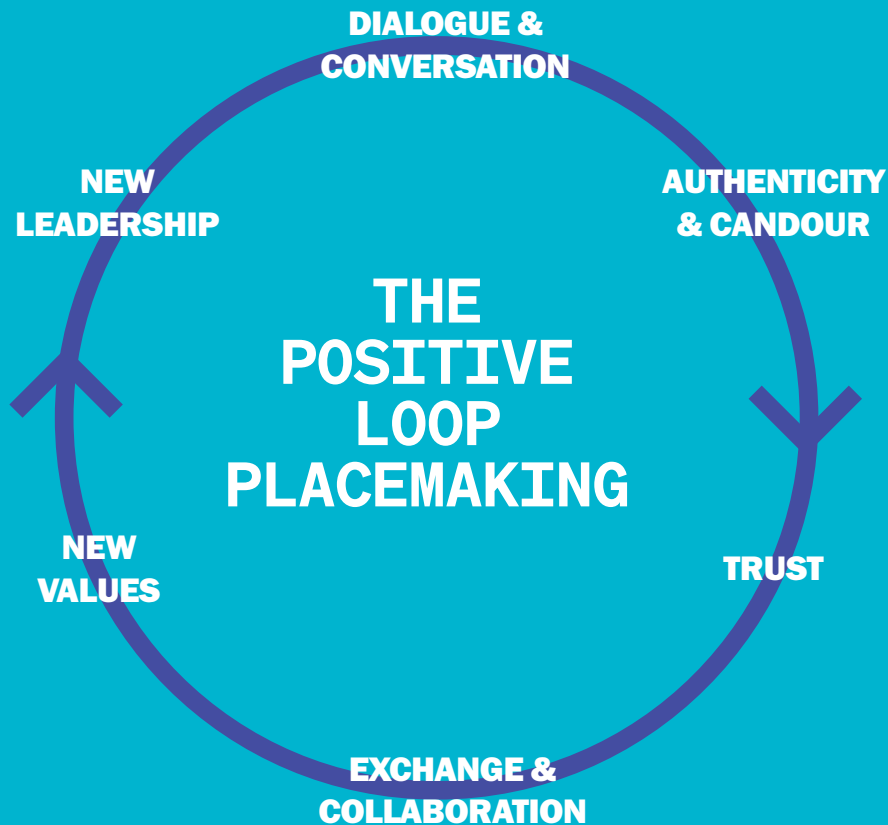
## **INTENTION 5 - UNDERSTANDING THE PAST IN THE PRESENT TO CO-CREATE THE FUTURE**

9. Understanding the history of a place results in people learning more about themselves and their relation to that place and their place in the world.
10. Histories that are hidden from view need to be actively included in planning and policy to ensure their visibility and to stop them from being forgotten.

### THE POSITIVE LOOP OF PLACEMAKING

Placemaking is not a destination, but an evolution that continually loops back and forth.

While placemaking always starts with a conversation, when you're up and running, the conversation is constant, and each stage in the positive loop responds to what has gone before it and helps build the next stage.



## PLACEMAKING HORIZONS

Placemaking works to many horizons, relationships and networks:

**PLACE-BASED, FOCUSING ON CONNECTIONS BETWEEN PEOPLE & ORGANISATIONS**

**ASSET-BASED, FOCUSING ON DEVELOPING LOCAL ASSETS**

**CULTURAL, FOCUSING ON ENHANCING PLACE FOR CULTURAL EXPRESSION**

**COMMUNITY, FOCUSING ON IMPROVING QUALITY OF LIFE**

**ECONOMIC, FOCUSING ON ENHANCING STANDARD OF LIVING**

## CONVERSATION → DIALOGUE → UNDERSTANDING

*'Asking questions doesn't give you answers.  
Talking with people does.'*

*'We're all adults in the room. We know obstacles will come up. We know there will be loses. That's OK – just be honest about it, and share even just the little wins with us.'*

Starting a conversation leads to a deeper and sustained dialogue, which leads to understanding.

Holding 'understanding' as a value:

- Opens up dialogue as a healing and hopeful process
- Avoids the confirmation bias of asking closed questions that lead people to a place you've already arrived at
- Is a two-way process – you are there to understand the community, and they equally want to understand you
- Creates a process that is responsive, not reactive, and is constantly learning, learning again and improving
- Gives time and space to share the wins and the loses of working with place, planning and policy
- Set the conditions for non-combative consensus-building across myriad voices

### CALLING TO ACTION

1. Issues of dog waste, parking and the like will always come up first in conversation as they matter to people – placemakers can create a space for this conversation to happen and progress in new ways.
2. There are always deeper issues in a place – placemakers can create a space to get to that depth.
3. While there are common aspects to placemaking practice, each place has its own particular principles to find out.
4. Any exhibition is another moment to gather people and to continue the conversation.

## TRANSPARENCY → AUTHENTICITY → TRUST

*'We're all adults in the room.'*

*'Trust that the community are experts.'*

*'The community is actually your ally.'*

Being honest about your role, your power and the process matters to people as it shows them respect and creates trust.

Holding 'trust' as a value:

- Joins all as equals in the same endeavour
- Helps manage expectations by being transparent
- Will disabuse all in the process of pre- or mis-conceptions of the other
- Holds community collective action as empowering, not adversarial

### CALLING TO ACTION

5. Start with trust in people and process and work to nurture that trust.
6. Artists and community organisations are part of a trust-building mechanism between the public and councils.
7. The spaces opened up by socially engaged arts and placemaking holds community collective action as empowering, not adversarial.
8. Holding honest conversations about place is essential in creating and maintaining a long long-term positive and meaningful community-commissioner relationship.
9. Share the wins and losses – communities know that change happens, that obstacles appear in a process, and know there is very little money at the council level, so it can have conversations about place with this honesty.



## VALUE → COLLABORATION → EXCHANGE

*'A small amount of money will work hard,  
but this is not the cheap option'*

*'Working with a listening and supportive funder, it's a power  
partnership where we're all working to our best'*

Value means more than a financial number, and exchange is both transactional and relational.

Holding 'exchange' as a value:

- The conversation becomes one of different value registers and of mutual exchange
- Brings the varied skills and capacities of all to a working relationship
- Gives standing to artist and community time with in-kind support in tandem with remuneration

### CALLING TO ACTION

- 10.** Be candid about the value of funding – as financial, as in-kind, and as kudos.
- 11.** Work to a transactional as well as relational project balance sheet.
- 12.** Value the passion and dedication of artists and communities, and pay and reward both for their time and expertise.
- 13.** Ask how funding and payment systems don't help and change them.

## SCALE → TIME → DWELL

*'This work goes at different speeds, fast and slow and  
back again, at the same time. But it does need to set  
its own pace. It can't be rushed'*

Asking big questions requires time, relationships and resource.

Holding 'dwell' as a value:

- Means that conversations with communities can happen sooner rather than later – a rule of thumb, if you think now is the time to start this conversation, you are a step too late
- Builds in necessary time for people to consider, expand and recollect their thoughts about place
- Gives time for practitioners to become immersed in a place – and to bring commissioners along on that journey too

### CALLING TO ACTION

- 14.** Come to the artist or placemaker earlier in the process – the sooner you can work in partnership the better.
- 15.** Duration and timeframe is the prime consideration of commissioning.
- 16.** Small, slow processes are tactical and necessary and should not be thought lacking in quality, potential or value.
- 17.** Build in time to share what you have done with communities and with the public, and think with the participants about what form this will take.
- 18.** Even if one is from the place in question, to spend time in the place is imperative to understand it and the people of it.

## NEIGHBOURLINESS → RELATIONSHIPS → NETWORK LEADERSHIP

*'Council people seem to forget that they are our neighbours, someone's neighbours – why would they give us something they wouldn't want in their own neighbourhood?'*

*'Where strangers become companions'*

*'It's all just people stuff'*

A placemaking process is galvanising and generative and creates a new type of collective leadership.

Holding network leadership as a value:

- Offers a smart way to better reflect what people want to experience in place
- Holds the potential decision-making beyond the capacity of the individual or organisation
- Is a change-making process that leverages relationships to transform our world

### CALLING TO ACTION

- 19.** Consider yourself as a neighbour to the communities you work with – think of a project through the question of what would you want or accept in your own neighbourhood?
- 20.** Work to the place, asset, cultural, community and economic horizons of placemaking.
- 21.** To be truly relevant and representative, creative decision-making needs to reflect – in composition as well as process - the people it exists to serve.

## A FRAMEWORK FOR COLLABORATION

In any project there is project management and project collaboration. It is essential that all people involved know what they have accountability to and responsibility for, with whom, when, and why.

### STEP 1: IDENTIFY THE WHY AND WHOM

As with any kind of collaboration, you must agree on the 'why' first. What is the aim of your collaboration? What is the result you both want to see at the end? Who is bringing what to the table? Or: what is the added value of each of the partners in the partnership?

### STEP 2: SET AND PRIORITIZE GOALS

This is the time to define the project scope and set the project aims (what you hope to achieve) and objectives (the actions you will take in order to achieve the aims). It must be clear here to all how that result can be achieved better together. Are there any gaps in the partnership skillset? Now is the time to identify any more partners needed, and to identify all the wider stakeholders.

### STEP 3: DEFINE DELIVERABLES

Define the role of each partner, define the tasks of each partner – who will do what, how and when? How is the reporting set up: who will report to whom, how, and when?

Assess your available resources, create a resource plan, and delegate work according to available resources.

This is the time to create a project budget, define the available budget for each partner, nominate budget holders and responsibilities. Who will pay to whom, when and on what conditions?

### STEP 4: CREATE THE PROJECT SCHEDULE

Develop a joint work plan and timeline and identify issues and complete a risk assessment.

### STEP 5: PRESENT THE PROJECT PLAN TO STAKEHOLDERS

Hold an implementation meeting for all people involved through the process so people know faces and names, and who is doing what and when. Agree and sign contracts, get all paperwork in order before project starts.

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# CREATIVE PLACEMAKING

TOOLS FOR POLICY ENGAGEMENT

