

ARTSCAPE

Project Title:	Artscape		
Delivered by:	Powys County Council's Arts Service		
Start date:	January 2021	End Date:	March 2022
LEADER Theme:	Theme 1 - Adding Value to Local Identity and Natural and Cultural Resources		

Total Expenditure:	£132,202.74
RDP Funding:	£75,353.74
Match funding:	£56,849.00

1. Introduction

Project Summary Intention

arts · climate change · wellbeing · digital

- **ARTSCAPE** aims to re-energise community life by re-connecting people with each other, their communities and the environment through shared creative **arts** experiences on the theme of **wellbeing & Climate Change**.
- The wellbeing of individuals, their cultural nourishment, concern for their places and community engagement needs are at the heart of **ARTSCAPE**.
- **ARTSCAPE** 'happenings' will invoke the re-ignition of the arts in Powys and how we reach into communities using digital technology, the re-imagining of how we interact with the environment and the re-awakening of rural life bringing people and nature closer together.
- **ARTSCAPE** will provide the 'setting', resources and expertise necessary to explore bold, new ways of cross sector working in the post-COVID Powys community landscape.
- **ARTSCAPE** will creatively address, through the arts, the themes that matter most, globally to humankind and locally to communities, now and into the future.
- **ARTSCAPE** unites artists, arts & cultural organisations and communities in co-curating connective creative happenings in the natural environment, community settings and green spaces **so** imaginatively compelling and informative that individuals and communities will readily engage, be inspired and motivated by and encouraged to reflect on climate change and take positive action.

We inspire and help our community

- ARTSCAPE involved the creation of a programme of community focused, environmentally themed and locally based creative arts experiences, happenings and events in the physical and digital space.
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- ARTSCAPE was a creative partnership alliance between Powys County Council's Arts & Cultural Service (as lead), National Resources Wales, Impelo, 4Pi Productions and Articulture involving local arts associates and communities.
- The partnership has been formed to engage imaginatively with communities to stimulate re-connectivity, stir an enthusiasm for environmental caretaking in the face of climate change, and promote people's wellbeing through interrelated environment / place based and virtual / digital arts experiences.
- ARTSCAPE was delivered as a creative collaborative partnership model.



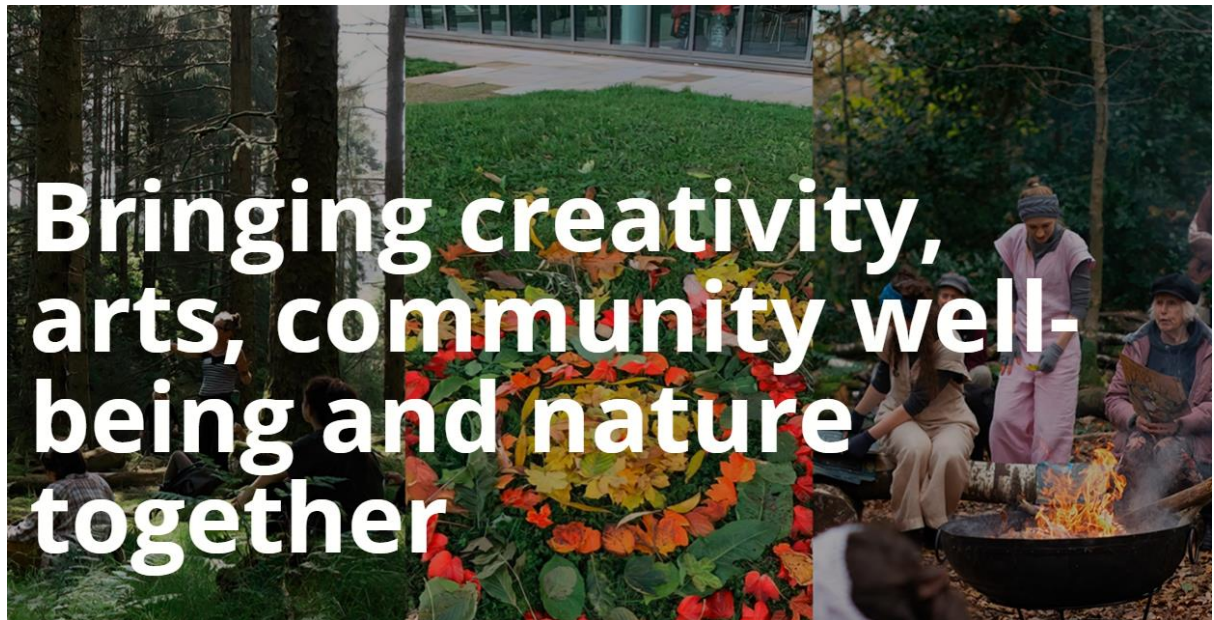
2. Challenge

The onset of COVID in March 2019 and the resultant shutdown of community activity, as we knew it, quickly impacted on all areas of life, including culture and the arts. With venues closing, community arts participatory activity ceasing and no access to cultural events, performances and arts spaces – the benefits of personal and population based creative nourishment were quite suddenly unavailable. Artists, producers, creative industry professionals and community arts organisations were faced with an immediate disconnect between themselves as cultural presenters and the people they connected with.

People became isolated, communities locked down, loneliness and poor mental health escalated in an already rural and socially remote area of Wales.

3. Solution

ARTSCAPE was conceived as an experimental solution to a current crisis, the length and breadth of its ongoing impact being unknown at the time (and to date is still uncertain). The main aim was to mitigate the stark restrictions imposed on people's movement, social interaction and societal barriers by safely taking arts production and presentation into the outdoors environment, where social distancing and safety measures could be compliantly managed allowing people to experience high quality & innovative arts practice in countryside locations which informed the arts experiences themselves.



4. Benefit

People of all ages benefitted from being able to safely experience accessible creative arts performances, events and presentations in their local communities with others (socially distanced but connected through shared experience).

Artists were given a valuable window to make, create, imagine and collaborate with other practitioners and audiences / participants thereby developing their practice in readiness for a new world.

The natural environment and Climate Crisis played a key role in informing what inspired the development of performance, visual, community participatory and experiential art work was developed, made and shared – thereby raising awareness of priority issues.

5. Result

- New project partnership model trialled – arts – digital – environment – communities
- Artist practitioners, arts organisations and creative industry professionals employed to effectively develop their practices and professions within and for communities
- Communities engaged and inspired by creative practices e.g. Puppet Soup, Glanio & the Brecon Arts Collective where engagement was central to the 'art work presentation'.
- Legacy of work

Examples: -

1.



Matt Cook is a sound artist and community practitioner, who is passionate about helping people appreciate and notice their environment. He often begins projects by walking

through the landscape, and uses gathered sounds, shapes and colours to create interactive sonic-kinetic maps.

'Brecon Sound Forage' was created through a series of interactions with ornithologist Andrew King, the Biodiversity Information Service for Powys and local green woodworkers, in response to the Island Fields site in Brecon.

A series of field recordings gathered throughout Autumn 2021, this work celebrates, archives and critiques the biodiversity of Brecon's Island Fields.

Brecon Sound Forage was installed at y Gaer during the Cop26 fortnight in Autumn 2021, played out of birdboxes outside to create an immersive soundscape.

<https://artscape.wales/2021/12/21/matt-cook/>

2.



'**Glanio**' is a work devised and developed by Marla King, Fin Jordão and Clara Rust. It was first performed at Llandrindod Lake as an immersive, guided walk using choreographed movement to explore themes of memory, loss and connection to place. The performance was devised as public engagement with climate change, exploring our intrinsic connection to nature and the discovery of possibilities provided by multiple languages. This was timed to coincide with the Cop26 fortnight in Autumn 2021.

'Glanio' would not have landed without: creative Welsh translation provided by Emyr Humphreys; soundscape created by Jim Somniac using site specific sound samples; carefully sourced costumes assembled by Tegan James; choreographic support by Cai Tomos; illustrations on the route map, welcome and closing signs created by Suzy Bee using eco-friendly clay paint, recycled paper and potato starch glue; wonderful additional dancers Jodie Evans and Bethan Cooper.

Fin Jordão is a writer, creative biologist and educator on human ecology, who seeks to engage the social body with critical discourses around excess, waste and multiplicity using material metaphors.

Clara Rust a multi-disciplinary artist, specializing in dance and movement practices. She takes a holistic approach, using the human body, nature, experience and connection to create and lead workshops. Clara Rust is also part of the Brecknock Arts Collective.

Marla King is a freelance dance artist, collaborator, climate justice advocate and podcaster. She works at the intersection of climate and social justice, incorporating the arts as a means to educate and explore nature connection in a more inclusive way that works to embed environmental sustainability.

3.



Billie Ireland is a visual artist with a practice deeply rooted in discovery, vulnerability, and nature.

She is drawn to spiritual, ritualistic and sacrificial methods of creation, often reflecting on the power of motherhood and connection to place.

“The Source” is a site-specific, temporary art project in three parts;

‘The Barefoot Pilgrimage’ was a journey to the source of the Severn River, to collect water samples from the peat bogs of Plumlumon. Walking barefoot allowed Billie Ireland to connect to the sacred feminine she sees in the water, as well as the way the land has historically been used as a burial site.

‘The Carbon Spiral’ was created by taking fallen wood from Hafren Forest, turning it into biochar, and then turning that into paint which was then applied in a spiral to the trunk of a dead tree. It forms a totem that reflects on the cycle of birth, life and death.

‘Weaving Carbon Connection’ involved the Welsh weave pattern being cut into the turf in the meadow at Hafren Forest. This was then filled with biochar, as both a symbol linking place and use, and a meditation of carbon sequestration.

4. https://youtu.be/K_fCsZYRmQ

PuppetSoup is an award-winning theatre company that creates ‘Puppetry. For everyone’. They offer courses, classes and workshops as well as community events and projects. PuppetSoup also create shows for large and small theatres, schools, community spaces, rural venues and festivals.

PuppetSoup ran a series of community workshops in and around Llanidloes. Participants from a wide range of backgrounds explored found and recycled materials to create puppets and developed their storytelling skills. In Hafren Forest, just outside of Llanidloes, they built six puppetry stages and invited workshop participants to perform on them whilst Cop26 unfolded during Autumn 2021.

6. Project Outputs/Outcomes

Output (Case Level Indicator)	Achieved
No. of feasibility studies	n/a
No. of networks established	0
No. of jobs safeguarded	n/a
No. Of pilot activities undertaken / supported	1
No. of community hubs created	n/a
No. of stakeholders engaged	27
No. of participants supported (awareness raising events only)	113
No. of jobs created	0.25
No. of communities benefitting	6
No. of businesses benefitting	31

7. Project Contact Details

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8. Partners/Match Funders Logos

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ARTSCAPE was a Powys County Council led project delivered in creative collaborative partnership with:



Powys County Council is the local authority for Powys, one of the administrative areas of Wales. They are lead partner in Artscape.



The Environment Act gives Natural Resources Wales a new purpose – to pursue sustainable management of natural resources. We will apply a specific set of principles while maximising our contribution to the well-being goals.

ARTICULTURE

Articulture is a registered CIC that supports the development of innovative, high quality outdoor arts and diverse engaged audiences in Wales. It collaborates with a wide range of arts and non-arts practitioners to facilitate and showcase the extraordinary diversity of outdoor arts. It develops new work, artists, audiences and networks, finding national and international platforms for Welsh creatives. Articulture believes outdoor arts can encourage widespread participation and mutually beneficial partnerships across all sectors of society, leading to more sustainable communities in Wales.



4Pi is an award-winning creative studio that blends powerful emerging technologies with cross-media storytelling approaches, producing immersive experiences that reach out to audiences in new and engaging ways.



Impelo is a charitable organisation that seeks to share the transformational power of dance as far and wide as possible, connecting people of all ages and ways of life in joyful expression.

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