



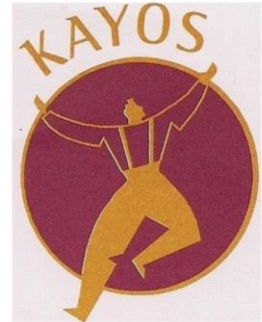
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Report:

Evaluation of the Inverclyde Culture Collective

First 18 months of activity (April 2021 – September 2022)

September 2022

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About Ruthless Research

Ruthless Research is an Edinburgh-based independent research consultancy, through which Ruth Stevenson provides a range of qualitative and quantitative research solutions to organisations who work for the benefit of the community.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Introduction to the evaluation

Inverclyde Culture Collective was established to create a context for artists to experiment with alternate modes of sharing practice, test piloting new local partnership and community projects with no pre-determined outcomes. The funding provides a context for both emerging and established artists to push the boundaries of their practice and think about radical solutions to how we can sensitively collaborate and make work with local communities. Inverclyde Council as the lead applicant in the Inverclyde Culture Collective Steering Group was awarded £275,000 from Creative Scotland to deliver 18 months of Culture Collective activities in Inverclyde, followed by an additional £198,000 for 12 more months of activity.

Independent researcher Ruth Stevenson undertook a mixed methods evaluation of the process, approach and impact of the Inverclyde Culture Collective so far. The methodology comprised a survey with 20 artists, a focus group and 5 artists and depth interviews with 4 artists, a focus group with 4 strategic partners, a survey with 40 participants, a depth interview with 1 local decision-maker, a paired depth interview with project staff, an Activity Snapshot form completed by all 18 projects, 4 case studies, postcode analysis and other internal data.

Setting up the Inverclyde Culture Collective

The Inverclyde Creative Producer and the Activities Coordinator are employed to facilitate the Inverclyde Culture Collective, and are hosted by CVS Inverclyde.

In total 18 projects have been undertaken by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far. Alongside the various project partners, 45 freelance employment opportunities were created by Inverclyde Culture Collective. 39 individual artists took up these 45 opportunities, undertaking an estimated 3,672 paid hours of work.

The commissioned artists told us that they felt very well supported by Inverclyde Culture Collective, with key elements of support including:

- Fair payment
- Being a highly supportive employer
- Brokering connections
- Assistance with practicalities
- Flexible working
- Collaboration opportunities

With regards the open-ended exploratory creative approach taken by Inverclyde Culture Collective, only 60% of the artists had worked in this way before, but 95% told us that *overall this process was positive for me and my practice*. Feeling trusted and autonomous was appreciated as a form of professional respect, which perhaps enabled ambition of approach as 85% agreed that *I pushed the boundaries of my own practice* and 70% agreed that *I implemented unusual or radical approaches*.

Challenges were minimal and typically resolved during delivery, and these included:

- Payment arrangements, for some.
- The length of the application process, for some.
- Disinterest in using the artist Slack channel, for some.

The key piece of feedback provided was that the artists would like to have more opportunities to meet, share and network with one another.

Objective 1: Arts and cultural organisations and creative freelancers will have built sustainable partnerships with other sectors, agencies and organisations in the place, and arts and culture will be fully reflected in local plans and strategies.

Inverclyde Culture Collective was built on a foundation of the strategic planning that had already happened locally, and it is fortunate that Inverclyde's plans fit very well with the intentions of the national Culture Collective funding stream. When Inverclyde Culture Collective was established it consequently felt natural to situate it within the Local Authority structure as a continuation of existing work. As such, all of Inverclyde Culture Collective's strategic direction aligns closely and is intrinsically intertwined with local strategic plans (including the Inverclyde Arts and Creativity Strategy 2017 and the Action Plan 2021). It is certain that some local decision-makers are supportive of the arts and there is a lot of good will surrounding of Inverclyde Culture Collective's work.

Inverclyde Culture Collective provides a great opportunity for local partners to work together strengthening existing relationships and building new ones. Commissioning 39 individual freelance artists also contributes to broadening and developing this vibrant arts ecosystem in the area with the bringing in of talent and the cross-fertilisation of ideas. All of these partners and artists have also forged relationships with other individuals and organisations across the regions, both intentionally and organically, most often in schools and the third sector. This has opened up access to further relationships and resources and audiences, upon which new ideas are already being built. Through this evaluation the partners made clear that they felt that a lot of excellent grassroots progress had been made but that more work must be done to make a significant and long-lasting difference to both the broader cross-sectoral policy landscape and to the local arts infrastructure. It is hoped that this will be more of a priority in the coming year.

Objective 2: Local creative organisations and freelancers will be more resilient.

The creation of 18 new projects, 2 salaried roles and 45 new freelance opportunities in Inverclyde has provided significant opportunity for the creative community in Inverclyde to develop and flourish. 95% of the artists agreed that *I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role*, demonstrating the scale of what can be directly attributed to the presence of Inverclyde Culture Collective.

In organisational terms, Inverclyde Culture Collective has provided funding at a difficult time (during Covid and Covid recovery, and a time of financial crisis) and is has also established opportunities to build on in terms of follow-on projects, new relationships and audience development. Evaluating the work also documents the progress, which will lead to further learning and potentially further funding prospects. All of this strengthens the base from which local creative organisations are grounded.

The provision of local employment opportunities for freelance creatives has been a real strength of the Inverclyde Culture Collective. The freelance creatives have had well-supported opportunities to develop their creative practice and build professional networks in a way that has had a tangible impact – as 90% of the artists agreed that *it has helped me to bounce back from the Covid pandemic period* and 80% of the artists agreed that *this experience has led to further paid work*. More specifically, many emerging and potentially marginalized artists have been awarded these roles, meaning that those facing the most barriers have benefitted.

Objective 3: Inequality and barriers to access will be addressed, and everyone given the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by arts and culture.

An estimated 939 individuals took part in 375 sessions across 18 new projects so far, and as mentioned before 95% of the artists agreed that *I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role*. Without Inverclyde Culture Collective much of this activity would not have taken place, and local people would not have had these opportunities to be inspired by arts and culture. A number of the projects focused on working with specific marginalized groups or individuals, or reducing barriers to access, in response to well-understood local need. 59% of locations used for activity were situated in SIMD decile 1 (the most deprived data-zone) and 44% of the projects focused on engaging with communities with low arts engagement and barriers to access. Those that took part in project activity were extremely positive about their experience and 100% agreed that *it felt easy for me to take part* which is testament to the inclusive ethos of Inverclyde Culture Collective and the careful attention that partners and artists put into engagement.

Objective 4: Inverclyde will be a better place to live, work or visit.

Inverclyde Culture Collective has established a range of new creative opportunities for local people to attend, where they can enjoy trying new things and learning new skills and meeting their neighbours. The vast majority of the Inverclyde Culture Collective projects have been directly responsive to Inverclyde as a place, including the local community, environment and historical context. Inverclyde has provided inspiration and the creative research-led process has connected local people to place, no doubt giving them a greater appreciation of Inverclyde's environment and resources. The outputs of this process have also left a lasting legacy, through tangible artworks and exhibitions, and pockets of small-scale regeneration, as well as a less tangible but equally important sense of local pride. Additionally, Inverclyde Culture Collective has created 45 new employment opportunities for freelance artists, and a significant effort has been made to provide a fair, inclusive and enjoyable working environment for the artists locally. This has been extremely successful as the artists have found this to be a very positive, useful and enjoyable experience. In particular Inverclyde Culture Collective's commitment to creative autonomy has been noted and appreciated by the artists, leading to artists feeling trusted and respected. It is likely that this positive working ethos and environment will also have positive ripples beyond the freelancers and into the partner organisations and the wider network.

Concluding remarks

Inverclyde Culture Collective has explored a great variety of new ways of working regionally, and has made substantial progress in delivering the objectives that it set out to deliver. There is no doubt more work to do in drawing the various elements of the Inverclyde Culture Collective together in the coming year to solidify the network and ensure that relationships and activities have a lasting and sustainable legacy. The successes of the Inverclyde Culture Collective can be attributed to the commitment of all concerned in celebrating Inverclyde and its people, and the ethos of open-ended innovation, because this has made the programme of activities feel interesting and highly relevant locally. Kat Boyle and Jack Stancliffe have put substantial care, support and encouragement into maintaining this focus and creating the excellent conditions enabling the Inverclyde Culture Collective to flourish, which has been vital.

Introduction

Creative Scotland with Scottish Government emergency Covid-19 funds launched the Culture Collective pilot programme to support creative practitioners, organisations and communities to work together across Scotland to help shape the future of local cultural life. The programme focus is on community engaged creative activity, supporting 26 lead organisations in Scotland working collaboratively to develop ways of responding to the impacts of the ongoing pandemic and establish a network of creative practitioners, organisations and communities, working together to create a positive difference locally and nationally in response to Covid-19. Inverclyde Council as the lead applicant in the Inverclyde Culture Collective Steering Group was awarded £275,000 from Creative Scotland to deliver 18 months of Culture Collective activities in Inverclyde, followed by an additional £198,000 for 12 more months of activity. The funding has been allocated to support the following objectives:

1. Arts and cultural organisations and creative freelancers will have built sustainable partnerships with other sectors, agencies and organisations in the place, and arts and culture will be fully reflected in local plans and strategies.
2. Local creative organisations and freelancers will be more resilient.
3. Inequality and barriers to access will be addressed, and everyone given the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by arts and culture.
4. Inverclyde will be a better place to live, work or visit.

Inverclyde Culture Collective was established to create a context for artists to experiment with alternate modes of sharing practice, test piloting new local partnership and community projects with no pre-determined outcomes. The funding provides a context for both emerging and established artists to push the boundaries of their practice and think about radical solutions to how we can sensitively collaborate and make work with local communities. The Aim of Inverclyde Culture Collective is to investigate key areas specific to Inverclyde: Health and Social Care (with a focus on adult Mental Health), Young People, Regeneration of communities, outdoor work and engaging with Inverclyde communities that have Low Arts Engagement and barriers to access.

Methodology

Independent researcher Ruth Stevenson was commissioned to undertake an evaluation of the process, approach and impact of the Inverclyde Culture Collective as a snapshot of the first 18 months of activity. A mixed methods methodology was utilised, with data collected as follows:

- Survey with 20 commissioned artists;
- Focus group with 5 artists and depth interviews with 4 artists;
- Focus group with 4 strategic partners;
- Survey with activity 40 participants;
- Activity Snapshot form completed by all 18 projects;
- Case studies (interviews and input from 9 individuals);
- Depth interview with 1 local decision-maker;
- Paired depth interview with project staff;
- Postcode analysis;
- Other feedback and evaluative data collected in the course of project delivery.

Key themes arising from this process are summarised in this report.

KEY FINDINGS

Background

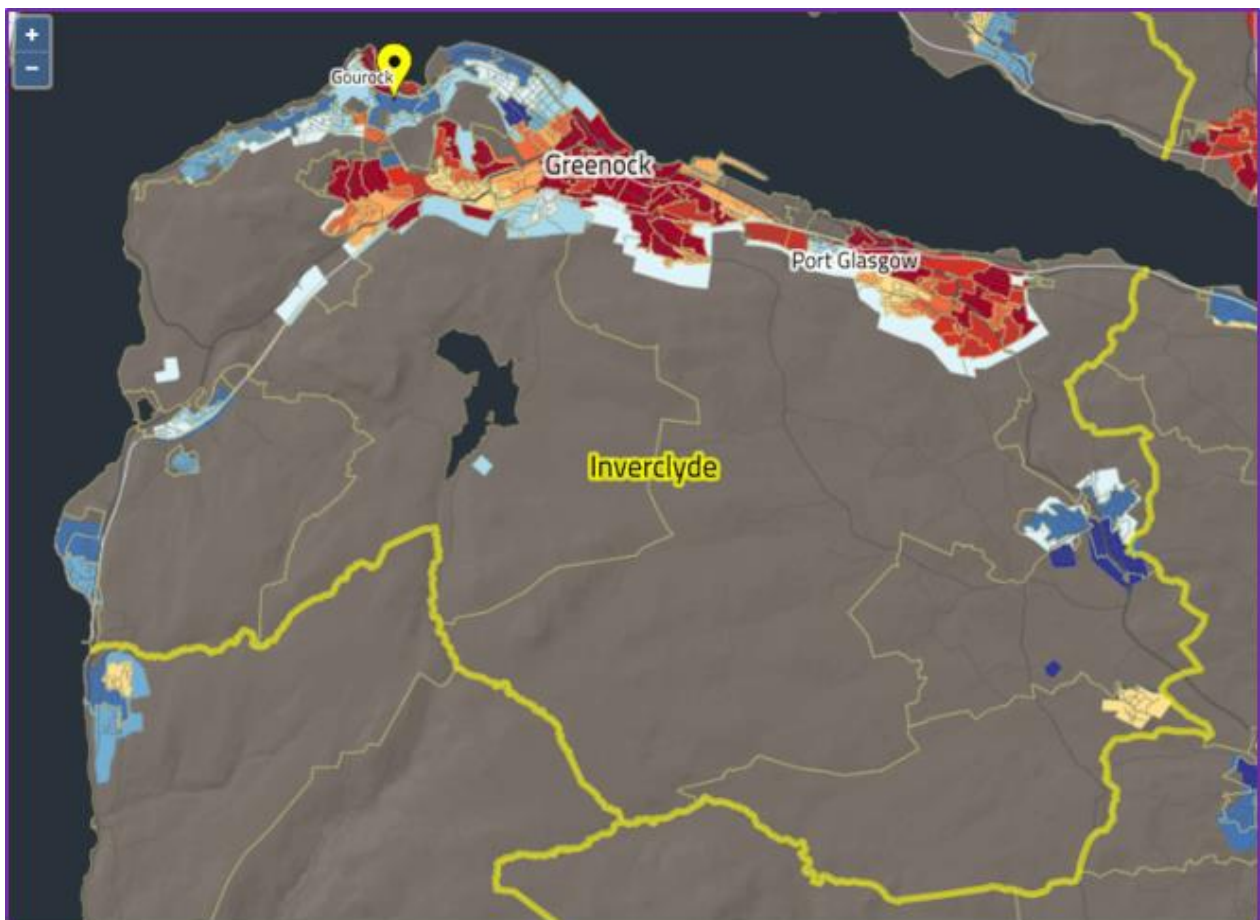
The following section outlines the background to the Inverclyde Culture Collective programme.

About Inverclyde

Located on the west coast of Scotland, Inverclyde enjoys beautiful scenery, excellent transport links, and some of the best walking and sporting activities in Europe. A strong sense of community identity exists within Inverclyde and in local neighbourhoods in particular. Local citizens are rightly proud of their area and its history, which is steeped in centuries of maritime and industrial endeavour.

However, the area is subject to a high degree of de-population, and a lack of local employment opportunities and other markers of multiple deprivation are the main causes of this. Deprivation levels vary significantly across the area with residents in Greenock and Port Glasgow experiencing some of the worst income inequality in Scotland.

The following Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) map of data-zones across Inverclyde shows that much of the area falls into the first and second deciles (in red), with these areas being the most deprived 20% of all data-zones in Scotland.



Background to Inverclyde Culture Collective

Alana Ward

Libraries, Educational Development and Arts Manager, Inverclyde Council

“Inverclyde’s strong focus on arts, culture and heritage in recent years can be traced back to our three-year Place Partnership in 2014-2017, which was led by a management consortium of local arts stakeholders.

At the same time Inverclyde Council was working towards an Outcomes Improvement Plan for 2017-22, and as culture was recognised as being an important local focus it became one of the three priorities in the Outcomes Improvement Plan. Each of these three priorities had a delivery group, and the Inverclyde Cultural Partnership was the delivery group that took forward arts and culture in Inverclyde. An Arts Sub-group made up of local partners was then set up, and this group developed an Arts Action Plan 2021-23 which was forward-thinking and aspirational.

We had some money left over from the Place Partnership so it was agreed that we would take on an Arts Coordinator with that money to help move the group along. Kat Boyle was appointed as Arts Coordinator and held that role for about a year, at which point we were thinking about how we would continue to fund the role. This coincided with the launch of the Culture Collective opportunity, and Creative Scotland were keen for us to put in a bid. When we saw the outcomes of Culture Collective it was exactly what we were already trying to do, exactly what we were already trying to achieve. We were able to pull out actions from our Arts Action Plan and build these into our Culture Collective bid. Such a natural fit and such perfect timing.

It had made sense for Inverclyde Council to run the Cultural Partnership, so then it made sense for Inverclyde Council to lead on the Inverclyde Culture Collective. We had an established partnership model with associated policy and procedures and budget management, so we were already demonstrating that this could work effectively.

Kat went from being Arts Coordinator to Creative Producer for Culture Collective, and later we took on Jack Stancliffe as Activities Coordinator, with these roles based at CVS Inverclyde. Having Kat and Jack based at CVS Inverclyde has had a lot of benefits - there is infrastructure already in place there, plus the organisation is very well connected into the third sector and third sector initiatives. Having partners in the third sector is key, and another thing that is unique about our model that works well.

Being part of Inverclyde Council has a lot of benefits too. We can access support on the Council side including legal support, HR support, and Corporate Comms support. We can also tap into the Council departments if we need to seek advice, for example around insurance or working with vulnerable people or using community spaces. There are regulations that we need to work under because we are part of the Council but we’ve put in place effective processes. We’ve worked through the challenges and not yet come across something we couldn’t deal with.

We report formally through the Council and Community Planning structures so the decision-makers see everything that Inverclyde Culture Collective is doing – such as new research we are publishing on arts activity in the area, and the links between arts and health and social care - and this impacts on how visible we are to elected members in the area. It crystallises in minds how much good work is going on culturally and feedback has been universally positive.”

The following diagram outlines the aforementioned relationships:



Inverclyde Culture Collective is managed by a Steering Group which includes all partners and is Chaired by Inverclyde Council's Libraries, Educational Development and Arts Manager.

The lead partners for the Inverclyde Culture Collective are:

- Inverclyde Council
- CVS Inverclyde
- RIG Arts
- Beacon Arts Centre
- Inverclyde Youth Theatre (Kayos)

Projects undertaken so far

In total 18 projects have been undertaken by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far.

The following projects are now complete:

Name of project	Delivery partner	Description of project
Development of Godspell	Inverclyde Youth Theatre (Kayos)	Development of the theatre piece Godspell.
Street theatre	Inverclyde Youth Theatre (Kayos)	Street theatre for Galoshans '21 and the Beacon's Meliora Festival weekend.
LIGHTWORKX (Trancnd with Crow Cottage Arts)	Beacon Arts Centre	Engagement with 8 schools on themes around community, connectedness, geography, cosmos, physics and light to collaboratively create artworks. A large 'saltire' was beamed from two schools, with guerrilla projector displays created by the children.
Inverclyde Arts & Creativity: Where are we now? (SWOT Analysis Report)	CVS Inverclyde	Updated analysis or 'snap shot' of strengths and weaknesses of the arts in Inverclyde.
Creative Research: Health & Social Care (Cross partnership conversations looking at creativity as a driver for improving health & wellbeing)	CVS Inverclyde	A series of conversations with health and social care partners looking at Creativity as a driver for improving Health and wellbeing.
Clyde Muirshiel Outdoor Arts	CVS Inverclyde	Outdoor arts residency X2 artists partnering with local cultural, heritage and environmental agencies.
Emergent Artist Development Bursary (2021)	CVS Inverclyde	Emergent artist (within first 5 years of their practice) hosted at an artform-relevant partner organisation.
Established Artist Development Bursary (2021)	CVS Inverclyde	Mid-Career artist (All Artforms) hosted at an artform-relevant partner organisation.
Writer In Residence	CVS Inverclyde	12 month Writer-in-Residence post based in Inverclyde libraries.
Clowning Workshops	Inverclyde Youth Theatre (Kayos)	Work with an artist to build in new skills for young people in clowning.
Puppetry Workshops	Inverclyde Youth Theatre (Kayos)	Work with an artist to build in new skills for young people in puppetry.
Galoshans Festival Bursary (2021)	RIG Arts	X2 Local Artist development opportunities to be part of the festival

The following projects are ongoing or still to be actioned across Sept 2022-2023 as part of extension funding:

Name of project	Delivery partner	Description of project
Creativity in Mind	RIG Arts	A pilot arts mental health project for adults in Inverclyde, using creativity as a means of self-expression to support recovery, manage symptoms, and build self-esteem.
Open Studios	RIG Arts	Building upon the summer open studio opportunity from 2018 when RIG Arts handed their studio to young people in Inverclyde and invited them to come in and be creative utilising RIG's space and materials.
Inside Out	RIG Arts	Weekly intergenerational workshops focusing on the creative regeneration of community greenspaces of the Auchmountain Glen area.
Beacon Art Group	Beacon Arts Centre	An inclusive, friendly and participant-led visual art group for adults (16+) meeting weekly at the Beacon Arts Centre.
Outdoor Arts Artist Led Events at Gourock Amphitheatre	Beacon Arts Centre	X3 Test Artist Curated Events
EDI Researcher in Residence	Beacon Arts Centre	Research topic be approaches to removing the barriers to wider community participation in the arts and developing a sustainable model of community-led theatre
Feed into outdoor events at Gourock Amphitheatre	Kayos Youth Theatre	By working with an artist to test out new performances
Writer In Residence	CVS Inverclyde	12 month Writer-in-Residence post based in Inverclyde libraries.
Artist In Residence	CVS Inverclyde	12 month artist residency in Inverclyde.
HSCP and Creative Practice Residencies	CVS Inverclyde	Informed by Health and Social Care Research and conversations. X2 Projects: Sian Yeshe with IFIT Inverclyde a criminal justice and throughcare organisation And Elina Bry with Your Voice: Recovery
Community Practices Residencies	CVS Inverclyde	Local Artist Small Projects to work specifically with and respond to community groups ideas. X 3 Projects: Ben Vardi (Grieve Road), Amy Bruning (Barnardo's Inverclyde) and Greer Pester (Coronation Park, Port Glasgow)
Galoshans Festival Bursary (2022)	RIG Arts	X2 Local Artist development opportunities to be part of the festival
Emergent Artist Development Bursary (2022)	CVS Inverclyde	Emergent artist (within first 5 years of their practice) hosted at an artform-relevant partner organisation.

Established Artist Development Bursary (2022)	CVS Inverclyde	Mid-Career artist (All Artforms) hosted at an artform-relevant partner organisation.
Watt Institution - Black History Month	Inverclyde Council	Artist in Residence
Front: Re-imaging Greenock High Street.	CVS Inverclyde	Artist/Curator in Residence - Responding to the Highstreets/Town Centre
Attempts: Events by Young People	CVS Inverclyde	X1 Experienced Artist 'Sessions with Young People'
HSCP/Arts: Compassionate Inverclyde - Artist Residency	CVS Inverclyde	'No One Grieves Alone' Festival linked to Greenspace Scotland 'Remembering Together' COVID Memorial
HSCP/Arts: Art Packs Test Pilot: Pathways and Communication	CVS Inverclyde	Guided exposure to art resources working in partnership with HSCP/3rd Sector Partners / Artist to develop 'Art Packs'
HSCP/Arts: Medical Narratives and Chronic Disease	CVS Inverclyde	Artist Research and Participatory Project with Port Glasgow Health Centre
Creative Minds Festival	Beacon Arts Centre	Summer 2023
Beacon Performance and Dance Development Bursary	Beacon Arts Centre	X2 opportunities for artists

Employment opportunities

The Inverclyde Creative Producer and the Activities Coordinator are employed (each two days per week) to facilitate the Inverclyde Culture Collective, and are hosted by CVS Inverclyde.

In addition, 45 freelance employment opportunities were created by Inverclyde Culture Collective across the 18 projects undertaken so far. 39 individual artists took up these 45 opportunities, with 6 artists holding two roles each. The greatest number of opportunities were created by the projects Open Studios (9 artists employed) and Inside Out (7 artists employed).

In total an estimated 3,672 paid hours of work were undertaken by the freelance artists, which is an average of 82 hours per opportunity and 204 hours per project.

Partnership working

The Inverclyde Collective worked with community partners, including: Auchmountain Glen AGM & Women's Group, Auchmountain Community Resource Centre Youth Club, IAMH, Mind Mosaic, SAMH, Your Voice, Turning Point, and eight Inverclyde Schools and Nurseries, IFIT Criminal Justice, Barnardo's Inverclyde, Port Glasgow Health Centre, Inverclyde Council Locality Planning, Clyde Muirshiel Regional Park, The Pantry (Inverclyde Development Trust), Belville Community Garden, and Inverclyde Libraries (Bookbug).

Scope and reach of delivery

The following section describes the scope and reach of the projects delivered by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far.

Projects undertaken by Inverclyde Culture Collective

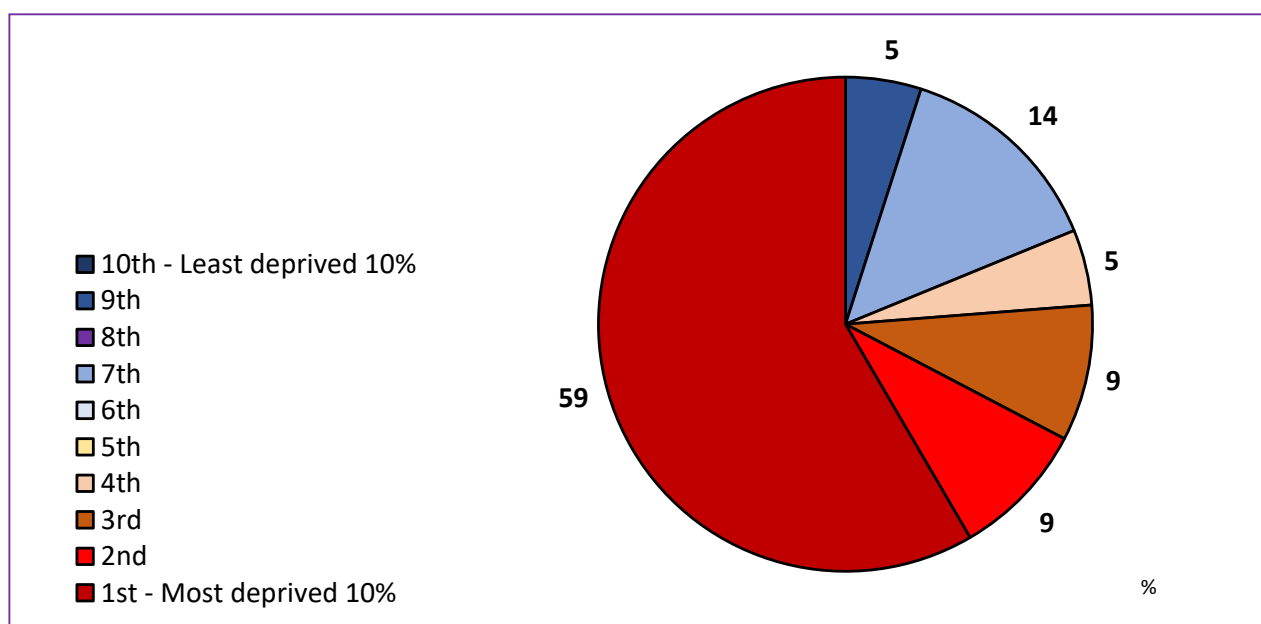
As outlined earlier in the report, work has been undertaken on 18 projects so far as part of Inverclyde Culture Collective. Of these 10 (56%) are already complete, and 8 (44%) are still ongoing. 14 further projects are still to be actioned across Sept 2022-2023 as part of extension funding.

In total 375 individual Inverclyde Culture Collective sessions have been held, which is an average of 21 sessions per project with a range from 2 to 86 sessions per project. The projects holding the most sessions so far were Writer in Residence (86 sessions), Creativity in Mind (65 sessions) and Open Studios (56 sessions).

An estimated 939 individuals took part in these projects. This is based on an estimate of individuals attending each project, so there may have been some crossover of individuals attending multiple projects.

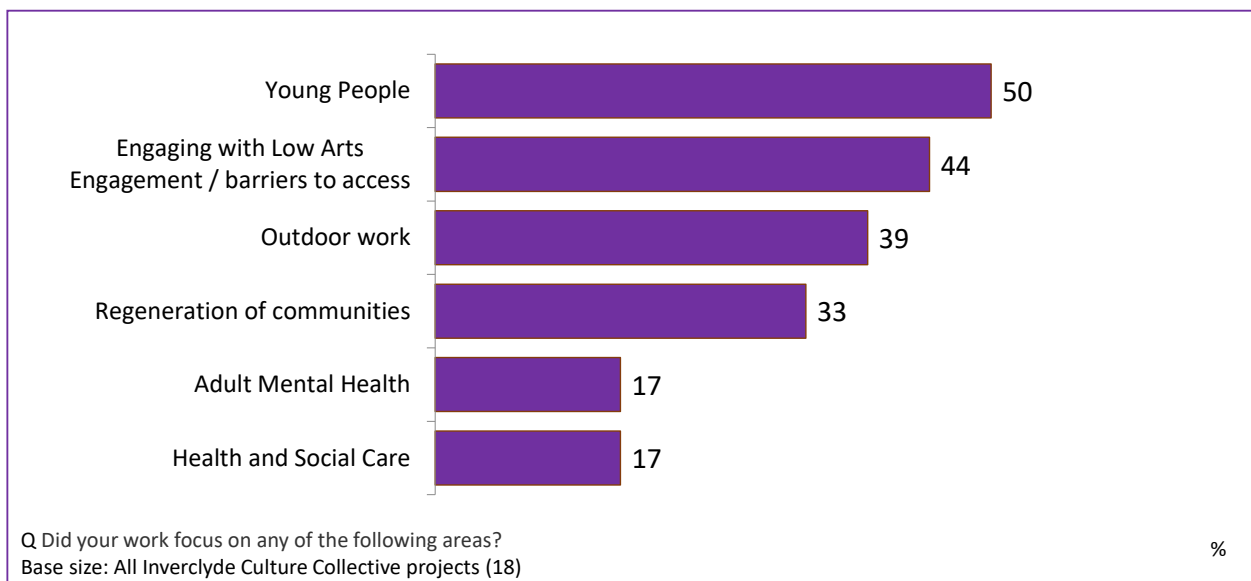
The sessions took place in 25 unique locations across Inverclyde (mapped later in this report), which is an average of 2.6 locations per project. Multiple projects took place at locations including RIG Arts (7 projects), Beacon Arts (4 projects), South West Library (3 projects) and Greenock Cut Visitor Centre (3 projects). In addition three projects had remote/online elements, and one project held a session at the Kelvingrove Art Gallery in Glasgow.

Analysis of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data-zones for each of these 25 unique locations shows that much of the work has been delivered in the first decile (in red, below), with these areas being amongst the most deprived 10% of all data-zones in Scotland.



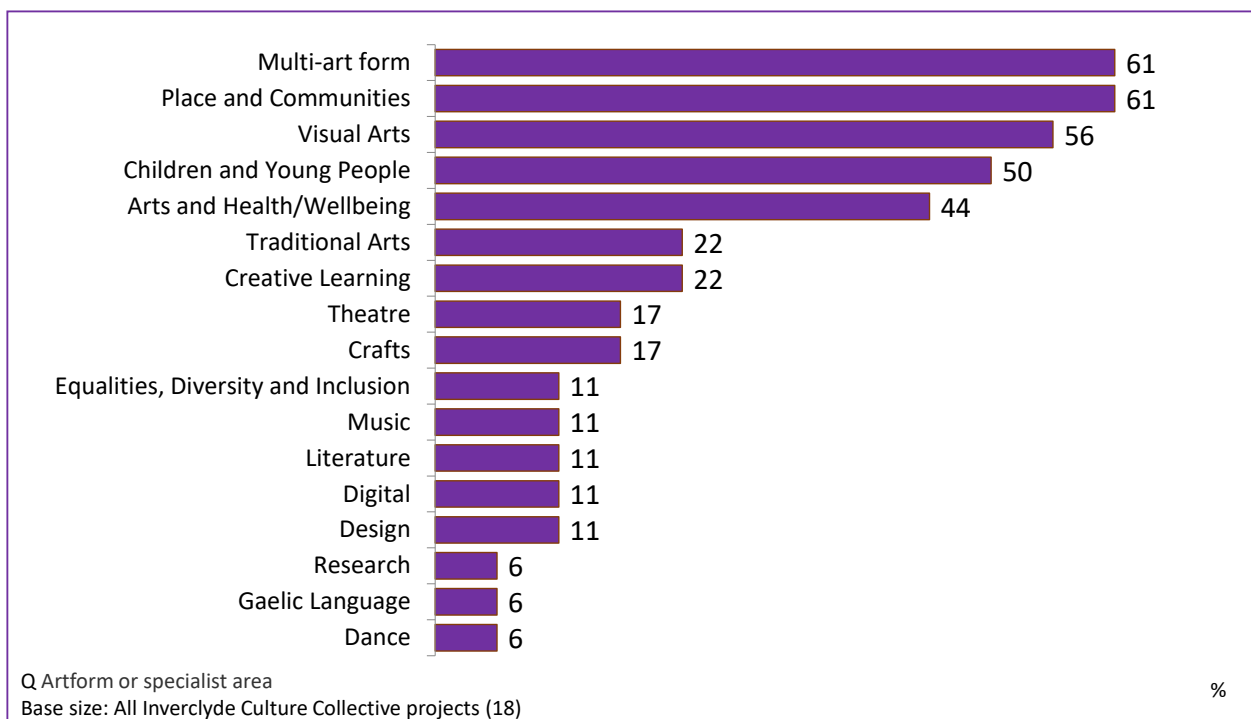
Type of work undertaken

The 18 Inverclyde Culture Collective projects focused on the following areas:



The projects most often focused on young people (50% of the projects), engaging with communities with Low Arts Engagement and barriers to access (44%) and outdoor work (39%).

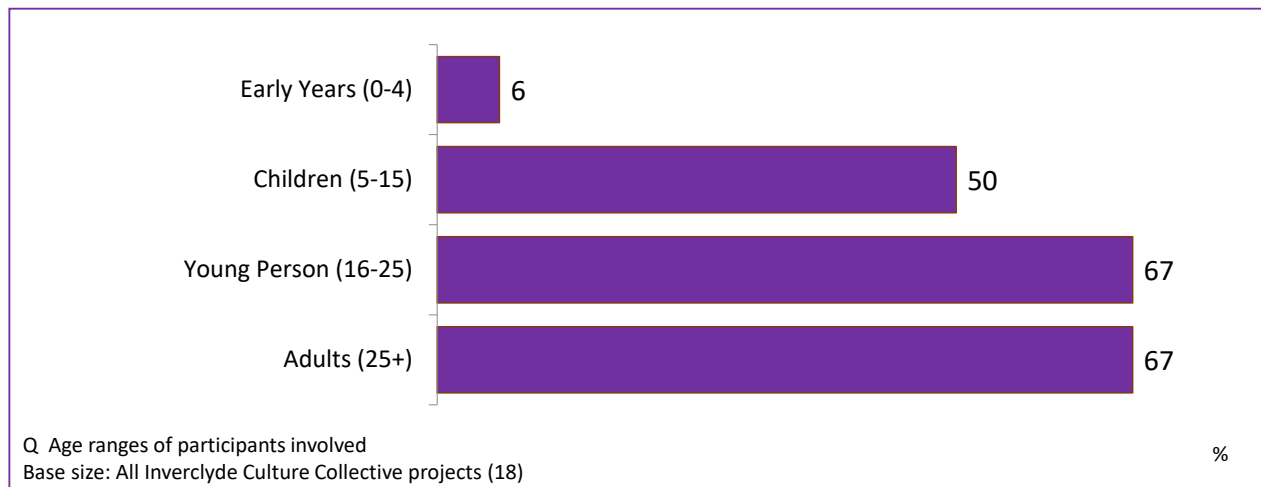
The Inverclyde Culture Collective projects worked with the following specialist areas:



The projects were most often multi-art form (61% of the projects) or worked with place and communities (61%), visual arts (56%), children and young people (50%) or arts and health / wellbeing (44%).

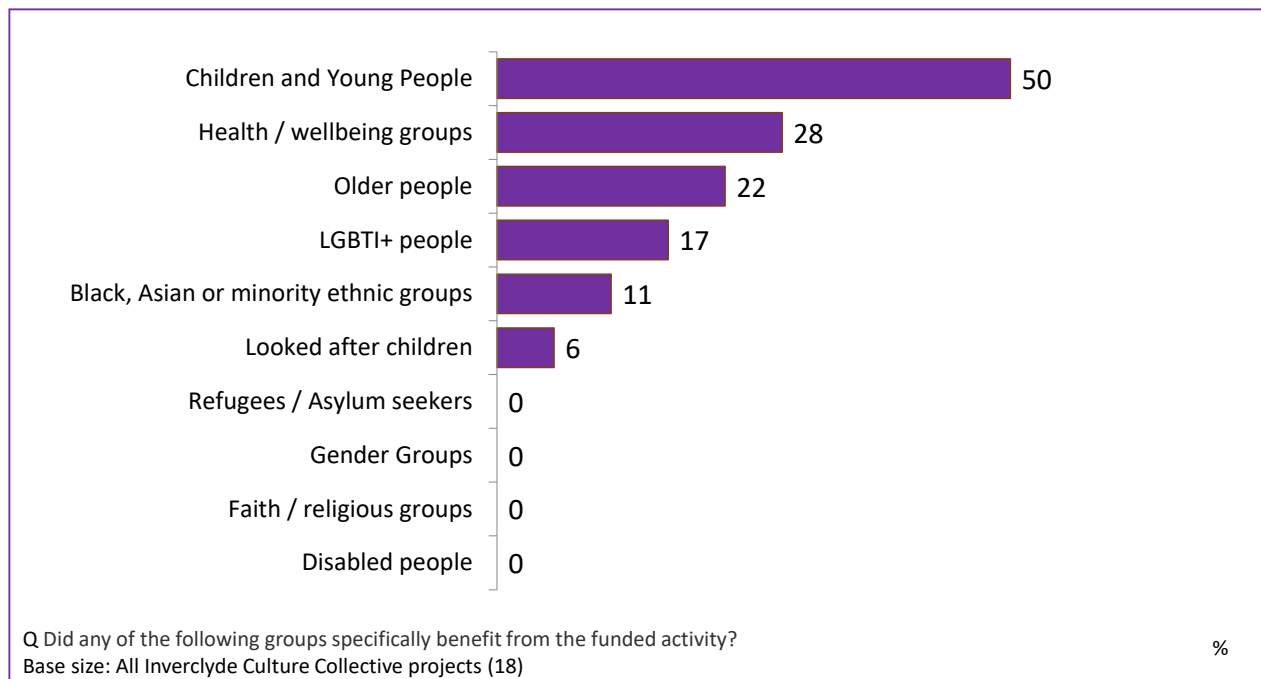
Reach of delivery

The Inverclyde Culture Collective projects worked with the following age groups:



The projects most often worked with adults (67% of the projects) and young people (67%) of the projects. Very few (6%) of the projects worked with early years.

The Inverclyde Culture Collective projects worked with the minoritized groups:



The minoritized groups that most often specifically benefitted from the Inverclyde Culture Collective projects were children and young people (50%), health / wellbeing groups (28%) and older people (17%).

EVALUATING THE INVERCLYDE CULTURE COLLECTIVE MODEL AND PROCESS

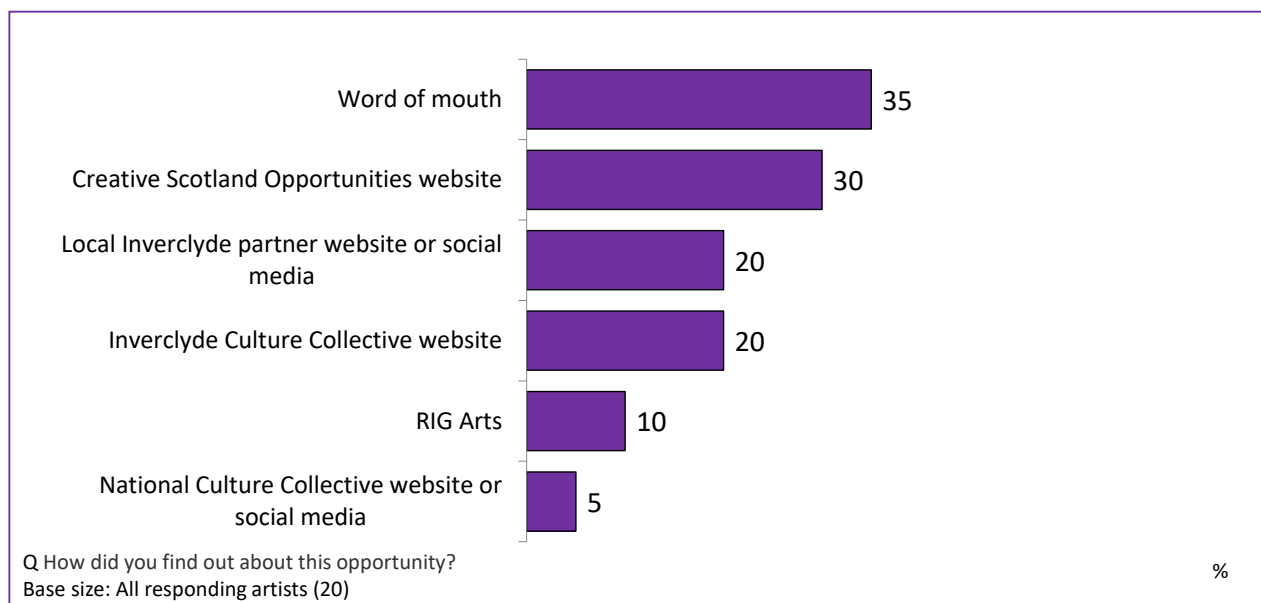
The following section evaluates the Inverclyde Culture Collective model and process.

Employment of artists

Recruitment of artists

Pre-application Jack set up a meeting with a group of artists who were looking to apply. He ran through the application process and answered any specific questions. (Artist)

We asked the artists to tell us how they found out about the opportunity to work with Inverclyde Culture Collective:

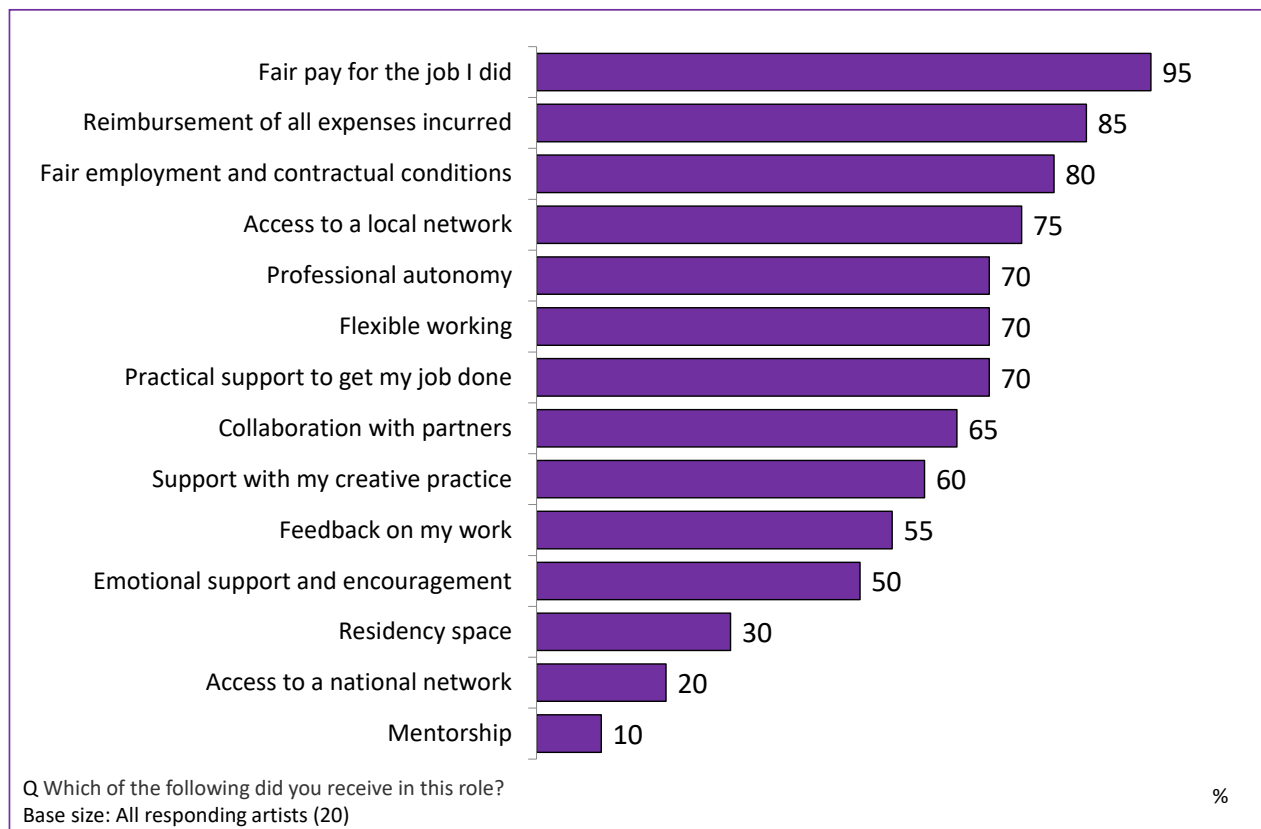


The artists found out about this opportunity through a variety of sources, most often word of mouth (35%) or the Creative Scotland Opportunities website (30%).

80% of the artists found the recruitment and contacting process to be straightforward.

Types of support received

We asked the artists to tell us what sort of employment support they received in undertaking their role with Inverclyde Culture Collective:



All of the artists (100%) received supportive employment in their role, most often *fair pay for the job I did* (95%), *reimbursement of all expenses incurred* (85%), *fair employment and contractual conditions* (80%) and *access to a local network* (75%).

On average each artist selected 8.4 types of employment support from this list, indicating that individuals received a variety of support.

A supportive employer

Jack and Kat were very much on hand as the project progressed. I felt really supported. I knew I was always able to connect them. They were really good, really helpful answering different questions about anything I needed to ask. (Artist)

The artists found the support that they received from Inverclyde Culture Collective to be “warm” and “really really helpful”. They felt that Inverclyde Culture Collective “have been supportive throughout” and they could “always reach out to someone when we need to”. Inverclyde Culture Collective “checked in every so often” offering “meetings” and “regular conversations” and “chats at various points” to “point me in the right direction”. Artists commented that there was “no pressure” and “I never ever felt it was checking up” but that this

approach was “exactly what I needed” because there was “enough accountability” and “it was a good way to push me on”.

Fair payment

**This is one of the few jobs where I feel like I get fairly paid.
Congrats to you guys for actually paying a wage we can live off! (Artist)**

As highlighted earlier, 95% of the artists told us that they received *fair pay for the job I did* and 85% received *reimbursement of all expenses incurred*.

The artists told us that they were given “a decent amount of budget” and “quite a lot of time” to undertake their projects, which amounted to “a good rate for a serious practitioner” and “a fair payment”. The materials budget was also considered to be “really generous” and “fair for what I wanted to do”.

Brokering connections

**It was really nice the way Jack did it, he took me around Greenock
and introduced me to the support available to me. It was really useful.
I’m not from here so I would have had no clue. (Artist)**

75% of the artists told us that they received *access to a local network*.

Some of the artists mentioned that they appreciated having Inverclyde Culture Collective available as “people who could give me information and make those connections”, particularly if they were not local.

Assistance with practicalities

**It was the very practical support that I had from Inverclyde Culture Collective.
They just made it possible to get on and focus on what I was
trying to create without any of the faff. (Artist)**

70% of the artists told us that they received *practical support to get my job done*.

Inverclyde Culture Collective supported the artists with “dealing with bureaucracy” including “paperwork” and “legal permissions” and “licenses” and “getting my PVG sorted”. They were available “whenever we needed something” including providing “hands-on things like driving or our exhibits”. Consequently, the artists found their projects “logistically very easy” as they “could just get on with it” which was “a relief”.

Flexible working

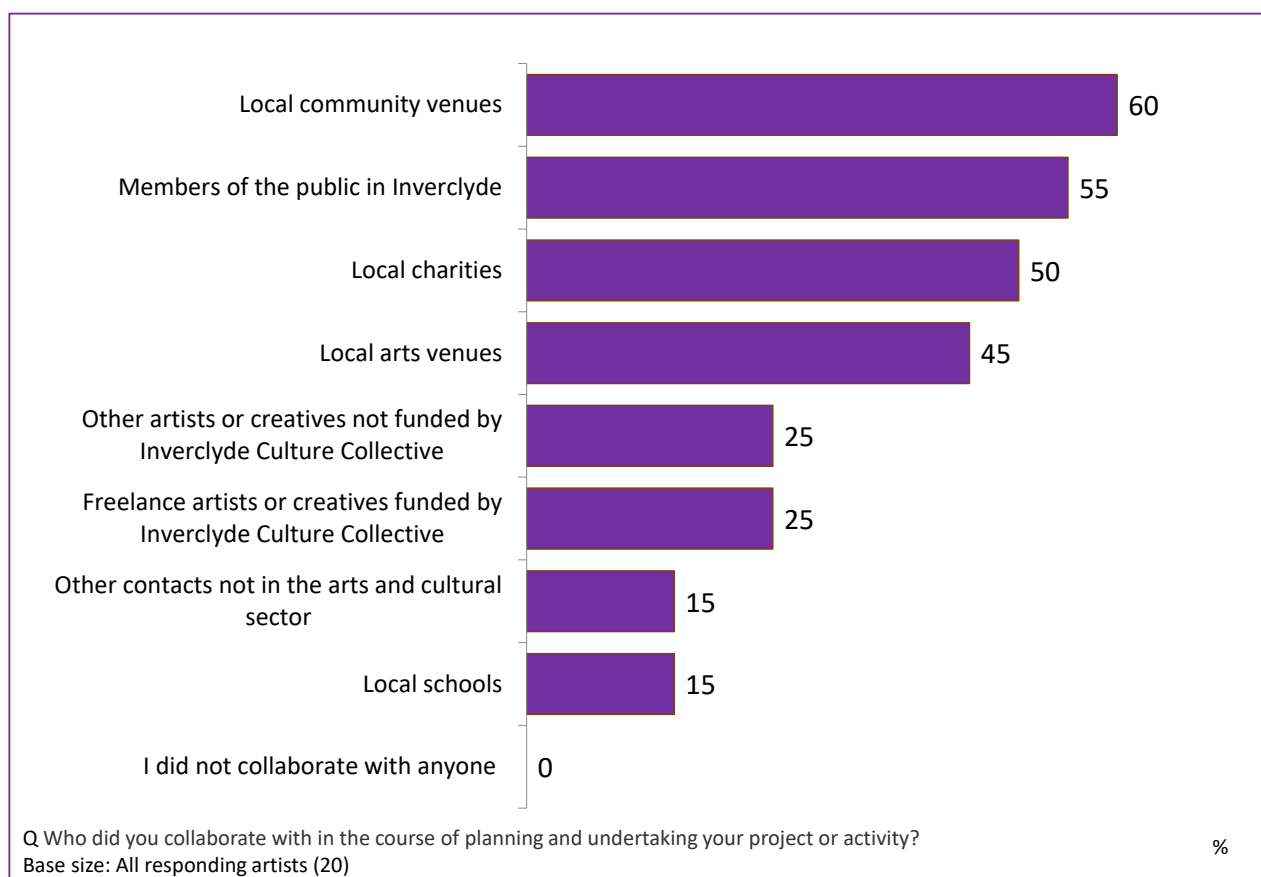
**I haven't been asked to account for my time in any way,
they have trusted me and declared themselves satisfied.
How nice is that, treated as adults and left to get on with it. (Artist)**

70% of the artists told us that they received *flexible working* in their engagement with Inverclyde Culture Collective. They appreciated that “I don’t need to clock in” and “I can just be there at whatever time” and “I wasn’t expected to provide timesheets”. Consequently this way of working “made it easy for me” and “it feels really good to be treated as an adult”.

Collaboration opportunities

65% of the artists told us that they undertook *collaboration with partners*.

We asked the artists to tell us who they had collaborated with during their project.



All (100%) of the artists had collaborated in the course of their project, most often with local community venues (60%), members of the public in Inverclyde (55%), local charities (50%) and local arts venues (45%).

70% received support from someone within the Inverclyde Culture Collective network and 10% received support from someone within the national Culture Collective network.

Reducing barriers to career development in the creative industries

The following section describes ways in which Inverclyde Culture Creative has contributed to reducing barriers to career development in the creative industries.

Opportunities for emerging artists

Inverclyde Culture Collective has provided opportunities for emerging artists. In the survey, 70% of the artists told us that they consider themselves to be emerging artists in the sector, and 30% told us that they consider themselves to be established artists. As some of the emerging artists told us:

- “It was my first residency of this kind.”
- “I didn’t have loads of professional experience yet.”
- “This has been the first larger project that I’ve managed on my own and it has been good to have that independence, it has given me confidence in my own practice.”
- “Working as a creative researcher was a new direction for me, and with the support of the Cultural Collective I was able to deliver a successful project.”

Opportunities for local artists

Inverclyde Culture Collective has provided some opportunities for local artists. In the survey, 35% of the commissioned artists told us that they live within Inverclyde.

Application data is available for eight open call opportunities advertised by CVS Inverclyde. The following maps show the residence of the 56 artists that applied for these opportunities.

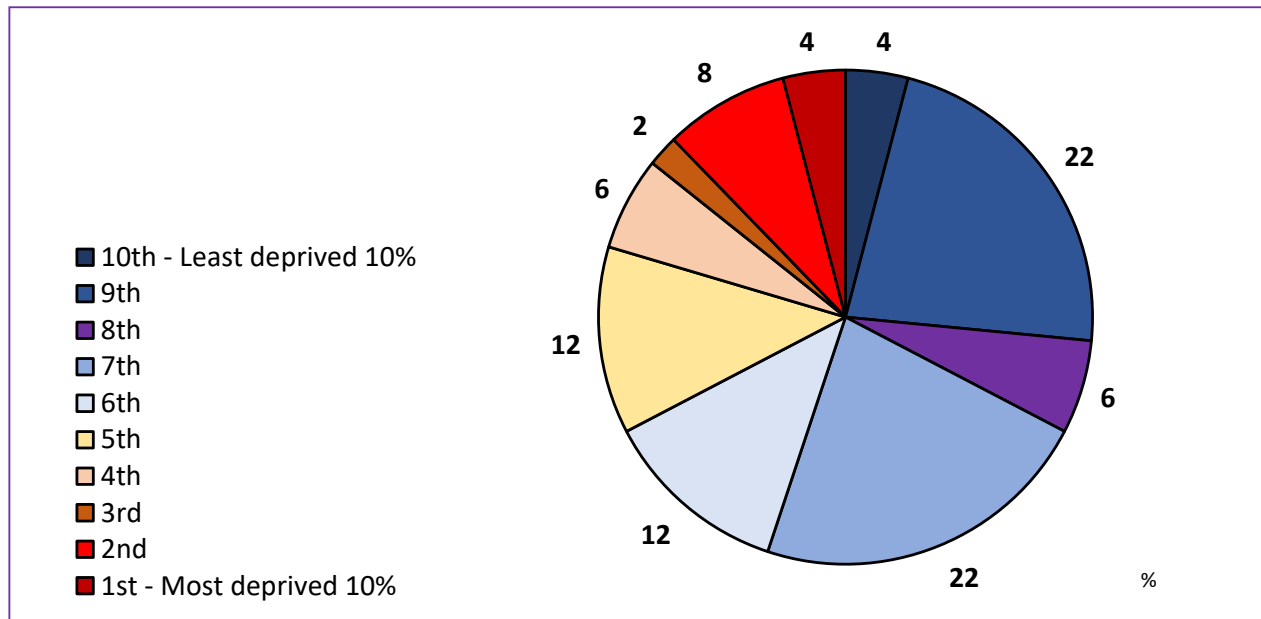


The vast majority of the applicant artists were resident in the West of Scotland around Glasgow or Inverclyde, with 16 applicants living in Inverclyde.

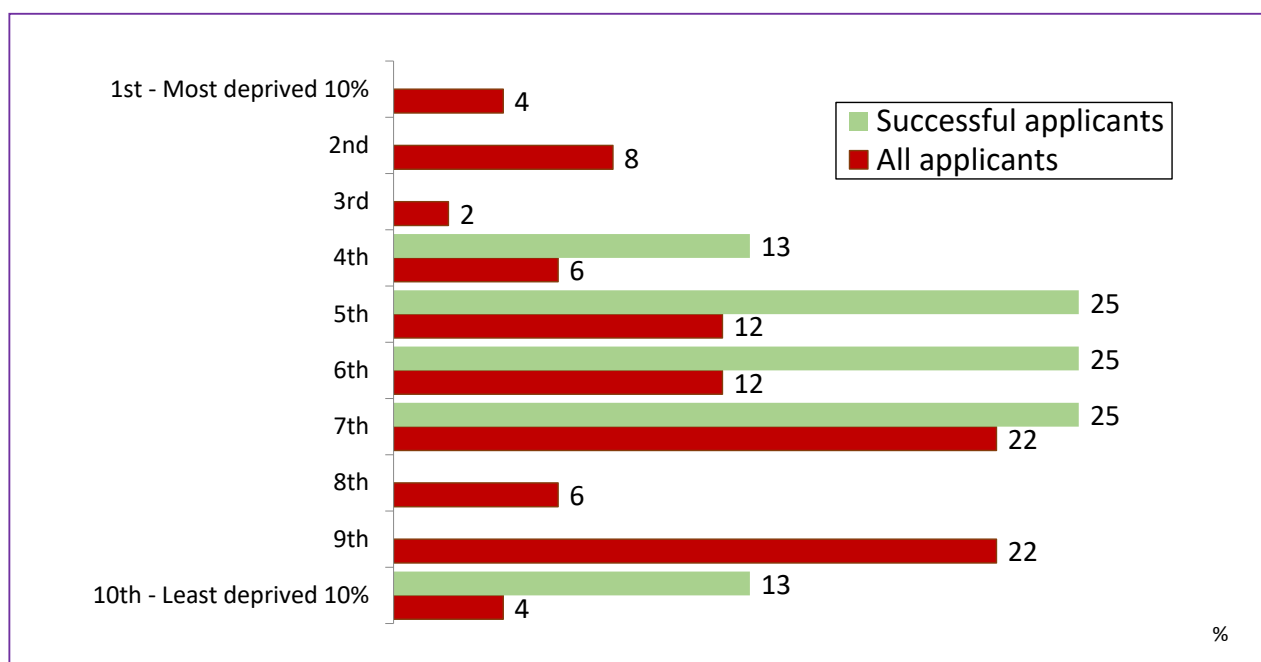
Opportunities for economically deprived artists

25% of the commissioned artists told us that they come from an economically deprived background.

The applications of 56 artists who applied for roles through open call were also considered. Analysis of the Scottish Index of Multiple Deprivation (SIMD) data-zones for each of these 56 applicant artists shows that more than half of the applicant artists live in the 7th to 10th deciles (in blue, below), with these areas being amongst the most affluent 40% of all data-zones in Scotland.



Comparing the SIMD distribution of all applicants to the SIMD distribution of successful applicants:



All but one of the successful applicants came from SIMD deciles 4 to 7, so the distribution of successful applicants was more towards the middle deciles than the distribution of all applicants as a whole. Inverclyde Culture Collective appointed relatively fewer of the most affluent applicant artists, but also relatively fewer of the least affluent applicant artists.

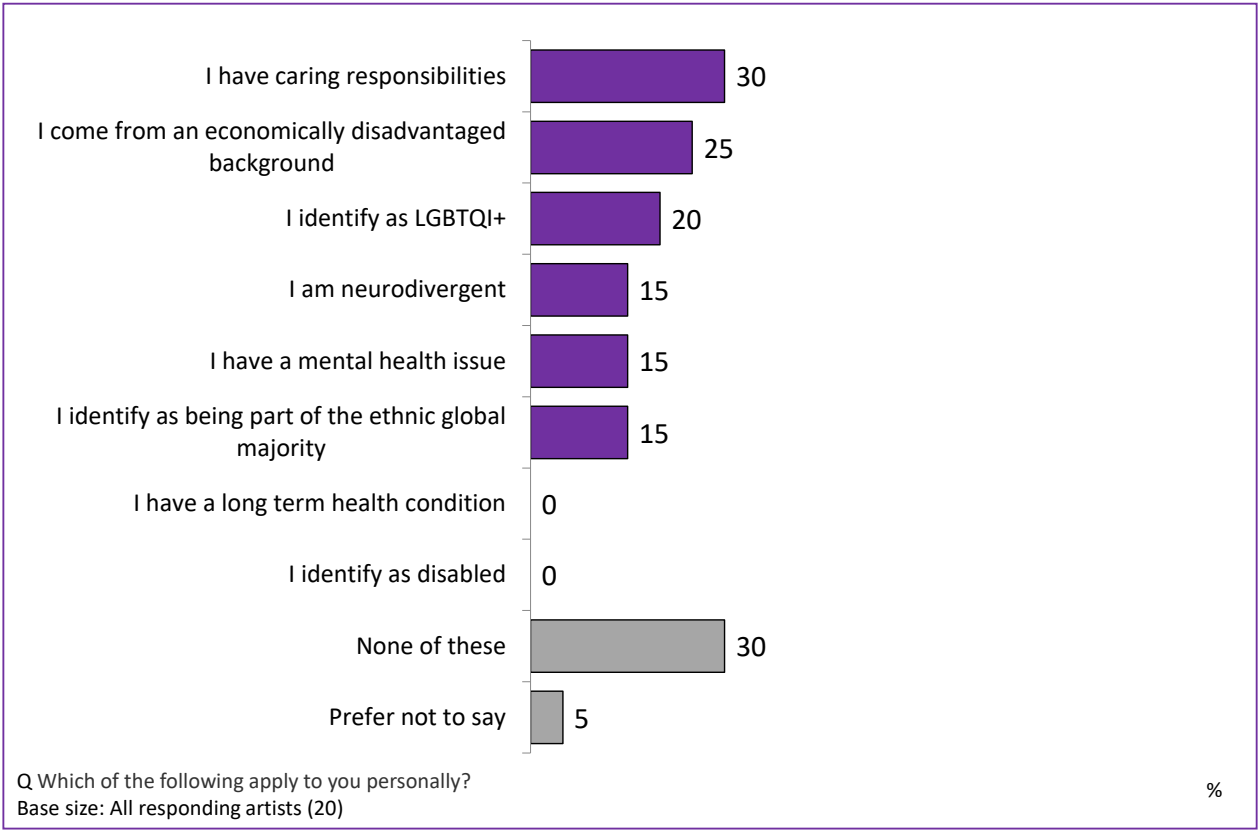
Opportunities for a diversity of artists

Inverclyde Culture Collective has provided opportunities for a fairly diverse group of artists.

Three quarters (75%) of the artists were female, with 20% being male and one individual preferring not to say.

All of the artists were aged 25-55, with the greatest proportion being aged 45-55 (45%).

We asked the artists to tell us whether they come from a minoritised group or have a protected characteristic:



65% of the artists identify with at least one of these characteristics and thus are potentially minoritised, most often having caring responsibilities (30%), coming from an economically deprived background (25%) or identifying as LGBTQI+ (20%).

Commitment to accessibility

Inverclyde Culture Collective have been committed to ensuring that their approach is accessible.

Jack Stancliffe, Activities Co-ordinator

- Inverclyde Culture Collective holds a £12,000 allocated budget for access (£9,000 Original and £3,000 Extension Funding). This can be accessed by the partners, artists and participants.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective recently undertook Disability Equality Training with Birds of Paradise Theatre Company, which provided information and guidance on ensuring venues, user experience, participatory activity, recruitment processes, communications and marketing were accessible to individuals identifying as having a disability. The training involved the attendance of 16 individuals representing freelancers, consortium partners, and representatives from Health and Social Care Networks across Inverclyde. The training took place on Tuesday the 6th and 7th September 2022.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective have broadened their approach to communications and recruitment processes. We now offer multiple ways for people to engage with our open call processes and this includes using screen reader friendly documents in PDFs and Word documents, clear and accessible fonts and spacing within the documents, and hosting group and solo open call information sessions on Zoom with captioning inclusive. Further than this we will now be working with a BSL interpreter on various open calls to create a digital video providing an overview of the opportunity.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective will now be standardising the invitation for all artists and creative practitioners on awarding of contract to submit an access requirement form or invite them to provide us with their own access statement form as part of the recruitment process.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective have identified barriers relating to payment structures of artists and have rectified this through re-distribution of material funds within the consortium and ensuring payment structures are part of a transparent conversation at the start of the recruitment process.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective, through Health and Social Care creative conversations with partners across Inverclyde, have been able to identify and list recommendations to overcome barriers, approaches and knowledge gaps that prevent broader access to arts provision and activity. This will be addressed further through a residency within 2023 considering how to practically improve this relationship.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective are currently in conversation around approaches to diversifying the recruitment process and ensuring there are opportunities specifically reaching the Black and Brown ethnic majority. This has involved meetings with Rebecca Livesey Wright from RIG Arts and Moira Salt (artist in residence exploring narratives, histories or lived experiences of black communities and/or communities of colour in Seedhill Paisley). Inverclyde Culture Collective are seeking anti-racism training to be undertaken within 2023.
- Inverclyde Culture Collective have supported access through funding travel for members of Your Voice Recovery group who are working with Elina Bry to attend outdoor arts sessions as part of the project.
- Inverclyde Culture Collectives Consortium partner The Beacon Arts Centre will be soon recruiting for a creative practitioner/researcher to work to respond and make recommendations to The Beacons EDI policies and practices across their programmes and activity (0.7 Post).

Reflections on the creative ethos of the Inverclyde Culture Collective

The overall concept of Culture Collective is to test and show new ways of working, and not being scared to fail. (Kat Boyle)

Project description

Our intention for Inverclyde Culture Collective is to create a context for artists to experiment with alternate modes of sharing practice. Our activity is primarily routed at this stage on test piloting new local partnership and community projects that offer a window into new collaborative ways of working including residency and artist exchange process. There is no pre-determined outcome however there are opportunities for artists and the community to reflect and evaluate across a National Network. This funding will provide a context for both emerging and established artists to push the boundaries of their practice and think about radical solutions to how we can sensitively collaborate and make work with local communities.

The following section reflects on the creative ethos of the Inverclyde Culture Collective.

Response to the creative approach

I feel like Inverclyde Culture Collective are trusting me as a creative to just be doing this. The trust is great, they understand that is what being an artist is. We're not just producing something, we are asking questions. That's amazing. (Artist)

With regards the creative approach taken by Inverclyde Culture Collective, six in ten (60%) of the artists had worked in this way before, but four in ten (40%) had not. As highlighted earlier, 60% of the artists felt they had *professional autonomy* during this engagement.

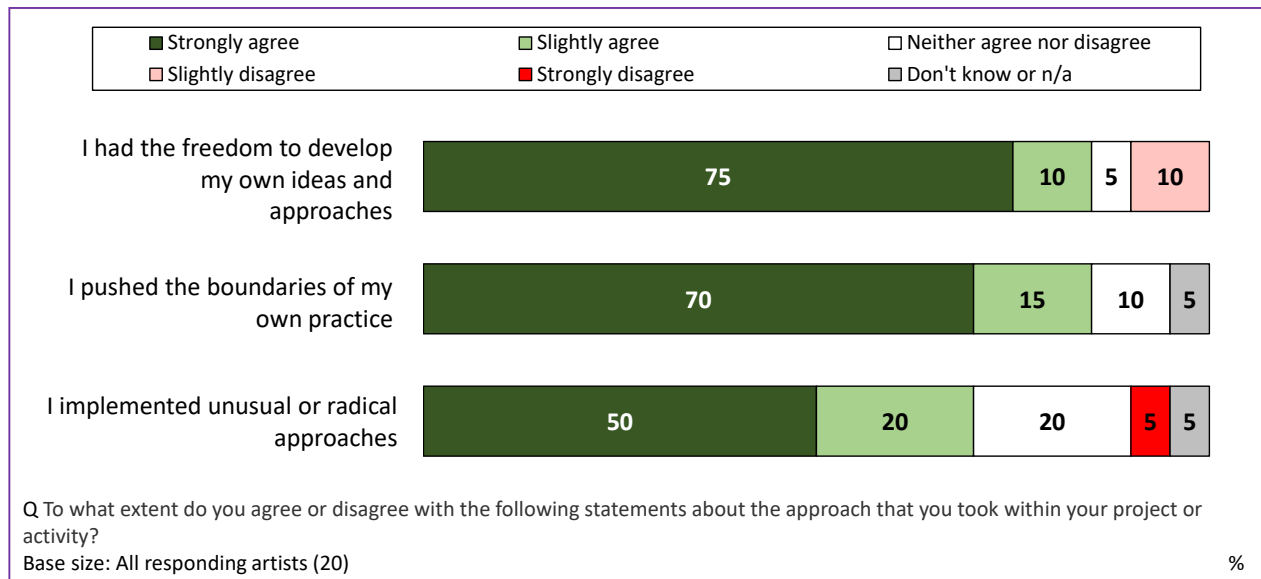
In response to this approach, the artists found "it is a real pleasure to have an open ended brief". The artists described how the approach "isn't about numbers" or "producing something concrete" but is instead "self-directed" and about "the process and the research" with a "sense of freedom to be able to explore, to trial, to experiment". The artists felt "very free" and "didn't feel any pressure to be achieving a certain amount" or "pushed in any way", which was "a lovely way to be able to work" and left them feeling "pleasantly surprised that everyone trusted me".

This "outstanding trust" and "freedom" was felt to be "a valuable thing for an artist".

All but one of the artists (95%) told us that *overall this process was positive for me and my practice*, with the remaining artist giving a *don't know* response. As that individual described: "I liked having the freedom but for me I would have liked some clearer outcomes that Inverclyde wanted. Just to make the success more quantifiable. To know this is what they wanted to use this money for. It would give me direction for what to work towards".

Ambition of approach

We asked the artists to tell us how ambitious they had been with their creative approach:



85% of the artists agreed that they felt *I had the freedom to develop my own ideas and approaches*, which perhaps enabled ambition of approach as 85% agreed that *I pushed the boundaries of my own practice* and 70% agreed that *I implemented unusual or radical approaches*.

The artists told us that “there was massive scope for experimentation of approaches” and “having more free reign in being creative and responding” and “being free to make mistakes” which was “very much let’s just see what’s possible”. In particular some artists reported that they “changed my mind a few times” and “revised what I said I would do”, and Inverclyde Culture Collective “were totally fine with it”. As a consequence, artists said that they got “the full amount of ideas out of the process” and “it helped me produce the best work”.

Connection with Inverclyde

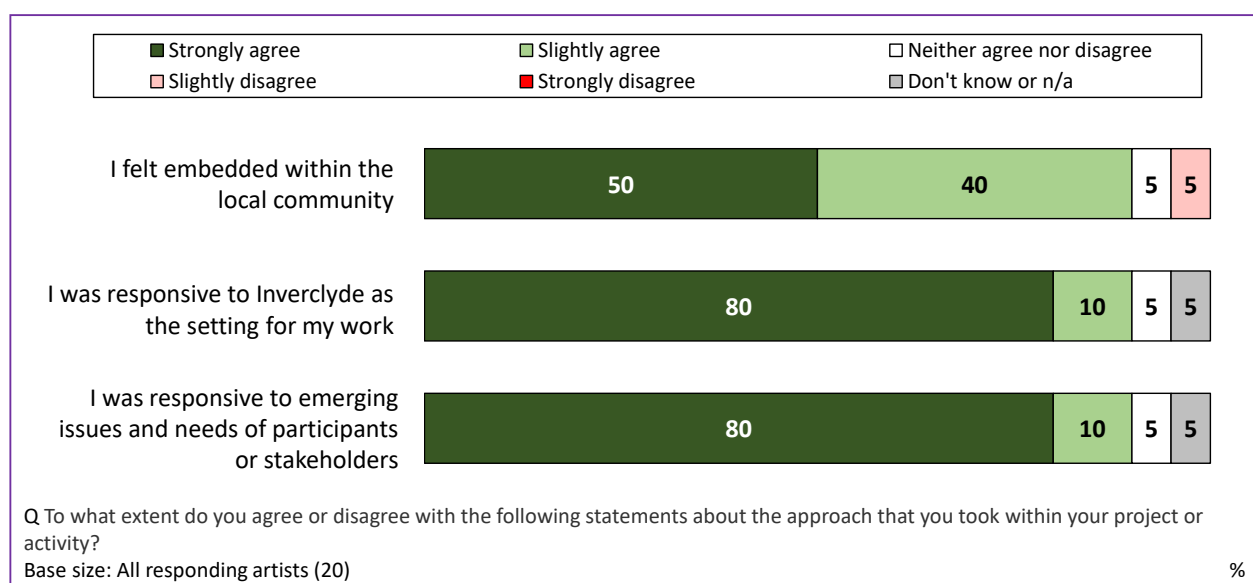
Always a pleasure to make beautiful Inverclyde the centre of a place-based approach. There is so much history to delve into, it's a physically stunning part of the world and has a happy future. (Artist)

A number of the artists described the way that they had responded to Inverclyde’s environment, history and community through their work. For example:

- “I was looking more at the natural history and the history of the area which hasn’t been looked at for nearly 100 years. I built that into my research as well and it expanded over time.”

- “We made a mural for the centre and we worked with them to create what the mural would look like and make sure it represented the community and the area of Inverclyde.”
- “A lot of them are of the generation where their parents were shipbuilders but they’ve grown up into nothing. There was a protest about bread where 200 people were killed in the centre of Greenock in the 1890s. They said this is happening again now. We were talking about food banks with the cost of living crisis at the moment, and how they’ve watched Greenock change in their lifetime.”

We asked the artists to tell us how they responded to place through their projects:



The artists were very connected with the local community in Inverclyde. 90% of the artists agreed that *I was responsive to Inverclyde as the setting for my work* and that *I was responsive to emerging issues and needs of participants or stakeholders*, with 80% agreeing strongly in each case.

Consequently, 90% of the artists agreed that *I felt embedded within the local community*.

Many of the artists commented on “developing this relationship with Inverclyde” having “had the blessing” of the local people and been “made to feel very welcome”, even in some cases “as an outsider”. This was “very positive” and “felt really nice”.

Challenges and learning points

The following section outlines challenges and key learning points from undertaking this process.

Length of application process

The application process was fairly long and I felt like it might have put some people off applying. I wasn't sure I had answered all the questions well. (Artist)

Whilst most of the artists were satisfied with the application process, some commented that the process was “fairly long” and “quite in depth” which felt “a bit daunting at the time”.

Payment

The payment system wasn't the best. (Artist)

Several artists raised that “there was an issue with me being paid”, including “a lot of paperwork problems” and that “originally I was going to be paid my fee at the very end of the project which would mean I would not be paid for 4 months” and that “being paid for the fee can take a little time to go through”. In all cases this was “resolved” or “rectified”. However, artists noted that it was “frustrating” and “quite tricky for me” and “a struggle not being paid”. In response to these comments, Inverclyde Council notes that all artists were offered either the full fee at the end of the contract (upfront payments being precluded by Council financial regulations), or a payment schedule to break down the fee over the course of the contract. Most artists opted to take advantage of a payment schedule. Inverclyde Council’s standard payment terms are 28 days. During the Covid pandemic, to assist contractors and small businesses, the Council began paying invoices much more quickly and this system is still in place. Most, if not all, artists were paid within 14 days of invoices being added to the financial management system.

Desire to network with other artists

I had no idea who else was out there and what might have been a link-up. (Artist)

Many of the artists spontaneously raised that they would appreciate “a way to connect with the other artists in residence” for “getting to know each other’s skills” and “sharing with artists” – to “share resources” and “share reflections” and to “see what people are exploring”

Engagement with the artist Slack channel

I haven't been part of the online Slack channel, that wasn't as useful for me. (Artist)

In addition to their relationship with Inverclyde Culture Collective, the artists were invited to join Creative Scotland’s national Culture Collective Slack channel. Some of the artists commented that they did not use the artist Slack channel. They said “I don’t use it frequently” because “it is too vast”.

EVALUATING THE IMPACT OF THE INVERCLYDE CULTURE COLLECTIVE

Impact on participants

The following section explores the impact that the Inverclyde Culture Collective has had on participants.

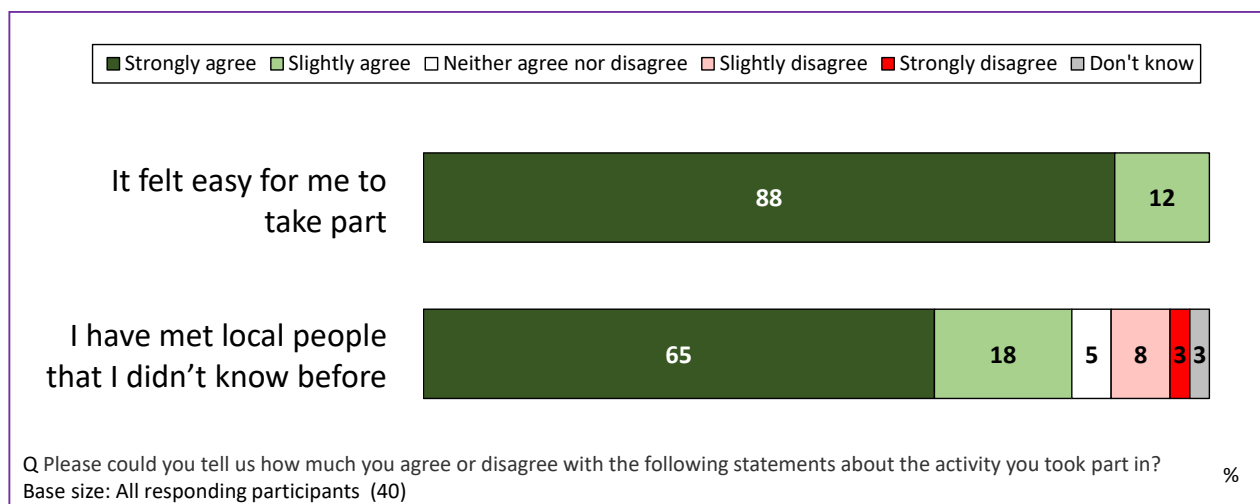
75% of the artists agreed that *my project or activity had a positive impact on local people*, with the remaining artists giving a neutral response.

A positive experience

Participants in the Inverclyde Culture Collective projects were invited to complete a brief survey to provide feedback on their experience. Although this was only completed by 40 participants, this gives us an indication of the participant experience.

We asked the participants whether they enjoyed the experience, and 98% agreed that they did. They told us that “it was fun” and “I really enjoyed this” and “it makes me feel happy” and “I really look forward to it”.

We then asked the participants about participation:

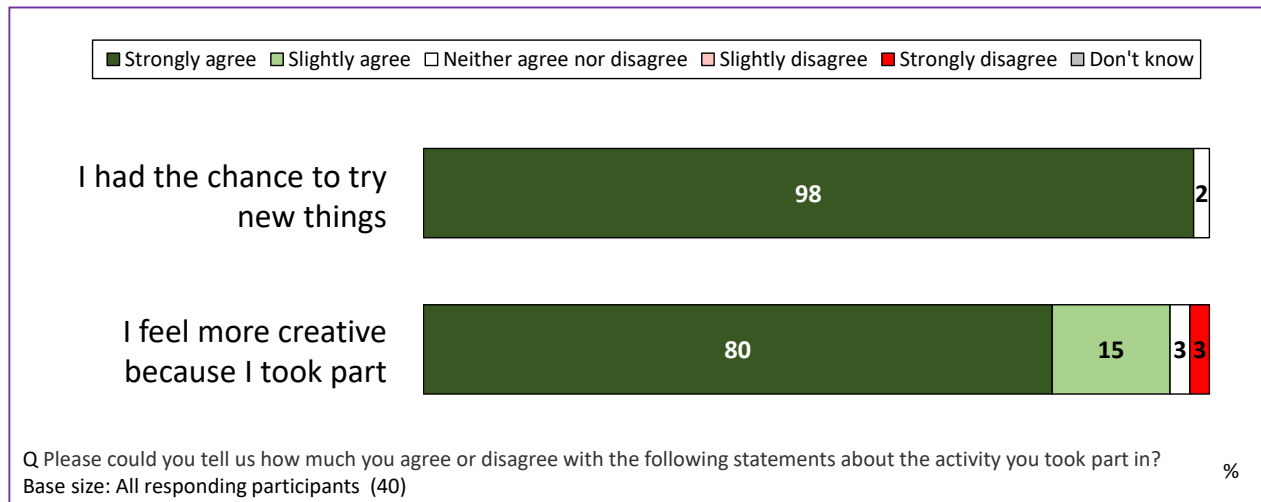


All of the participants (100%) agreed that *it felt easy for me to take part*, and 83% agreed that *I have met local people that I didn't know before*.

The artists noticed that new friendships were being built and that “this was a community starting to develop and bond”. One artist described that their participants “made a group chat and started going down the street together independently doing their own stuff”.

Access to creativity

Next, we asked the participants about their creative experience:



The creative experience was very positive for the participants. Almost all (98%) of the participants agreed that *I had the chance to try new things*, and 95% agreed that *I feel more creative because I took part*.

Describing this experience in more detail the participants told us:

- “I wouldn’t say I was ‘good’ at art but learned everyone’s artistic endeavours have merit.”
- “I felt encouraged, and I certainly wouldn't have confidence to do these activities on my own.”
- “She really made me feel like I wasn't a lump of sh**e and encouraged me to write.”

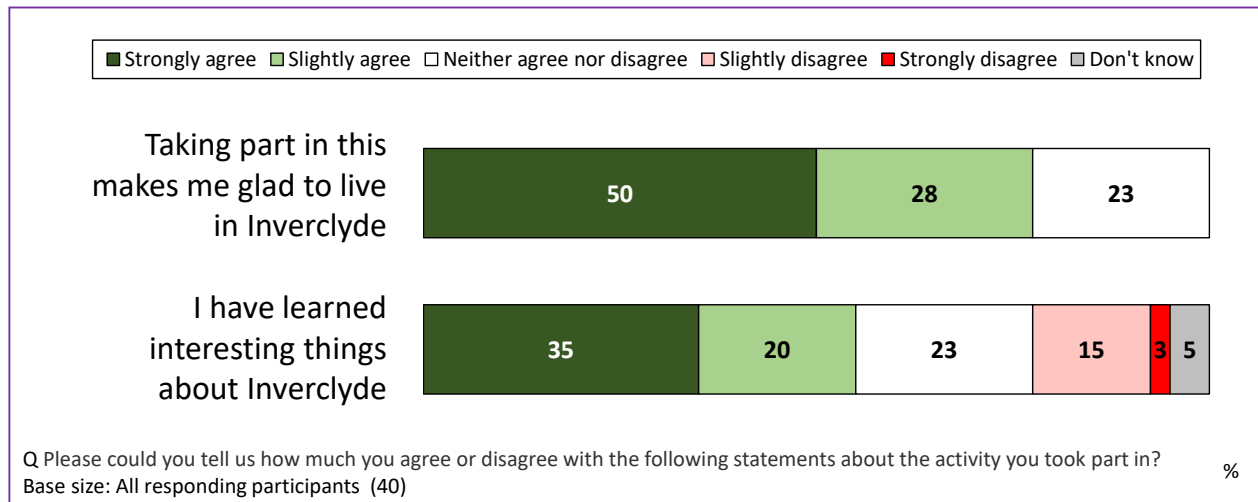
The artists noted that through this experience the participants “were all able to express themselves” and “they could learn how to express themselves via art”.

For many participants the exploratory approach taken “wasn’t art in the way that they know about art” and was “outside of whatever they think about art”, but “they have been enjoying research as a practice” and are “realising they can be equally active in this process”.

The artists and partners noted that participants experienced significant “personal pride” through “all the skills that people have learned” and “having the opportunity to see their work” and “recognise their stories” and “see their work on that huge scale” in an exhibition.

Creativity in Inverclyde

Finally, we asked the participants how this experience related to Inverclyde:



The experience strengthened connections to Inverclyde for many of the participants. 78% of the participants agreed that *taking part in this makes me glad to live in Inverclyde* and 55% agreed that *I have learned interesting things about Inverclyde*.

The participants felt that Inverclyde Culture Collective and its activities was “great for the community”, and as one of the participants told us: “I think it's really excellent that this exists and there should be more of it for everyone. There are many reasons why I don't enjoy living in Inverclyde but this definitely makes it better.”

The artists and partners highlighted a variety of connections and opportunities that would not have been available to local people without Inverclyde Culture Collective:

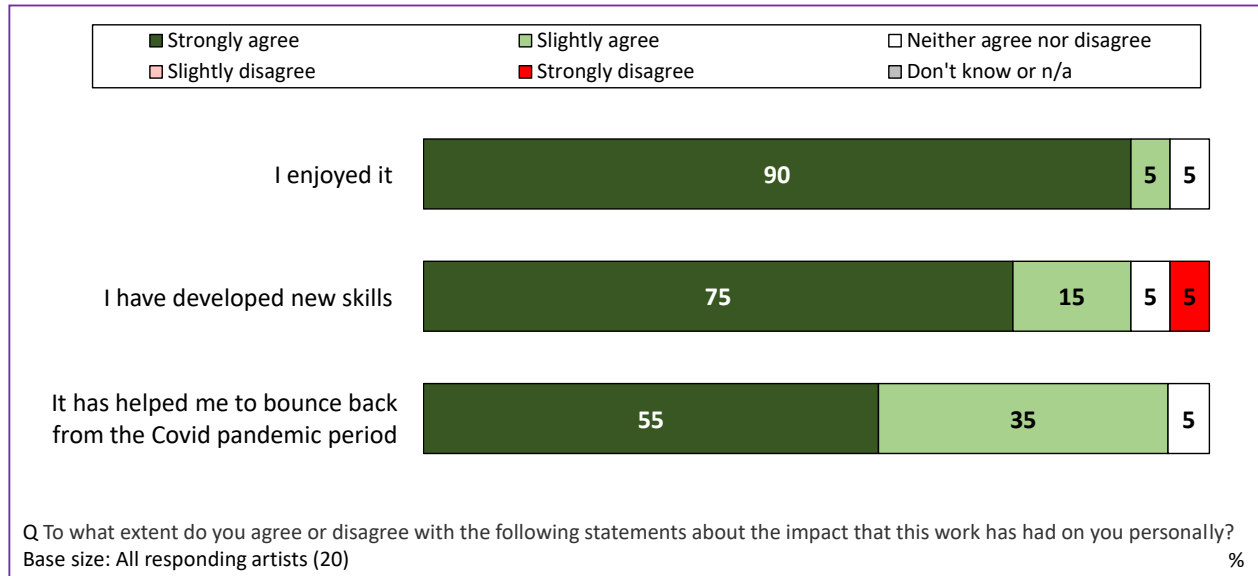
- “At Auchmountain Glen we really connected with families through the women’s group.”
- “The Beacon Art Group has lasted well. People who have not been to the Beacon before and not participated in arts activities before.”
- “The LIGHTWORKX project was for schools and that engaged with children that wouldn’t have been involved with those sorts of activities before.”
- “Creativity in Mind has been hugely popular, participant led using arts for mental health. This has opened up an opportunity.”

Impact on artists

The following section explores the impact that the Inverclyde Culture Collective has had on the commissioned artists.

Experience of Inverclyde Culture Collective

In the survey we asked the artists to tell us about the impact that the experience of working with Inverclyde Culture Collective had on them:



The experience of working with Inverclyde Culture Collective was very positive for the artists. 95% agreed that *I enjoyed it*, 90% agreed that *I have developed new skills*, and 90% agreed that *it has helped me to bounce back from the Covid pandemic period*.

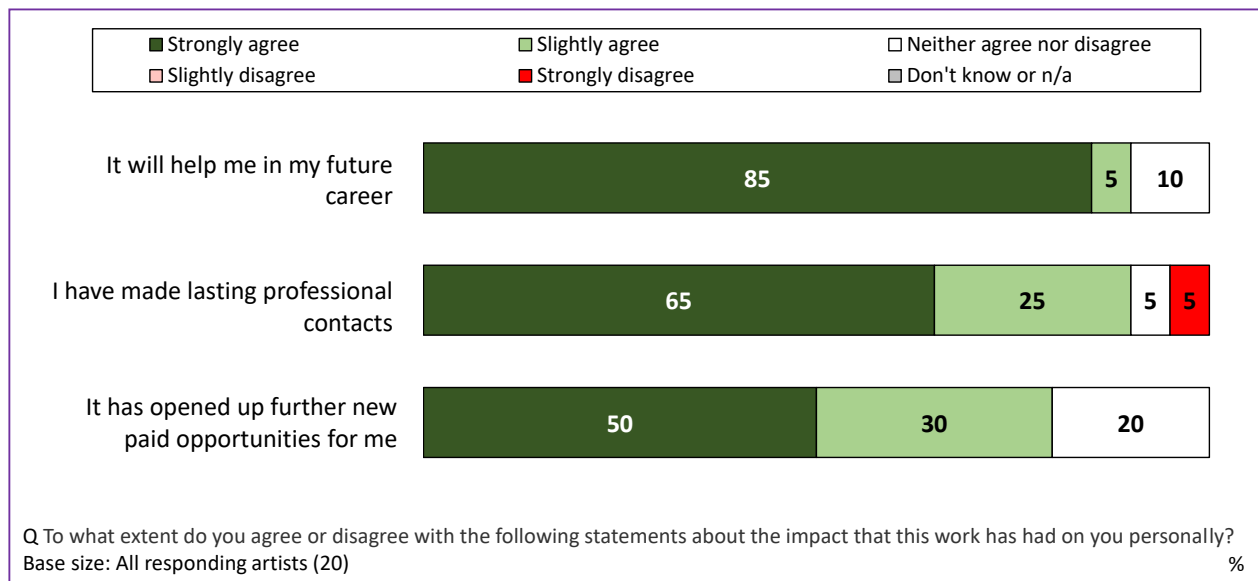
Development opportunities

7 of the projects (39%) included training or professional development opportunities for the artists. These were primarily opportunities for emerging artists to gain hands-on experience.

95% of the artists agreed that *I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role*. As well as this having an impact on the community, several artists described having been given the opportunity to bring long-held plans to fruition.

- “At this stage in my career I have a lot of ideas and projects I have wanted to do for a long time, so to be able to realise them with that support in place.”
- “Being able to have the time and extra money for material budgets was really valuable. I definitely wouldn’t have been able to do it without the support and the funds. I don’t think it would have been possible.”

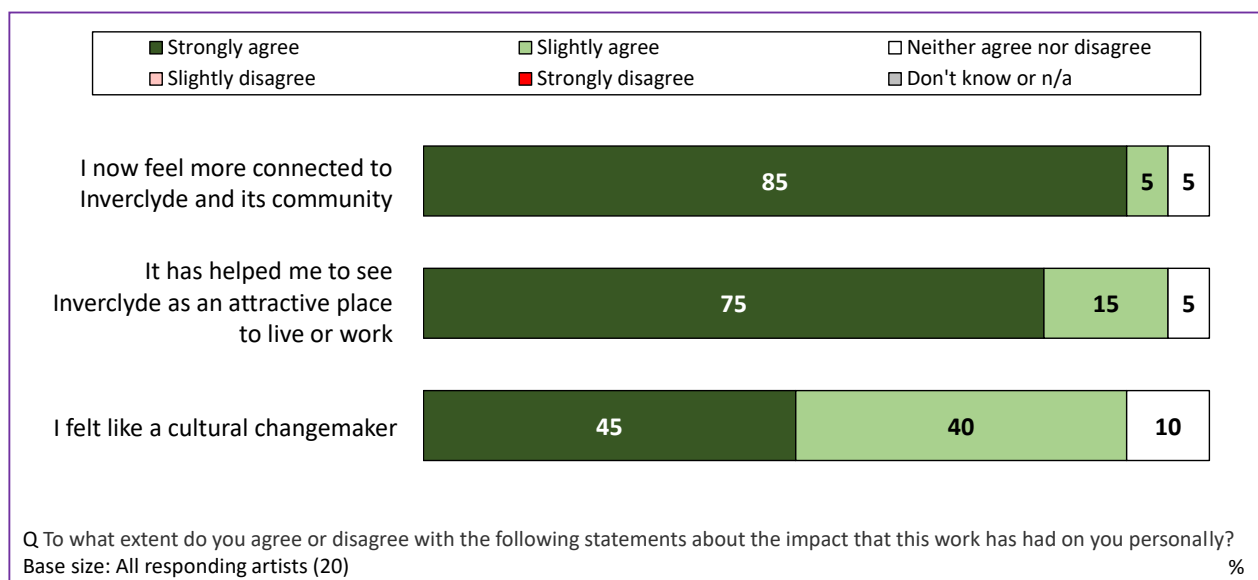
We asked the artists to tell us about the impact that working with Inverclyde Culture Collective has had on their career:



The experience of working with Inverclyde Culture Collective has had a very positive impact on artist careers. 90% agreed that *it will help me in my future career*, 90% agreed that *I have made lasting professional contacts*, and 80% agreed that *it has opened up further new paid opportunities for me*.

Relationship with Inverclyde

We asked the artists to tell us about the impact that working with Inverclyde Culture Collective has had on their relationship with Inverclyde:



The experience of working with Inverclyde Culture Collective has had a very positive impact on artist relationships with Inverclyde. 90% agreed that *I now feel more connected to Inverclyde and its community*, 90% agreed that *it has helped me to see Inverclyde as an attractive place to live or work* and 85% agreed that *I felt like a cultural changemaker* whilst working in Inverclyde.

Impact on partners

The following section explores the impact that the Inverclyde Culture Collective has had on project partners.

Delivering a range of successful projects

It was really successful. (Partner)

Through Inverclyde Culture Collective, the partners were able to deliver a range of projects that were “successful”. Partners described these as being “massively popular”, as “people responded really well” and “we got a great response”.

Engaging new audiences

Through that short activity we met people who have since come to different things at RIG. So even at that simple level RIG Arts met five people that have come to different things. (Partner)

The partners have engaged with new audiences through Inverclyde Culture Collective activity, meeting “people who have not been to the venue before” who have subsequently “come along to other things”. “Making those little connections” and “those first points of contact” through Inverclyde Culture Collective work has thus been “important”.

Establishing new partnerships

Everyone we spoke to said they’d love to come and work with us, they really engaged with us reaching out to them. (Partner)

The partners described that “we’ve worked with a range of organisations” and “we have established partnerships with new organisations that we’ve not worked with before” and that “Culture Collective has enabled those partnerships”.

Impact on Inverclyde

It has been great to hear there have been people taking part in different Culture Collective activities. The excitement about what was available in Inverclyde, this was something new and exciting that people wanted to engage with. (Artist)

The following section explores the impact that the Inverclyde Culture Collective has had on the Inverclyde region.

As outlined earlier in this report, the sessions took place in 25 unique locations across Inverclyde. The majority of the sessions were held around Greenock, with other locations across Inverclyde.

The following map shows these locations:



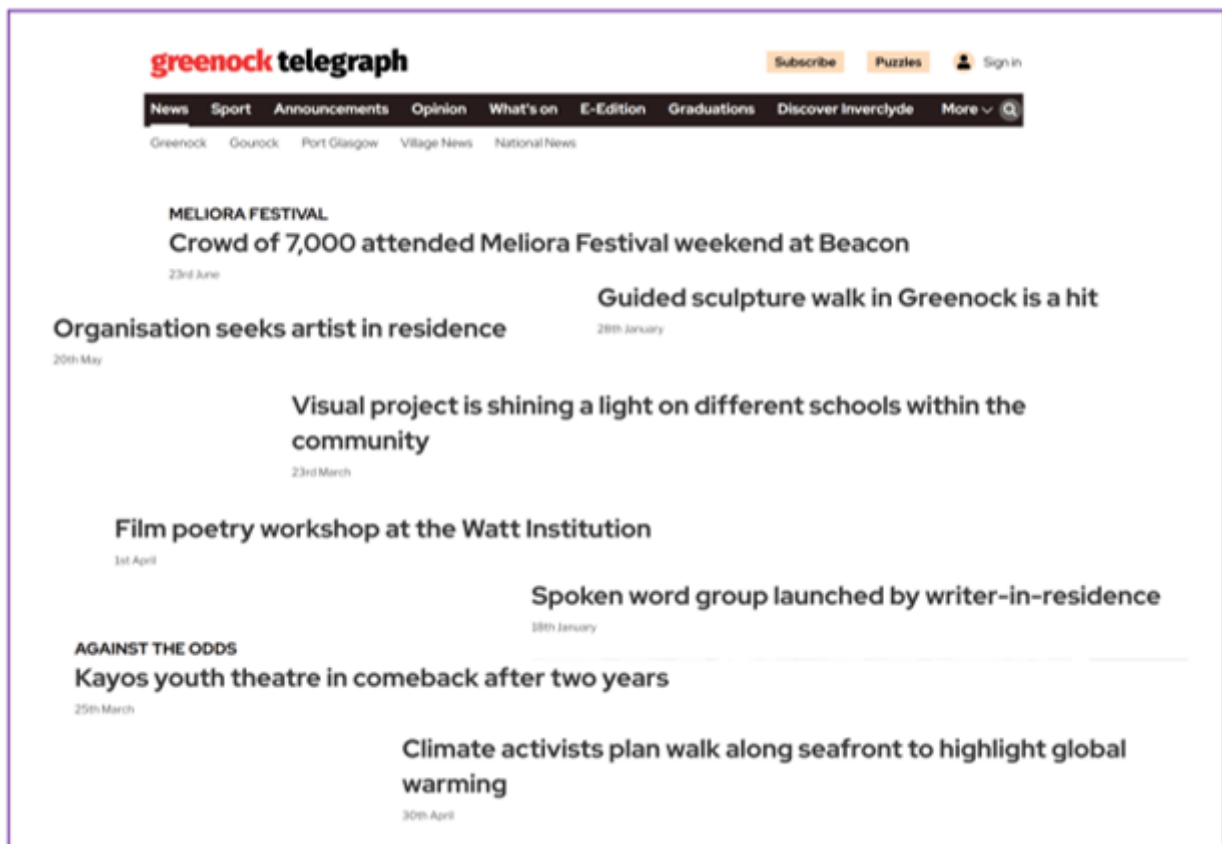
These projects have provided creative opportunities for the Inverclyde region that may not have taken place without Inverclyde Culture Collective.

Raising the profile of Inverclyde

All of these activities that we do raise the profile in Inverclyde as a place to come and visit or work. (Partner)

The artists and partners felt strongly that the “actual opportunities and things that are happening” are “raising Inverclyde’s profile”.

6 of the projects (33%) told us that their project received press coverage. All of these were featured in the *Greenock Telegraph*, and one featured on the website *Inverclyde Now*. A keyword search of the *Greenock Telegraph* website identified 11 articles referencing the 'Inverclyde Culture Collective'.



This press coverage will have helped to inform the wider Inverclyde community about the work of the Inverclyde Culture Collective and to further raise the profile of the work and of the area.

A sense of pride in the community

It is a great thing for bolstering that sense of community pride. (Partner)

The artists and partners felt that all of this work “does improve people’s sense of pride” in “their community”.

Legacy

85% of the artists agreed that *my project will have a lasting positive impact in Inverclyde*, including positivity and relationships, regeneration activities and created work.

Strategic impact

The following section outlines a response from the Council about the strategic impact of Inverclyde Culture Collective in the region.

Ruth Binks

**Director of Education, Communities & Organisational Development, Inverclyde Council
Chair of the Culture and Heritage Partnership**

"I am proud that Inverclyde has culture and heritage as a stand-alone priority in its Local Outcome Improvement Plan. In Inverclyde we have a relentless focus on the impact of poverty and looking at the cost of living to reduce inequalities. However, we do not overlook the value that the arts brings to the area. People living in Inverclyde have a huge community spirit and have told us of their hope and ambition for the area. Without culture and the arts some of the sparkle in life disappears. Our arts partners in Inverclyde understand the impact of poverty and being community-focused, they are able to put the sparkle back into communities.

There has always been a lot of small pockets of cultural work going on in Inverclyde but it was quite difficult to find a cohesive way forward and to join forces for larger scale projects. When everyone is putting in small funding bids we don't always know what each other is doing, and some of our local organisations found themselves essentially competing against each other for similar funds.

Working together under one big joint fund absolutely felt like a great solution. It means that we are not putting people in competition with each other across Inverclyde, we are putting people together in the Culture Collective. For me as the Chair of the Culture and Heritage Partnership the Inverclyde Culture Collective has given us an ability to work together, and when you can get partners together to do joint working for funding, suddenly the partnership working becomes better. Joint working, partnership working, cross-sectoral working. Small groups working with larger groups. It is the 'collective' part of it that makes all the difference.

For the Council to be part of the Culture Collective has been really, really useful. We expanded the collective work undertaken in the arts and culture with sport and the community through the development of our Meliora Festival. This is a festival that we created in response to recovery from Covid.

Inverclyde Culture Collective also creates employment in Inverclyde, which works in partnership with the ambition to make Inverclyde a great place to live and work and to create thriving communities. A significant amount of artists have already been supported.

We aim to build on and increase our partnership working in the arts, and Inverclyde Culture Collective has created a platform for us to achieve this. It has already fed back into our wider work and I am very keen for us to continue this cohesive way of working."

Looking forward

It is changing those minds in positions of power, that is something the Culture Collective has to develop. Work needs to be done at that higher level. (Partner)

The partners felt strongly that Inverclyde Culture Collective has “come a long way” and that “Inverclyde punches well above its weight when you consider its size”. They felt that “there has been increased engagement” and “Council Officers seem quite engaged” and that “the value of the arts does seem to be recognised”. However, they questioned “how do we embed that?” and “how do we sustain that so there isn’t a big dip when the money ends?”

In the opinion of the partners: “if we’re going to operate at a better level culture and arts needs to be more embedded into strategic thinking”. For this reason a focus for Inverclyde Culture Collective in the coming year needs to be “having these cross sector discussions” and ensuring that “the creative community are at the decision-making table” which may require “educating people to see the value of having creative people sitting at these tables”.

Looking forward, it may be worthwhile to be more ambitious as one partner outlined:

- “I think the Culture Collective has done a lot for regeneration that is good given the scale of the funding but in Inverclyde we need to do something that is a game changer. Compared to Dundee or Liverpool we’re not off the starting blocks. If we’re looking for significant impact on regeneration we need a big hitter. It’s not as if this is a new issue, there’s been several attempts but we’re not on the scale we need to be. We need to up our game. This is more than just arts and culture – it is the place to stay, the place to eat, the place to be entertained. That is the challenge when you think about scaling up culture. It is about the infrastructure that is there to support that.”

Summarising delivery against objectives

Objective 1: *Arts and cultural organisations and creative freelancers will have built sustainable partnerships with other sectors, agencies and organisations in the place, and arts and culture will be fully reflected in local plans and strategies.*

Inverclyde Culture Collective was built on a foundation of the strategic planning that had already happened locally, and it is fortunate that Inverclyde's plans fit very well with the intentions of the national Culture Collective funding stream. When Inverclyde Culture Collective was established it consequently felt natural to situate it within the Local Authority structure as a continuation of existing work. As such, all of Inverclyde Culture Collective's strategic direction aligns closely and is intrinsically intertwined with local strategic plans (including the Inverclyde Arts and Creativity Strategy 2017 and the Action Plan 2021).

It is certain that some local decision-makers are supportive of the arts and there is a lot of good will surrounding of Inverclyde Culture Collective's work.

Inverclyde Culture Collective provides a great opportunity for local partners to work together strengthening existing relationships and building new ones. Commissioning 39 individual freelance artists also contributes to broadening and developing this vibrant arts ecosystem in the area with the bringing in of talent and the cross-fertilisation of ideas.

All of these partners and artists have also forged relationships with other individuals and organisations across the regions, both intentionally and organically, most often in schools and the third sector. This has opened up access to further relationships and resources and audiences, upon which new ideas are already being built.

To summarise some of the key indicators in relation to this:

- Inverclyde Culture Collective worked directly with community partners.
- Much of the work had a focus beyond the arts, including: young people (50% of the projects, engaging with communities with Low Arts Engagement and barriers to access (44%), regeneration (33%), adult mental health (17%) and Health and Social Care (17%).
- 65% of the artists undertook collaboration with partners.
- 85% of the artists agreed that *I felt like a cultural changemaker* whilst working in Inverclyde.

Through this evaluation the partners made clear that they felt that a lot of excellent grassroots progress had been made but that more work must be done to make a significant and long-lasting difference to both the broader cross-sectoral policy landscape and to the local arts infrastructure.

It is hoped that this will be more of a priority in the coming year.

The case study that follows provides an example of the way that Inverclyde Culture Collective's work has contributed to this objective by making collaborative and cross-sectoral plans in response to local strategy.

Inverclyde Culture Collective case study – Health and Social Care Research

Kat Boyle, Inverclyde Creative Producer

“Health and wellbeing is a key thematic in Inverclyde because of the high levels of deprivation locally, so bringing together wellbeing and the arts feels like a very important thing to do.

As we were writing our Action Plan and we found that Inverclyde’s Health & Social Care strategy referenced the arts too, and we felt strongly that we needed to stop working in silos and instead collaborate and build capacity and find the synergies between our action plans. We knew that we needed to have conversations with experts from across the sectors - a melding of minds about how we can move forward – so we brought in an artist to facilitate those cross-partnership conversations.”

Inverclyde Arts and Creativity Action Plan, Priority 3: Wellbeing

“The arts are central to health and drug / alcohol awareness-based education, therapy, and recovery. Everyone can access arts education at a level appropriate to them. Individuals and collectives can cultivate an ethos around promoting knowledge and skill sharing. Access to the arts has a direct impact in improving self-esteem and emotional literacy while providing opportunities for self-expression, learning new skills and personal development.”

Health and Social Care Partnership Strategic Plan

Includes a range of areas for improvement, including Big Action 4 which has the “aim to create an Inverclyde where people are encouraged and supported to take an active role in managing their own health” and the idea of social prescription as a way to direct people to activities within the community.

Inverclyde Culture Collective hosted a series of three cross-sectoral creative research events at the Beacon Arts Centre, Greenock, designed and delivered by Creative Researcher and Artist Samantha Macgregor.

Local partners attending the events included: Barnardo’s Inverclyde Nurture Services, Beacon Arts Centre, Belville Community Gardens, Branchton Community Centre, CVS Inverclyde, IFIT Inverclyde, Inverclyde Health Improvement (Mental Health Services), Inverclyde Health Improvement Team, Inverclyde Libraries, RIG Arts, Turning Point Scotland (Inverclyde) and Your Voice: Recovery.

The events took place over three separate dates and were thematically focused around past, present and future as explained by Creative Researcher Samantha Macgregor:

Session 1: The Past

Who am I and what do I know from experience about the relationship between creative practice and health and social care contexts and environments?



“In the first session we introduced ourselves and our services, to get used to the idea of sharing through art. To make individual art and to communicate about it isn’t always easy so I wanted to create a welcoming environment that was not threatening, where we focused on the content rather than anyone’s individual abilities as an artist.”

Session 2: The Present

What resources are available to us currently within Inverclyde, what existing practice is there and what spaces?



“In the second session we all went outside to consider the quality of the spaces and to look at some newly installed art works developed as part of the recent ‘Creative Conversations’ project. We took a moment of guided mindful contemplation along the esplanade, to simply ‘sit and be’ and see how that felt, then we came back together and talked about it.”

Session 3: The Future

What next? What are our priorities going forward, how should we seek to support new or existing creative activity taking place within health and social care settings?



“The third session started with a visioning exercise which led to some very well-articulated proposals as the participants reflected together about what should be priorities going forward. It felt very much that the art would augment existing plans, like a natural extension of what the organisations were trying to do with their client groups already.”

A focus on **environmental improvement** and **narrative as a means of self-reflection** were key themes arising from the events.

Kat Boyle, Inverclyde Creative Producer

“Some of the partners had never worked with an artist before, but we know that artists can come in and interpret things in different ways. We wanted to take some of these ideas forward to test out new models for future working, and demonstrate ways that it is possible to be experimental within the constraints of Health & Social Care. Following our events, Culture Collective has supported or plans to support a number of Test Pilot projects linking artists with local Health & Social Care partners:

- Trauma informed environments (Barnardos)
- Exploring the outdoors for mental health (Your Voice Recovery Group)
- Upskilling young offenders with filming and editing (IFIT Inverclyde)
- Supporting chronic illness (Port Glasgow Health Centre)
- Interpretations of death and grief (Compassionate Inverclyde)

We published a report in August 2022: [Creative Research: Health & Social Care](#). In summer 2023 we will start to write the next stage of the Arts Action Plan and we will be continuing the dialogue with Health & Social Care that we have now opened.”

Objective 2: Local creative organisations and freelancers will be more resilient.

The creation of 18 new projects, 2 salaried roles and 45 new freelance opportunities in Inverclyde has provided significant opportunity for the creative community in Inverclyde to develop and flourish. 95% of the artists agreed that *I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role*, demonstrating the scale of what can be directly attributed to the presence of Inverclyde Culture Collective.

In organisational terms, Inverclyde Culture Collective has provided funding at a difficult time (during Covid and Covid recovery, and a time of financial crisis) and is has also established opportunities to build on in terms of follow-on projects, new relationships and audience development. Evaluating the work also documents the progress, which will lead to further learning and potentially further funding prospects. All of this strengthens the base from which local creative organisations are grounded.

To summarise some of the key indicators in relation to this:

- 18 new projects have been established by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far.
- 2 salaried and 45 freelance employment opportunities have been created.
- 95% of the artists agreed that *I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role*.

The provision of local employment opportunities for freelance creatives has been a real strength of the Inverclyde Culture Collective. The freelance creatives have had well-supported opportunities to develop their creative practice and build professional networks in a way that has had a tangible impact – as 90% of the artists agreed that *it has helped me to bounce back from the Covid pandemic period* and 80% of the artists agreed that *this experience has led to further paid work*. More specifically, many emerging and potentially marginalized artists have been awarded these roles, meaning that those facing the most barriers have benefitted.

To summarise some of the key indicators in relation to this:

- 39% of the projects included professional development opportunities for the artists.
- 90% of the artists agreed that *I have developed new skills*.
- 60% of the artists received *support with my creative practice*.
- 75% of the artists received *access to a local network*.
- 90% of the artists agreed that *I have made lasting professional contacts*.
- 90% of the artists agreed that *it has helped me to bounce back from the Covid period*.
- 90% of the artists agreed that *this experience will help me in my future career*.
- 80% of the artists agreed that *this experience has opened up further new paid opportunities for me*.
- 70% of the artists were emerging artists.
- 25% of the artists told us that they come from an economically deprived background
- 65% of the artists identify with at least one potentially minoritised characteristic.

The case study that follows provides an example of the way that Inverclyde Culture Collective's work has contributed to this objective by supporting an emerging artist.

Inverclyde Culture Collective case study – Carolan McPherson

“I was a freelance graphic designer for 18 years on and off, and I worked part time on visual displays with Tesco Clothing which gave me some consistent income. I loved graphic design but you are tied to a desk, and I wanted to get out and about and be more hands-on.



I’ve just finished my honours degree course in Design Practice, which was delivered by the City of Glasgow College and validated by the University of the West of Scotland. The course was predominately practice-based with a strong focus on understanding the multidisciplinary requirements of the creative industries. This gave me the opportunity to respond in a totally new way, reinforcing the importance of developing a collaboration approach in my practice.

I started volunteering with the Inverclyde Culture Collective project *Creativity in Mind* at RIG Arts while I was still doing my course. I love that class and get such a reward from that class. The people that come along experience mental health issues, and we are there to facilitate them using our skills to give them a hand doing different creative projects. They chat with each other, which is an important thing because they are often so isolated. One person took weeks to come through the door and now they talk to everyone and are really

expressive with their artwork. That brings me joy! *Creativity in Mind* has been fantastic for me and I’m still there, as RIG Arts decided to keep me on in a paid role.

I live in Port Glasgow so I have always known about RIG Arts. If there was anywhere I wanted to be, it was RIG. I don’t want to have to work in Glasgow! My community is important to me and now I get to make a difference to the community that I live in.

My experience working with RIG Arts has been priceless, extremely valuable. You must keep learning and educating yourself so this has been a good way to progress with my own practice. I like to get in there and find out how everything works and what I can learn from people. Working with *Creativity in Mind* lead artist Jim Strachan has been really good, as I have been able to watch and observe him. Jim and I have different skills and that seems to work really well in the class and I’ve enjoyed that because I’m very much into collaboration. I’ve also met so many other artists and it has been amazing looking at what other artists are doing to see how it compares to what I am doing. Honestly I was blown away by them, it was great! I have also been able to learn about how RIG Arts puts sessions and proposals and budgets together, and how all that comes to fruition to get the most out of the budget for the community. That insight has been really important from my point of view, and something I hadn’t done before.

I’m getting to put into practice what I was taught, and a lot of people don’t get to have that opportunity. Many of the fellow students that came out of my course are still looking for that first opening, so I feel lucky that I get to do what I was trained for right on my doorstep.

I plan to go into art therapy which will take two more years of study, so I’m taking a year out to get some experience under my belt. I want to get myself familiar with what is happening in Inverclyde and get my skills up. I also liked the idea of working within prisons, as my dissertation was on prison art. I have so many goals and I just want to do everything!”

Objective 3: *Inequality and barriers to access will be addressed, and everyone given the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by arts and culture.*

Inverclyde is an area experiencing high levels of economic deprivation, which brings with it poverty and multiple inequalities and can be a significant barrier to participation in the arts.

An estimated 939 individuals took part in 375 sessions across 18 new projects so far, and as mentioned before 95% of the artists agreed that *I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role*. Without Inverclyde Culture Collective much of this activity would not have taken place, and local people would not have had these opportunities to be inspired by arts and culture.

A number of the projects focused on working with specific marginalized groups or individuals, or reducing barriers to access, in response to well-understood local need. 59% of locations used for activity were situated in SIMD decile 1 (the most deprived 10% of all data-zones in Scotland) and 44% of the projects focused on engaging with communities with low arts engagement and barriers to access.

Those that took part in project activity were extremely positive about their experience and 100% agreed that *it felt easy for me to take part* which is testament to the inclusive ethos of Inverclyde Culture Collective and the careful attention that partners and artists put into engagement.

To summarise some of the key indicators in relation to this:

- 18 new projects have been established by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far.
- An estimated 939 individuals took part in these projects.
- 375 individual Inverclyde Culture Collective sessions were held so far.
- 44% of the projects focused on engaging with communities with low arts engagement and barriers to access.
- The sessions took place in 25 unique locations across Inverclyde, with 59% held in SIMD decile 1 (the most deprived 10% of all data-zones in Scotland)
- 100% of the participants agreed that *it felt easy for me to take part*.
- 98% of the participants agreed that *I had the chance to try new things*.
- 90% of the artists agreed that *I was responsive to emerging issues and needs of participants or stakeholders*.
- 75% of the artists agreed that *my project or activity had a positive impact on local people*.

The case study that follows provides an example of the way that Inverclyde Culture Collective's work has contributed to this objective by building an accessible long-term art group.

Inverclyde Culture Collective case study – Beacon Art Group

About the project:	
Partner organisation	Beacon Arts Centre
Dates	From September 2021, ongoing
Location	The Beacon Art Centre
Number of artists	2
Number of sessions	41 so far
Number of attenders	25

Karen Townsend, Creative Producer, Beacon Arts Centre

“Art classes are costly to deliver on – but because of the Inverclyde Culture Collective we have been able to offer a high quality art class to the community at no cost to them, and at low cost to the Beacon other than our in-kind contribution of space and staff planning. A lot of the work that we deliver at the Beacon is part of a social prescribing model, recognising that the arts can improve your mental health, improve social cohesion, and build confidence. The weekly art group very much does this. It is free, fully accessible, and you didn’t need any experience to join so it offers a level playing field that members of the community don’t feel daunted to join.”

Beth Shapeero, Artist

“I’m a visual artist and a big problem with visual art is that it can feel a bit pretentious. That feels sad to me because it is such an amazing thing to do, so my mission is to change that!

The unique thing about our plan for the weekly art group was that it would continue for a long time, a whole year, which is very rare. We wanted it to be a class that was open to any adults at all without any cost or restrictions, you just needed to have an interest in art to come along.

Free for everyone, very friendly, relaxed atmosphere, totally inspirational and a real boost to my confidence. This class is a life changer and has changed my whole perspective of art. (Participant)

In the first few sessions we worked on basic mark-making, and trying to get rid of that inner critic that people have when faced with a blank page. We did some abstract work, and meditative work, just getting into the feel of painting rather the conceit of whether it is

good enough. We worked with mixing colour, and we tried some outdoor painting classes. It all focused on the basics of growing confidence. The approach I took was not too prescriptive, instead it was all about how the group responded and I made sure it was flexible and met their needs. I try to keep it fun for everyone. We have expanded into screen printing and painting and drawing, and examining the way different artists do things.

Because I have had this consistent group we have been able to work towards them really developing their own practices through less guided sessions where they can pick a subject or technique and work into it a bit more.





Sometimes I try to disrupt things a bit to keep them excited. We recently took the group to visit some serious contemporary art galleries in Glasgow, all the small and independent places that they wouldn't necessarily know about. Next week we're going to go for a wild swim after the session, just for fun because one member of the group goes all the time. If it wasn't for Culture Collective I don't think they would have these opportunities. We now have a waiting list for the class which shows there is a demand and every once in a while we are able to let a few more people join.

I notice that adults don't get much care and attention and support. They tend to be the ones that look after other people, particularly the older women, so coming to the art class is special to them and they really appreciate it. I always bake something home-made for the class as I want it to be nice for them and I want them to feel I really care and that this is a treat that we do together. I've become really good friends with a lot of the group, which is really quite special. People say there is nothing going on in Inverclyde, but it is an area with a lot of creative history. Maybe the point of all this is reconnecting with the creative energy that has always been here."

Kevin Jannetts, Creative Engagement Officer, Beacon Arts Centre

This class has worked the way we all hoped it would, as it is led by the participants and the atmosphere is so relaxed. Nearly everyone in the class is new to the Beacon and they've all become friends. I think they wanted to be back in person creating work together after Covid, and they wanted a bit of stability. It is great that they have had the time to try out the different art activities and genres, and they are all finding things that they are stronger in. I've seen such a difference in them from the beginning until now. Some of them had said they were never any good at art before, that they didn't have those opportunities before, that they didn't have confidence in their own ability. Now they have worked with our curator and had their work in an exhibition - they got the same experience as the professional art community! Where else would that happen for them?

This group has been very supportive. I feel I have been challenged to develop creatively in an atmosphere of trust and goodwill. (Participant)

Karen Townsend, Creative Producer, Beacon Arts Centre

We are delighted that the participants are using the Beacon as a home and are feeling really comfortable here. The Beacon belongs to the people of Inverclyde and this project has helped cement that. They come in early, they say hello to the staff, and they meet for coffee in our cafe. You know it is going to be a nice morning when the art class are in, and we all look forward to it. The weekly art group has just worked, and the reason it has worked is because of the length of time we have been able to commit to it, working with the same people for a year. Culture Collective funding has enabled that longevity and that has had a real impact on individuals. We have been awarded a second round of Culture Collective funding so the class can continue for another year, after which we will seek further funding for it. It is becoming embedded in the Beacon as part of our standard programme. There would be such a hole if it suddenly stopped as it has been a phenomenal success."

Objective 4: *Inverclyde will be a better place to live, work or visit.*

At the most obvious level, Inverclyde Culture Collective has established a range of new creative opportunities for local people to attend, where they can enjoy trying new things and learning new skills and meeting their neighbours.

The vast majority of the Inverclyde Culture Collective projects have been directly responsive to Inverclyde as a place, including the local community, environment and historical context. Inverclyde has provided inspiration and the creative research-led process has connected local people to place, no doubt giving them a greater appreciation of Inverclyde's environment and resources. The outputs of this process have also left a lasting legacy, through tangible artworks and exhibitions, and pockets of small-scale regeneration, as well as a less tangible but equally important sense of local pride.

To summarise some of the key indicators in relation to this:

- 18 new projects have been established by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far.
- 90% of the artists agreed that *I was responsive to Inverclyde as the setting for my work.*
- 61% of the projects focused on place and communities.
- 33% of the projects focused on the regeneration of communities.
- 98% of the participants agreed that they *enjoyed* their experience.
- 78% of the participants agreed that *taking part in this makes me glad to live in Inverclyde.*
- 85% of the artists agreed that *my project will have a lasting positive impact in Inverclyde.*

Inverclyde Culture Collective has created 45 new employment opportunities for freelance artists, and a significant effort has been made to provide a fair, inclusive and enjoyable working environment for the artists locally. This has been extremely successful as the artists have found this to be a very positive, useful and enjoyable experience. In particular Inverclyde Culture Collective's commitment to creative autonomy has been noted and appreciated by the artists, leading to artists feeling trusted and respected. It is likely that this positive working ethos and environment will also have positive ripples beyond the freelancers and into the partner organisations and the wider network.

To summarise some of the key indicators in relation to this:

- 45 freelance employment opportunities have been created by Inverclyde Culture Collective.
- 35% of the artists told us that they live within Inverclyde.
- 95% of the artists received *fair pay for the job I did.*
- 80% of the artists received *fair employment and contractual conditions.*
- 95% of the artists told us that *overall this process was positive for me and my practice*
- 90% of the artists agreed that *I felt embedded within the local community.*
- 90% of the artists agreed that *it has helped me to see Inverclyde as an attractive place to live or work.*

The case study that follows provides an example of the way that Inverclyde Culture Collective's work has contributed to this objective by connecting the local community to their local environment.

Inverclyde Culture Collective case study – Inside Out

About the project:	
Partner organisation	RIG Arts
Dates	From July 2021, ongoing
Location	Auchmountain Glen
Number of artists	7
Number of sessions	40
Number of attenders	Estimated 350 so far (Community events had over 100+ each)



Karen Orr, Chief Executive, RIG Arts

"*Inside Out* is all about exploring the connection between community greenspaces and the related positive health and wellbeing benefits through working with local residents. The project aimed to encourage the local community to visit and appreciate the Auchmountain Glen, to visualise creative improvements for it and to raise its profile.

At RIG Arts we took inspiration from our *Broomy's Bee's Garden* from The Broomhill Project. Working with residents, an urban community garden was created from derelict land to improve access to greenspaces for three blocks of high flats and surrounding homes. This proved to be a lifeline for residents, especially over lockdown, who expressed that having a space to safely meet friends, take time for themselves, and enjoy nature was restorative and uplifting for both physical and mental health. The garden was co-designed with residents as part of the creative regeneration of Broomhill and therefore nurtures a sense of community ownership. This successful approach has informed our plans as we found that a people-led approach results in the best outcomes and highest success.

RIG Arts had previously worked with *The Friends of Auchmountain Glen* project through co-designing and creating an archway feature in 2019-2020. We were aware of their passion for the Glen and that *The Auchmountain Glen's Women's Group* had recently started up. The women felt a bit marginalised and really wanted to have a bigger presence in the Project. They also wanted to involve the wider community in activities linked to the Glen to raise its profile and to build support for its ongoing improvement. RIG Arts felt that *Inside Out* was a good fit to help achieve these aims."

Samantha Macgregor, Artist



“This area has undergone a lot of regeneration and change with new housing built and old housing taken down, and a lot of people have recently moved into the area. The arts can be helpful in enabling people to meet each other through shared activities and find commonality, as well as being a way for us to consult with local people on identifying and developing their priorities for Auchmountain Glen.

In the first quarter of *Inside Out* we worked with a women’s group and their kids, making

fairy houses for a fairy trail, created using natural elements that they gathered from up the Glen. We placed the fairy houses in the Glen and asked the community to come along and see what we had made. It was such a popular event that hadn’t really prepared for how busy it

would be! Our next event was *Light Up the Glen*, an illuminated walk. This time we managed the attendance in blocks, and we arranged to have activity stalls and an ice cream truck at the base



of the Glen too. We then decided to connect with the youth clubs that meet at Auchmountain Community Hall, to do some workshops focusing on getting the kids up to the Glen. The Glen already contains some plinths and they had a great idea about having a regular competition to keep the buzz going, to create a temporary sculpture for one of the plinths. We hope that all of this creative activity is encouraging the communities to see the potential in the Glen and in their own ideas.

The events are enhancing the Glen and getting people out to visit, and engaging with the community through art opens up so

many conversations. We want people to appreciate what they have, such a beautiful greenspace at their back door. Some locals have been working away for years getting the Glen to this point, and the art gives us the opportunity to educate and inform more people and put things into a historical context for them. We are creating that dialogue for future generations so that when they grow up they know that they had their input into Auchmountain Glen too. *Inside Out* is helping to give local people that sense of ownership, and by getting them involved they are starting to feel that this is their Glen.”



Karen Orr, Chief Executive, RIG Arts

“To achieve a degree of success takes time and *Inside Out* has started to make an impact working with the community and raising awareness of Auchmountain Glen with community members who were not aware of what an area of great natural beauty it is. The project is at the stage of embarking on the physical inputs of artworks, seating, and looking to source additional funding for lights - identified as the priorities from the creative consultations and events. These additions will help make the space more accessible and add to the excellent work that local volunteers are already doing on a day-to-day basis.”

Response to other questions of interest

Do new approaches lead to improved social, economic and cultural outcomes for the local area?

Inverclyde Culture Collective has initiated a wide range of activities, partnerships and employment opportunities that would not have been available locally otherwise, and response from partners, artists and participants has been extremely positive.

What are the key learnings on how to embed arts in local place-making?

Inverclyde Culture Collective is immersed in the Inverclyde community, and its direction is closely intertwined with addressing local issues and the challenges that local people face. It is this deep understanding and sensitivity to local need that has led to its successes. A 'sense of place' has been rooted in every activity that falls under the Inverclyde Culture Collective banner, whether this relates to environment, history or the people of the region. Using the arts in response to these issues, especially in such an exploratory manner, has created linkages between creativity and locality which has made the Inverclyde Culture Collective and its activities feel extremely relevant to the full spectrum of people involved. Participants have been enthusiastic and interested, artists and partners have enjoyed being responsive to local need, and local decision-makers have appreciated the focus on strategic local outcomes.

How can we offer meaningful support to creative practitioners from socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds to troubleshoot barriers they face to career development in the creative industries?

The quantity and quality of employment opportunities for artists created through Inverclyde Culture Collective has been a real success of the approach taken, and a high proportion of the artists employed have been emerging artists and potentially minoritized artists. Providing opportunities for these artists in Inverclyde is an excellent outcome. That said, only 25% of the artists come from an economically deprived background and only 35% live in Inverclyde, and our postcode analysis shows that applicants living in the most deprived postcodes were not ultimately selected for the roles. It may be that more could be done at the application stage to support local or applicants to apply and to be successful, or that other actions could be taken in the coming year to support local artists. Another success of the approach taken has been the excellent working conditions, flexibility and bespoke nature of support offered to artists by Inverclyde Culture Collective, and the artists have appreciated receiving individualised support. For this reason it appears likely that any artists from socio-economically deprived backgrounds would be equally well supported should they be successful in securing roles, and that the focus should thus be on changing recruitment practices if this is considered a priority.

How best to position arts and culture in local decision-making, planning and delivery?

Inverclyde Culture Collective grew out of existing local strategic plans, and its collaborative work has started to make inroads into delivering against these plans and forming new cross-sectoral relationships. There is, however, more work to do around the sustainability of this. In the coming year it will be important to focus on raising ambition around what can be achieved longer-term.

Concluding remarks

By the end of the Inverclyde Culture Collective grant term, along with our lead partners, we will have explored ways of engaging community planning partners, communities and visitors in mutual relationships, identifying that arts and culture is important to them and working with them to celebrate and preserve it.

Inverclyde Culture Collective has explored a great variety of new ways of working regionally, and has made substantial progress in delivering the objectives that it set out to deliver.

In total 18 projects have been undertaken by Inverclyde Culture Collective so far. Alongside the various project partners, 45 freelance employment opportunities were created by Inverclyde Culture Collective. 39 individual artists took up these 45 opportunities, undertaking an estimated 3,672 paid hours of work.

The commissioned artists told us that they felt very well supported by Inverclyde Culture Collective, with key elements of support including:

- Fair payment
- Being a highly supportive employer
- Brokering connections
- Assistance with practicalities
- Flexible working
- Collaboration opportunities

With regards the open-ended exploratory creative approach taken by Inverclyde Culture Collective, only 60% of the artists had worked in this way before, but 95% told us that *overall this process was positive for me and my practice*. Feeling trusted and autonomous was appreciated as a form of professional respect, which perhaps enabled ambition of approach as 85% agreed that *I pushed the boundaries of my own practice* and 70% agreed that *I implemented unusual or radical approaches*.

The various parties involved in Inverclyde Culture Collective have been extremely positive about the opportunity and about progress so far. Challenges were minimal and typically resolved during delivery.

There is no doubt more work to do in drawing the various elements of the Inverclyde Culture Collective together in the coming year to solidify the network and ensure that relationships and activities have a lasting and sustainable legacy. Some of the partners feel that Inverclyde ought to be more ambitious in its cultural plans, but perhaps this ambition in itself has been ignited by the possibilities that Inverclyde Culture Collective has enabled.

The successes of the Inverclyde Culture Collective can be attributed to the commitment of all concerned in celebrating Inverclyde and its people, and the ethos of open-ended innovation, because this has made the programme of activities feel interesting and highly relevant locally.

Kat Boyle and Jack Stancliffe have put substantial care, support and encouragement into maintaining this focus and creating the excellent conditions enabling the Inverclyde Culture Collective to flourish, which has been vital.

Establishing a baseline

The following table outlines a proposed set of indicators that Inverclyde Culture Collective could use to track progress and change across the coming years. Inverclyde Culture Collective should internally agree whether these indicators are the most relevant (and remain relevant) and additional indicators could also be added. Inverclyde Culture Collective could also use Year 1 figures as a baseline from which to set tangible goals for future years (target percentages to achieve), or to specify an intended direction of change (whether each indicator should increase, decrease or be maintained).

Working with artists

Indicator	Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Conditions				
% of artists: found the recruitment and contacting process to be straightforward	Artist survey	80		
% of artists received: <i>fair pay for the job I did</i>	Artist survey	95		
% of artists received: <i>fair employment and contractual conditions</i>	Artist survey	80		
Approach				
% of artists received: <i>professional autonomy</i>	Artist survey	60		
% of artists agree: <i>I had the freedom to develop my own ideas and approaches</i>	Artist survey	85		
% of artists agree: <i>I pushed the boundaries of my own practice</i>	Artist survey	85		
% of artists agree: <i>overall this process was positive for me and my practice</i>	Artist survey	95		

Objective 1: Arts and cultural organisations and creative freelancers will have built sustainable partnerships with other sectors, agencies and organisations in the place, and arts and culture will be fully reflected in local plans and strategies.

Indicator	Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Number of projects worked directly with community partners	Snapshot	3		
% of artists: undertook collaboration with partners	Artist survey	65		
% of artists agree: <i>I felt like a cultural changemaker</i>	Artist survey	85		

Objective 2: Local creative organisations and freelancers will be more resilient.

Indicator	Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Organisations				
Number of new projects established locally	Snapshot	18		
Number of freelance employment opportunities created	Snapshot	45		
% of artists agree: <i>I undertook work that would not have happened if Inverclyde Culture Collective had not funded my role</i>	Artist survey	95		
Freelancers				
% of projects including professional development opportunities	Snapshot	39		
% of artists agree: <i>I have developed new skills</i>	Artist survey	90		
% of artists received: <i>support with my creative practice</i>	Artist survey	60		
% of artists received: <i>access to a local network</i>	Artist survey	75		
% of artists agree: <i>I have made lasting professional contacts</i>	Artist survey	90		
% of artists agree: <i>this experience will help me in my future career</i>	Artist survey	90		
% of artists agree: <i>this experience has opened up further new paid opportunities for me</i>	Artist survey	80		
% of artists: are emerging artists	Artist survey	70		
% of artists: come from an economically deprived background	Artist survey	25		
% of artists: identify with at least one potentially minoritized characteristic	Artist survey	65		

Objective 3: Inequality and barriers to access will be addressed, and everyone given the opportunity to experience and to be inspired by arts and culture.

Indicator	Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Estimated total number of participants across all projects	Snapshot	939		
Number of sessions held	Snapshot	375		
% of projects focused on: engaging with communities with low arts engagement and barriers to access	Snapshot	44		
% of unique project locations in SIMD decile 1	Snapshot / SIMD analysis	59		

% of participants agree: <i>it felt easy for me to take part</i>	Participant survey	100		
% of participants agree: <i>I had the chance to try new things</i>	Participant survey	98		
% of artists agree: <i>I was responsive to emerging issues and needs of participants or stakeholders</i>	Artist survey	90		
% of artists agree: <i>my project or activity had a positive impact on local people</i>	Artist survey	75		

Objective 4: *Inverclyde will be a better place to live, work or visit.*

Indicator	Source	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Place to live and visit				
% of projects focused on: place and communities.	Snapshot	61		
% of projects focused on: regeneration of communities.	Snapshot	33		
% of participants agree: <i>I enjoyed their experience</i>	Participant survey	98		
% of participants agree: <i>taking part in this makes me glad to live in Inverclyde</i>	Participant survey	78		
% of artists agree: <i>I was responsive to Inverclyde as the setting for my work.</i>	Artist survey	90		
% of artists agree: <i>my project will have a lasting positive impact in Inverclyde</i>	Artist survey	85		
Place to work				
Number of freelance employment opportunities created in Inverclyde	Snapshot	45		
% of artists: live within Inverclyde	Artist survey	35		
% of artists agree: <i>overall this process was positive for me and my practice</i>	Artist survey	95		
% of artists agree: <i>I felt embedded within the local community</i>	Artist survey	90		
% of artists agree: <i>it has helped me to see Inverclyde as an attractive place to live or work</i>	Artist survey	90		

Future iterations of evaluation could include statistics or other tangible measures of impact on partners, an assessment of the extent of partnership working, and a demonstration of impact in emerging policies and plans.