



Research Report
Creative Places Mac Uilliam
March 2023

Report by Tony Fegan – Creative Director
Jennifer Webster – Project Coordinator
Dr Victoria Durrer – Academic Researcher

Image by Jonathan Stokes

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
Mac Uílliam Estate.....	4
Methodological Approach.....	5
Creative / Research Activities.....	7
Meeting MacUílliam.....	9
Concluding Reflections.....	11

Appendices:

Appendix 1.....	13
Freshly Ground Evaluation	
Appendix 2.....	17
Arts Programme	
Appendix 3.....	19
Interview quotations	
Appendix 4.....	22
Freshly Ground Final Evaluation '23	
Appendix 5.....	25
Artist Reflections	

Introduction:

This document serves as an accompaniment to the arts-based research outputs that have resulted from our Research and Development with MacUílliam Residents.

Team:

There are two core members to the team involved in carrying out this research: Tony Fegan, Artistic Director of Tallaght Community Arts, and Jennifer Webster, Independent Creative Producer and Coordinator. Tony and Jennifer were main contacts in MacUílliam Estate for residents, for the interagency committee members and stakeholders. Tony devised the creative programme and supported the development of Adult Arts Action Group. Jennifer coordinated events, scheduled, developed and managed the creative team. She also supported the development and capacity building of Youth Arts Action Group to be effective co programmers of youth arts activities.

The core team was supported by Dr Victoria Durrer as a Research Advisor. Victoria supported the team in designing and delivering the research process as well as taking part in reflective meetings in which core team members discussed and reflected upon their experiences and learning to-date. She also engaged in a number of social scientific approaches, particularly semi-structured online interviews and walking interviews on site in MacUílliam and with residents and service providers.

In addition to these individuals the project also involved a number of freelance creative practitioners, who were employed to support the research in the following ways:

Creative Practitioners	Artistic/Research Support Role
Freshly Ground Theatre Company	Research and Evaluation Workshop for young people
Jonathan Stokes	Photographic Documentation of project including documentation workshops with participants
Annette Barnaville	Film Documentation of research project
Jenny Macdonald	Dramaturgy and story capturing during arts-based initiatives such as TogetherHERE and Felt Making project
Lucy Peprah	MacUílliam development group/South Dublin County Partnership
Sharon Doyle	Tallaght Community Arts, outreach and community support

MacUílliam Estate: What we knew before we knew it

MacUílliam estate fits the social cultural and economic criteria as a under resourced physical and social environment with residents on low incomes. 60% population under 24 years with little disposable income. 40% + families from African cultural heritage and Traveller community.

In late 2019 residents supported by SDCC Housing & Community Departments had established a new Residents Association with 20 members with monthly zoom meetings. There was huge level of enthusiasm to bring about change.

SDC Partnership runs a Community Development Group of residents mainly of African cultural heritage. Tallaght Traveller Development Agency supports the Traveller families. The Childhood Development Agency (CDI) was working to improve education prospects for early years into national school, working with parents and home liaison teachers.

The Barnardos building on the estate, was the only meeting place. However, the largest meeting room can only hold 20 people maximum. There was no space for workshop type activities.

A children's playground and a MUGA (multi usage games arena) were installed in 2006. The children's play area had been consistently vandalised and was eventually removed in late 2021 as we had begun work. The MUGA continued to be successful. An ongoing issue was the provision of play space for children

In late 2019 Marie Corr, SDC Partnership Manager for Integration approached us to see if Tallaght Community Arts might work with residents. We met with residents and Tony Shaw SDCC Estates Manager & Andrea Molly SDCC Community Dept. We explored some STEAM project funding opportunities but the absence of a registered youth service on the estate meant that we were not eligible. We agreed to meet early in 2020 but the Covid pandemic intervened.

During the Covid Lockdown had kept in contact with the Community Development Group. In January 2021 we recruited 15 children/young people in an online dance project Break Thru. Three of those young people have since joined our Street Arts Academy. The recruitment was by an active parent/resident from the Development Group.

Mac Uílliam Estate is one of our largest Council estates and has a large population of young people. There have been significant challenges particularly involving anti-social behaviour amongst youths at the estate over the last few years. However, following efforts from residents and local agencies in recent months, a new Residents Association with 20 members was established and monthly meetings take place (by Zoom due to Covid restrictions). As a result, we have managed some small successes on the ground, including environmental improvements etc. There is now a huge level of enthusiasm to bring further change.

- Tony Shaw SDCC Estates Manager. February 2021

We encountered a wealth of negative stories about the estate and residents, some real, some apocryphal. There was in reality a consistent level of anti-social behaviour and drug running/dealing issues. However, we met residents from the Residents Association and MacUílliam Development Group and other individuals who had been working over the years to improve the social and built infrastructure of the estate.

Many were suffering from volunteer fatigue around the lack of response from the local authority.

So we began with the knowledge that there was a huge desire for change.

The overwhelming community response to our Research and Development programme has been, that something needed to be done for children and young people. Many young people we worked with had never visited local cultural centres – a common response was;

We didn't know we could come here.

So, a major focus of our participatory arts work has been engaging with young people 12 – 19 years.

Methodological Approach:

We initially set out to explore with residents the following research question:

How might we better understand the arts as a core part of our community capacity for collective engagement in decisions that impact our everyday lives?

However, as our research and development period stretched beyond the initial introductions to people and service providers that were afforded for the purposes of developing a funding application to the Arts Council, our thinking shifted. Gaining a greater sense of MacUílliam as being at a 'deficit' in some way (described above) as an institutionally based understanding (Durrer & Davey, 2024, in peer review) rather than a reality, we adapted our approach to better reflect our intention to 'get to know' MacUílliam.

Our approach to getting to know MacUílliam is aligned with scholarship in human and cultural geography (Paasi, 1991; Adams et al., 2001). Such an approach sees MacUílliam estate not simply as a geographical location with built environment as well as cultural and social relations. Rather we approach 'understanding' a 'sense' of MacUílliam as a complex endeavour. It involves understanding the institutional definitions of MacUílliam as a place and the personal experiences and feelings for people living and working in MacUílliam. It involves taking account of the interaction between the

institutional and the personal. It involves capturing the complex social relations that occur within MacUílliam as well as amongst those service providers existing outside the estate (Paasi, 1991). It involves getting to know MacUílliam's "texture", that is, "the processes, structures, spaces, and histories that went into [and continue] [the] making" of MacUílliam as a 'place' (Adams, et al., 2001, p. xiii). Doing so also means accounting for its (changing) atmosphere, that is the "complexity of feelings" associated with living and working in a particular location (Hicks, 2020, p. 463), including our own.

As a result, rather than our research being 'about' MacUílliam as a ('creative') place (or not), our approach has been focused on 'getting to know' MacUílliam "through creative practice" (Green, 2006, p. 5). Taking a creative 'practice-as-research'-based approach is critical for understanding the personal nature of meaning-making (Durrer, et al., 2022; Green, 2006) related to one's sense and experience of place (Paasi, 1991; Durrer, et al., 2021). Creative practice-as-research is also appropriate for the "socially engaged practice and community-development principles" in which the Creative Places Programme as a whole is "rooted" (ACI Guidelines, 2021: 1).

In our use of the term 'creative practice-as-research', 'creative' refers to methods of art-making that take place through art workshops (e.g., lantern making, drawing, dancing) and dialogical practice (e.g., meetings and discussions over cups of tea that inform the creative activity we develop) (Kester, 2004; Bishop, 2006). Creative practice-as-research is distinct from arts-informed methods that are often used in qualitative research studies. Rather than serving as a complement to other forms of data, a creative-practice-as-research approach positions artistic or creative practice as central "for investigation, analysis, interpretation, representation, and dissemination" (Archibald & Gerber, 2018, p. 957). Drawing on the work of a number of scholars, Archibald & Gerber (2018)

"The arts embody, capture, and generate aesthetic ways of knowing. Aesthetic knowing is best understood as sense-based, perceptual, embodied, and emotional forms of knowledge inaccessible through more traditional epistemologies or linear/causal methods of investigation..." (p. 957)

Tallaght Community Arts has long taken such approaches as fundamental to our methodology for meeting and engaging with participants in any community or locale-specific context of work. However, we have become more confident in recognising creative-practice as methods for research that are equally valuable to arts policy development through the support of our Research Advisor, Victoria Durrer and her work in championing the contribution of arts-practice-as-research methods to cultural policymaking and study (see McGrath, et al., 2021; Durrer, et al., 2022).

Creative / Research Activities:

We have carried out the following creative-practice-based activities:

- Initial planning meetings with Research Advisor (Dr. Victoria Durrer) to embed research methodology (July 2021)
- First two months of getting to know you included: meeting residents on the estate, walking the estate with two residents helping us make introductions to other residents, leaflet drops, meeting with schools, and meeting with groups and associations linked with MacUíllíam Estate. This has continued throughout the 18 months. The purpose of this was to introduce Creative Places to the local residents and to give them the opportunity to share their wishes regarding the project.
- Reading and research interviews and interview walks/rambles; residents' association meeting sharing about project; by Research Advisor (Aug - Oct 2021)
- Reflection meeting with Research Advisor (Sept 2021)
- Walk about the estate with Lucy Peprah - South Dublin County Partnership, and SDCC Anti-Social Behaviour Unit
- First public event was a 'Lantern Making Workshop' in October 2021 held in Barnardos and outside in a gazebo at the entrance to the estate. During this event, we spoke with young participants aged 7 - 19 years and documented the type of arts events they would like to see happen on the estate.
(Please see Appendix 1- Freshly Ground Report 2021, page 14)
- LLPSS (Local Live Performance Support Scheme) supported the event in the basketball court in December 2021 that included a dance performance, 15 Christmas trees lighting, and a parade throughout the estate, our first of many!
- Following consultations and meetings with St. Aidan's Community School, our first mid-term camp began in Feb '22 for young people aged 7 years upwards. Workshops in the following arts genres were programmed: music, beats, visual art, drama, film, and dance. Our youth arts camps have continued each mid-term since.
- 'Sharing Moves' dance workshops and performative event held at the basketball court in June 2022
- Cruinniú na nÓg - 'Trash Catchers Ball': young people worked for a week with our artist team in Ardmore Community Hub. Young people under the guidance of facilitators delivered a workshop in the basketball court to younger residents.
- Early Years project development and sharing.

- Tours and workshops at Rua Red, introducing members of the community to South Dublin Arts Centre and its programme of events. Attending Culture Night activities in Tallaght Cultural Quarter.
- Tour of Dublin city (July 2022)
- Family Day in association with MacUíllíam Development Group, SDCP, and interagency groups. (June 2022)
- Reflection meeting with Research Advisor (Nov 2022)
- 6 weeks felt-making and storytelling workshop for adults and young people 16+, Oct-Dec '22
- Lighting of Christmas Tree 2022 in association with MacUíllíam Development Group

(For more details on our Research Arts Programme events, please see Appendix 2, page: 18).

Our Research Advisor engaged in qualitative methods of data collection including:

Walking tours with people living and working in MacUíllíam, discussing key sites, moments and activities in the area to assist in understanding the atmosphere and experience of living and working in the estate (Aoki and Yoshimizu, 2015, p. 278; Durrer, et al., 2022)

Semi-structured interviews with service providers involved in the earlier years of MacUíllíam's development as an estate in order to gain perspective on the institutional perspectives and histories involved in its making as a 'place'.

The core team also took part in reflection meetings with the Research Advisor. In these meetings, the core team individually discussed our views on our own work. In order to highlight our learning, discussion centred on sharing experiences, challenges, surprises and feelings about the process undergone. Perspectives on opportunities and challenges for current and future programme development were raised for response and consideration.

An important discussion point was how as artists engaged in a participatory arts process work in a dispersed physical location and in premises not directly associated or located in the community.

Having discussions to work in the open air, is very different when faced with the reality, that includes removing broken glass, syringes and nitrous oxide capsules from the Basketball Court event site, before welcoming participants and public.

Meeting MacUílliam:

Influenced by forms of ‘cultural mapping’ (Duxbury et al., 2015, p. 2) that align with the complex views on place we outlined above, we have set out to ‘meet’ MacUílliam and become better acquainted with the people living and working there as well as the tangible and intangible assets of the estate. According to Duxbury et al. (2015):

Tangible assets refer to the physical spaces, social / cultural organisations, public forms of promotion and self-representation, public art, arts / cultural groups, natural and cultural heritage, architecture, people, artifacts, and other material resources.

Intangible Assets refer to the “values and norms, beliefs and philosophies, language, community narratives, histories and memories, relationships, rituals, traditions, identities, and ... senses of place.” (p. 2)

(Please see Appendix 3: Interview Quotations, page 20)

Below is a summary of what we learned while getting to know MacUílliam, which are reflected in our creative outputs.

- Welcoming and enthusiastic community
- Vibrant collection of young teenagers/young adults who are willing to participate and actively support initiatives
- Barnardos - only physical indoor space on the estate, albeit small. Great for meetings and small workshops
- relationship with Barnardos who have supported us with complex child protection issues.
- St. Aidan Community School with both space and outreach
- Basketball Court/Astro in Estate that has been the area used for many site-specific workshops and events. Central location within the estate.
- Green spaces both beside the Basketball Court/Astro and at the front of the estate
- Enclosed physical layout of the estate.

Creative practice as research is a valuable approach for meeting and getting to know people in places. Whereas much research into creative practice from an arts management and policy perspective tends to privilege quantifiable and statistical data, this approach champions situated / site-specific knowledge. It also champions the practice of artmaking as a form of experiential knowledge-making. We believe this potential is a strength that the Creative Places programme provides, and the value of such approaches can be championed more greatly by the Arts Council.

The official narrative or description of MacUílliam in the media and in local authority and service provision related literature and practitioner circles takes a deficit-based approach. It neglects recognition of the richness of experience and cultural diversity of the estate that the funding from Creative Places has assisted the Creative Places research team in presenting. (It was always there but it allowed the Creative Places team to 'meet' it).

We have found that employing (and at full pay) emerging arts facilitators that have come from the surrounding locality has been important to residents. Not only did our local artist team bring artistic professionalism to the project they were also vital role models to the residents; in particular young people aged between 12-19 years.

MacUílliam residents have experienced a historical neglect and a lack of consistency in terms of services. Their voices are currently engaged by a small, but significant group of providers that include South Dublin County Partnership, Barnardos, Connect 4, and local schools in particular Scoil Aoife National School and St. Aidan's Community School.

Approaches to the planning development of MacUílliam by the local authority have fostered a visible and very real sense of division among the residents, that has been addressed to as much an extent as is possible by Creative Places MacUílliam.

St. Aidan's Community School serves as an important site for gathering and hosting activities. This has been a particularly important site in the absence of any available indoor gathering place on the Estate, but also, being a school, it as it is viewed as a neutral space.

Among all the residents we engaged with there is a strong pride in the estate but also a deep feeling of frustration at the lack of long term and meaningful engagement to address basic needs, such as street lighting, locations for meeting, and so on.

There is some trepidation amongst arts workers and our service providers/supporters that the arts may be viewed by residents or be seen to be by others as a ploy to mask the remaining local authority negligence in serving the everyday needs of residents. e.g.: improvement in the built environment including street lighting.

The practice involved in place-specific and participatory or socially engaged arts involves a high level of emotional labour, that is not fully recognised and needs greater acknowledgement and accounting for as an aspect of the roles, responsibilities, skillsets and 'price' (even if not quantifiable), of this work.

Concluding Reflections: Building our Relationship

We have gained a stronger understanding of how to better facilitate pathways for amateur, youth, and professional participation in the arts that are connected to the physical facilities and social, cultural and professional arts networks existing in the wider locality of Tallaght, in which MacUílliam sits.

(Please Appendix 4: Final Evaluation with youth participants aged 12-19 years, page: 22).

Reflections on this learning are summarised below:

- The Creative Places Research Project has enabled us to explore and tap into the potential of a locality and communities that have been marginalised for some while.
- It has revealed the latent talent and interest in residents particularly the young people, that was not evident at the beginning.
- Our investment in working with local artists and organisations proved to be an enormous asset to the research process. (Please see Appendix 5: Artist Reflections, page: 25)
- Being part of a national initiative like this and sharing experiences with other Creative Places groups has brought home the challenges of widening arts engagement across the country.
- Each community is different in its social and cultural context. The built environment plays a huge role in people's perception and attitudes to their worth. Neglected streets and housing sends a strong message to residents and outsiders about 'community value'.
- Whilst improvements to the built environment are incremental and tangible the legacy of 'nobody cares about us' are carried in memories of communities and individuals for a long time.

References:

ACI Guidelines. (2021) Creative Places Funding Guidelines. Dublin: Arts Council Ireland.

Adams, P. Hoelscher, S., & Till, K. (2001). Place in context: Rethinking humanist geographies. In Adams, P. Hoelscher, S., & Till, K. (Eds). *Textures of Place: Exploring Humanist Geographies*. Minneapolis, MN, USA: University of Minnesota Press, pp. - xii – xxiv. Available at: <http://site.ebrary.com/lib/nuim/Doc?id=10151212&ppg=14>

Aoki, J., and Yoshimizu, A. 2015. Walking histories, un/making places: Walking tours as ethnography of place, *Space and Culture*, 18(3), pp. 273-284.

Archibald, M. M., & Gerber, N. (2018). Arts and mixed methods research: an innovative methodological merger. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 62(7), 956-977.

Bishop, C. (ed.) (2006). *Participation*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Durrer, V. & Davey, M. (2024, in peer review) *Slow and Steady? Capacity Building for Participatory Governance in Local Arts Development*. *City, Culture and Society*, Special Issue.

Durrer, V., Davey, M., Murphy, K., McIlgorm, M., (2020). *Exit 15: A Creative Placemaking Project, Ballyogan 2016 – 2020*. Dublin: dlr Arts Office. Available at: https://www.dlrcoco.ie/sites/default/files/atoms/files/exit15.a4booklet_oct_final.pdf

Durrer, V., McGrath, A., & Campbell, P. (2022). *Artists' Mobility Across Borders: A Mixed Methods Approach to Understanding Dance on the Island of Ireland*. *Journal of Cultural Management and Cultural Policy/Zeitschrift für Kulturmanagement und Kulturpolitik*, 8(2), 115-136.

Duxbury, N., Garrett-Petts, W. F., & MacLennan, D. (2015). *Cultural mapping as cultural inquiry: Introduction to an emerging field of practice* (pp. 1-42). Routledge.

Green, L. (2006). *Research outputs in the creative and performing arts: 'Australianising' an international debate*. *Media International Australia*, 118(1), 5-15.

Hicks, S. (2020). "The feel of the place": Investigating atmosphere with the residents of a modernist housing estate. *Qualitative Social Work*, 19(3), 460-480.

Kester, G. H. (2004). *Conversation pieces: Community and communication in modern art*. Univ of California Press.

McGrath, A., Durrer, V., & Campbell, P. (2021). *Dancing with Epistemic Borders: Knowledge and unknowns in mixed-methods Practice-as-Research (PaR) collaborations between dance and social science*. *Performance Research*, 26(4), 95-103.

Paasi, A. (1991). *Deconstructing regions: notes on the scales of spatial life*. *Environment and planning A*, 23(2), 239-256.

Appendix 1:

Freshly Ground Theatre/Creative Places MacUílliam: Initial Workshop Evaluation Report – October 2021

This report details the preparation, outcome, learnings and future ideas surrounding a workshopping process conducted by Freshly Ground Theatre as part of the Creative Places MacUílliam project. This initial workshop involved a wide invitation to the community by Tallaght Community Arts, culminating in a large outdoor community workshop with young participants, coupled with an indoor lantern-making workshop.

1. Preparation:

As part of our preparation session for this workshop, we spoke about what our objectives were and how we could achieve them in the most engaging and participant-friendly way. Our objectives were threefold:

- to provide a space for the participants of MacUílliam to be creatively engaged,
- to facilitate the creation of a community canvas by the local residents to foster the idea of communal creation.
- to elucidate the creative needs within the area.

To achieve these objectives, we agreed on a set of principles.

- The workshop would be open to anyone and everyone passing by and there would be minimal pressure to participate.
- We would encourage the idea that the canvas is a communal project and that it's something that has shared ownership by the participants, therefore respecting each contribution given to it.
- We would give prompts to what is to be drawn or written on the canvas, but we wouldn't force them to be adhered to, rather we are happy for them to be suggestions or inspiration for the creativity of our participants.

We believe that the act of communal free drawing or writing would yield natural and honest flows of conversation between us and the participants. While we had questions prepared, there would be no pressure to answer them from our participants and our conversations with them are free to be casual and guided by their interests. We believed following the above principles would lead to the best outcomes for the workshop, where the participants would be engaged, their creative needs heard and a connection between us and the area made.

The prompts we had for our participants were to draw their area and aspects of their interests and day to day lives. This could come in the form of their house door, their hobby, something in their surrounding area that they always see on their daily commute.

Our prompts for them were:

1. Draw your front door
2. Draw and describe your journey to work or school
3. What do you see when you look out your window?
4. What do you love to do?
5. What would you love to do more of?

Workshop day:

The setup for this workshop was outdoors under a gazebo. There was a large table covered in paper alongside markers, pencils etc. The table was surrounded by stools and all participants were invited to complete the same task together. This workshop was free and open to children of all ages. There was no booking required so anyone could join in if they happened to come across the event by chance. A workshop leaflet was posted though every door in the estate and we also posted on the residents social media pages.

We feel going forward that the option to book in advance may prove useful to anticipate numbers but to also allow people to show up on the day. This can give children in the estate a chance to participate by interest and accessibility rather than relying on a parent to sign them up!

The workshop itself was loose in structure. We gave our participants optional prompts such as tracing around their hands, drawing their house, drawing a Halloween image etc. The optional prompts worked well in giving some children encouragement to get started while also giving more confident children some freedom to be creative. The children seemed to really enjoy the social gathering element of the workshop more so than the drawing which is exciting to discover as it opens many avenues for various events/activities to be planned and considered. Some of the participants asked if the sessions would be happening weekly and continued their interest in the sessions as it would give them “something to do”. Majority of our participants were in agreement with this and very enthusiastic at the idea of something to keep them occupied, focused with their friends and perhaps to introduce routine or something to look forward to.

The outdoor set up worked well in terms of welcoming participants as it was not a huge commitment or intimidating to casually join in or leave. However, from a facilitator’s point of view, the space in which we were leading was almost too informal and open that it became difficult at times to focus on the objectives, as it was very loud and difficult to fully differentiate between the creative workshop space and the busy street. Learnings/outcomes:

When we discussed how the workshop and the day as a whole went, we were able to gather some learning points and informative moments to help us create better workshops and activities for the children in future.

As soon as we sat down with the participants and began the workshop plan, we felt a strong sense of engagement which demonstrated that there is a desire for this type of activity in the community. The children were ready to chat to us about what they enjoy doing for fun and were excited to draw with us.

Despite this, we realised quite quickly that smaller groups would lead to more focused conversation and would allow us to hit the questions we had prepared more effectively, thus allowing us to collect their responses which will inform the future of the activities supplied to them.

Groups of approx. 12 children with 4 of us leading the workshop would mean that each child is able to be heard and has space to draw and express their opinions clearly. We loved hearing their thoughts on what they would like to do in future workshops and when we got the chance to chat with one or two participants at a time we were able to learn their interests even if the child was particularly shy. We noticed that the children really enjoyed chatting about their hobbies and having the opportunity to be heard. 4 As they were waiting to go into the lantern making workshop some children became restless if they had been with us for a longer period of time.

We realised that shorter workshops would have benefited the group, or perhaps smaller groups swapped around more frequently. If we had half the group inside and half outside and then swapped over this may have led to less children losing focus, leaving less time for non-workshop related chat and smaller group chats between the children beginning to break out. As smaller groups of chatting happened, we thought on our feet to bring the energy back to the workshop and back to the conversation surrounding their interests and hobbies. This indeed was a learning moment for us as a group as it meant we had to move away from our plan and adapt to refocus the group. Instead of sticking to drawing our houses and hands we decided to encourage the group to draw what they might dress up as for Halloween and then ask them why they chose that costume, this then led back to drawing their interests and a more richly informed conversation.

In future workshops we will be ready to change the workshop to adapt to the group's needs. Through the conversations and drawings with the group we learned a lot about their individual interests and saw that there was a large and diverse number of hobbies and activities the group enjoyed doing.

Some children said they enjoy reading books such as Captain Underpants, others discussed the video games they play like Fortnite. One led us all in an origami lesson teaching us how to fold the paper into a fox. Another child expressed an interest in animation and anime, while another group told us about the different sports they enjoy such as GAA and rugby. Listening to all these different activities we thought that it might be nice to bring workshops focusing on these different topics to the kids. It would be an engaging way to help them share their interests with each other, growing their sense of community and togetherness.

Learnings/Outcomes:

An overall finding from this day is that there is a huge demand for this kind of work among MacUílliam residents across a range of ages and interests. This is a positive note for the future, as it will be of great benefit to home in on aspects of this workshop and develop them in order to encourage regular and sustainable artistic engagements for the community of MacUílliam.

In the future, we suggest that an ideal structure for these kinds of workshops are focused engagements with small to medium groups of young people, on a regular basis so that the capacity of workshops is not limited. It was important for this workshop day that young people could come across the activity and join in, without having to be invited, so that the whole community felt that this workshop belonged to them without any exclusivity.

We would like to work towards a model in the future that allows facilitators to meaningfully engage on a one-to-one basis with participants, while always welcoming in new participants and giving equal attention to all young artists present. We would like to draw on the learning outcome mentioned above focusing on the diverse range of artistic practices that the young people of MacUílliam have an interest in.

We believe that regular, very focused workshops which culminate in the creation of something by the young artists present would be a great way to address the interests of the community. This could come in the form of mini masterclasses with artists across a range of forms such as novel writing, animation, game design, fashion design, etc. It could also take the form of short showcases of performative work, followed by a built-in forum discussion which leads to a series of engagements. These specialised workshops would run alongside consistent feedback collection coming in different forms (written feedback, short feedback discussions, regular workshops focusing on the needs and interests of the young people in the community), so that this programme of engagements is always suited to the changing interests and needs of young people.

These workshops have also highlighted an interest among the community in workshops aimed at different age demographics, and at other smaller communities within this wider community. We think that in order to provide a meaningful engagement, it will be important to facilitate intergenerational work, as well as work that is exclusively for adults, focusing on particular skills, crafts and interests. These engagements might happen alongside engagements for young people or offer a built-in childcare model for those who are caring for young people.

Appendix 2: Arts Programme, community involvement and engagement:

We worked with a Core Team of artists, the majority of whom come from or work regularly in South Dublin County

- Noise / Music Generation mentors - Music, DJing / Beats.
- Kelvin Akpaloo - Dance
- Tatiana dos Santos - Dance
- Jonathan Stokes - Photography/Visual Arts
- Claire O'Sullivan - Visual Arts
- Fernanda Ferrari - Visual Arts
- Freshly Ground Theatre - Drama/Film
- Vlad Gurdis - Theatre/Drama
- Bronwen Barrett - Theatre/Drama
- Martha Knight - Theatre/Drama/Early Years
- Michelle Henry - Theatre/Drama/Early Years
- Tadashi Kato - Early Years
- Alts Ent's mentors - Music
- Jamie Tobin - Music
- El Fortune - Music
- Jenny Macdonald - Dramaturgy/Storytelling
- Gabi McGrath - Felt making.

Creative Places MacUílliam set up both an Adult Arts Action Group and a Youth Arts Action group.

The Adult Arts Action Group was made up of 8 members of the MacUílliam Estate Development Group. The Youth Arts Action Group was made up of 15 members of young people living in MacUílliam Estate and the surrounding area. During the 18-month research phase, we had 12 meetings. Our Youth Arts Action Group liaised with the CP MacUílliam team on all activities for young people. We recorded community engagement by recording attendances, forms, roles sheet (arts camps).

First two months of getting to know you included: meeting residents on the estate, walking the estate with two residents helping us make introductions to other residents, leaflet drops, meeting with schools, and meeting with groups and associations linked with MacUílliam Estate. This has continued throughout the 18 months. The purpose of this was to introduce Creative Places to the local residents and to give them the opportunity to share their wishes regarding the project.

- First public event was a '**Lantern Making Workshop**' in October 2021 held in Barnardos and outside in two gazebos at the entrance to the estate. During this event, we spoke with young participants aged 7 - 19 years and documented the type of arts events they would like to see happen on the estate.

Engagement: 27 young people aged 5-16 years

- LLPSS (Local Live Performance Support Scheme) supported the event in the basketball court in December 2021 that included a dance performance, 15 Christmas trees lighting, and a parade throughout the estate, our first of many!
Engagement: 42 residents
- Following consultations and meetings with St. Aidan's Community School, our first mid-term **Arts Camp** began in Feb '22 for young people aged 7 years upwards. Workshops in the following arts genres were programmed: music, beats, visual art, drama, film, and dance. Our youth arts camps continued each mid-term since.
Engagement: 98
- **'Sharing Moves'** dance workshops and performative event held at the basketball court in June 2022. The event was an opportunity for us to demonstrate the skills and talent of the dance artist facilitators working with us to the children, young people and adults. LLPSS South Dublin supported the event and enabled us to have in addition a high quality sound system and DJ.
Engagement: 65
- Cruinniú na nÓg - **'Trash Catchers Parade'**: young apprentices from MacUílliam worked for a week with our artist team in Ardmore Community Hub. Young people under the guidance of facilitators delivered a workshop in the basketball court to younger residents. Engagement: Young apprentices: 8 and Participation: 62
- **Early Years** project development and sharing. Freshly Ground Theatre worked in collaboration with Patricia Toah a MacUílliam resident and member of the Adult Arts Action Group who is an Early Years practitioner and designer Tadashi Kato to devise an early year's performative experience. The resulting event was an installation performance space that was piloted at St Aoife's NS. 30% of the school's intake comes from MacUílliam estate. *Sea's the Moment* was shared with children from Junior Infants.
Engagement: 20 Junior Infants from Scoil Aoife National Scoil
- Tours and workshops at Rua Red, introducing members of the community to South Dublin Arts Centre and its programme of events. Attending Culture Night activities in Tallaght Cultural Quarter. Engagement: 28
- TogetherHERE at MacUílliam Estate Family Day. A photographic studio made of four gazebos located in the MacUílliam as part of family day in June '22. The project consisted of residents being invited to have their photographs taken by photographer Jonathan Stokes and stories their story captured by Jenny Macdonald.
Engagement: 73 residents
- 6 weeks **felt-making and storytelling workshop** for adults and young people 16+, Oct-Dec '22. Felt maker: Gabrielle McGrath and Stories captured by Jenny Macdonald.
Engagement: 39 residents

Appendix 3: Interview quotations collected by research advisor.

Demographic:

- A lot of migrants came in and came up on the housing list at the same time. when it was built it was “like a beacon for new migrants... allowed people to be together, the fear or risk” of being different “wouldn’t be seen to be as high.” (Intv No. 2001, 13:19).
- Roma families, black families, group housing scheme of travellers who would’ve been moved from the site opp the SDCC Belgard area (there was a halting site there for years) (2001).
- 7% Traveller, large African descent, some Eastern Europeans, 1300 people, 380 houses, 50 are Oakley mgt, 300 or thereabouts are SDCC and 38 are social housing.
- 35 - 40% are signed on to unemployment register (that could include students and disability)
- Those that claim disability benefits are approx. 35%.

What does MacUílliam look like?

- Lots of litter, burn spots, some areas very clean.
- 2003 – design concept doesn’t seem conducive to community (2003).
- People are “segregated from one another” (Intv No. 2003)
- “People are on top of one another” (Intv No. 2003)

Historical institutional neglect / complacency

- “issues are there... there from the beginning” (Intv No. 2001)
- “not addressed in a holistic way, not joined up” (Intv No. 2001)
- On previous research carried out: “people poured their hearts out and nothing happened” (Intv No. 2001)
- “the challenges were absolutely massive.” (Intv No. 2001)
- No shops or services there when established (Intv No. 2003)

What is MacUílliam like as a place?

- What would need to happen is that “[some people] need to be targeted and...supported.... people need to begin to feel safe in [the estate]. Doing this [Creative Places] project can give small pockets to engage” (Intv No. 2001)
- There are some strong leaders. Someone to capture what we like, what’s the best thing about here. “They seem to be climbing and then something like [the] Lidl [incident] happens” (Intv No. 2001: 28)
- “because of the news you get a lot of people who don’t want to engage with MacUílliam” (Intv No. 2002a: 11mins)
- It has a reputation but it’s a small group that causes that (Intv No. 2003, Intv No. 2004a)

Sites:

- The green – “it’s not just a field, it’s a facility” (Intv No. 2004a). “you can do anything and everything on the green” (Intv No. 2004a: 21:30)
- Barnardos
- Gardens (individual)
- Proper indoor space is needed (Intv No. 2004a)
- Recreation area – multi games area.

What is the best about MacUílliam:

- The people, the young people, the enthusiasm. The potential for the migrant community and the whole mix of cultures and learning and knowledge and what they can build on. I’m not disregarding the older people... getting old and young to talk together, younger people guided by the older? (Intv No. 2001)

Atmosphere:

“I think it’s very scary for some people to be honest. I think that there is an energy about some parts of the estate that is very menacing that’s difficult to break down for residents that have no back up” (Intv No. 2001). “There’s a fair amount of closing your door” (Intv No. 2001). “The newer part of the estate” has an energy ... they seem to not want to deal with that. They’ve made progress in terms of the media. (Intv No. 2001)

“It depends on where you stand” (Intv No. 2004a). The [local authority staff] have a negative impression of the estate. I have loads of people who have a positive impression. We need a little bit more help. (Intv No. 2004a)

“It stands to reason if people are home more, there will be litter” (Intv. No. 2004a)
Permanent houses (like a Council house) give you a settled state of mind, but the condition of the houses is an issue. (Intv. No. 2004a)

Emotional Labour:

“Don’t give me someone who clocks off at 5 o’clock... we need someone who’s heart is in the right place and who is dedicated (Intv. 2001: 27:48).

References:

Interview Number, 2001
Interview Number, 2003
Interview Number, 2004a
Interview Number, 2004b

Appendix 4: Final Evaluation with youth participants aged 12-19 years.

On the 14th of February 2023, twenty-four young people aged 12 to 19 years who have engaged with Creative Places MacUílliam came to Rua Red, for a theatre-based evaluation workshop lead by Freshly Ground Theatre Company. Participants interviewed one another and responded to the following questions:

Question One:

How/Why did you get involved with Creative Places MacUílliam?

- Came across Art camp from friends.
- His mother showed him.
- Got involved because of friends who said it was good and it was close.
- Something to do.
- Interested in arts.
- I did it because I was bored.
- Friends asked me to join.
- A new experience
- Jen called his Mum.
- Got involved because friends were going.
- New thing
- Getting out of the house
- I started because I was bored.
- to meet new people
- something to do.
- new friends
- bored

Question Two: What did you most enjoy about Creative Places MacUílliam activities:

- I learned how to play base,
- Liked drama.
- learn about yourself.
- learned how to do base and liked drama.
- different activities, from school.
- Trip to Van Gough experience.
- Wasn't what he expected, ended up liking things he didn't know he liked.
- trying new things and finding new talents.
- It wasn't boring, wasn't like school.
- liked art especially with Clare, it was good.
- exploring new forms of art.
- learning new things.

- it was fun, didn't expect to do much, didn't expect to be a big thing, thought it was a one-time thing, you felt a part of something.
- gives people something to get involved in and do, ended up liking things I didn't know I liked, gained a lot out of it.
- part of something, expected it to be serious,
- it was good, art, drums.
- how chill everyone is.
- music, learn about yourself, socialising, freedom, opportunities.
- skills, beats, singing, drama, bored.
- friends, enjoyed it more than thought I would, being able to be with your friends.
- comfort, socialise, freedom.

Question Three: What are your creative hopes for the future?

- Make more friends
- Drama
- Travel more
- Music
- Script writing
- To keep it going for the younger kids
- To keep it going to help kids put themselves out more
- Help kids show their creative side
- More dance
- Bass
- Food
- Coding
- Fashion show
- Science experiments
- Showcases
- Shopping
- Secret Santa
- Reading
- Computers
- To go on more trips
- Learning more instruments
- More drama fun
- Go into filmmaking more
- New venues
- Crèche
- Fashion design
- Musical theatre
- More fun time
- Literature and poetry
- Performing

- Art fun
- New experience's
- Creative writing
- Opportunities
- Creation
- Dance
- Friends
- Make more friends, more music
- More people participating
- Talk more
- More outings
- I hope they add science and engineering
- More band
- Hope it never ends
- Hope it becomes more popular
- Hope it goes on forever everybody deserves a chance to go
- Hope Jen finds more things to do with MacUílliam
- Hope Bronwen, Vlad and Michelle are my teachers
- Creative Places 4 ever
- To encourage new artists and find/allow people to help them express 100 % of themselves
- Super, look at me, interest, so I can scream, free. I didn't think it would be enjoyable, to be with friends, keeps people entertained and out of being bored.

Appendix 5: Creative Places Artist and Organisation Reflections

We asked Creative Places Mac Uíllíam research phase artists and organisations for their reflections of working on the project.

Freshly Ground Theatre:

Having been involved in Tallaght Community Arts' creative initiative in MacUíllíam over the last two year as mentors and facilitators, we've come away with the sense that this project has given opportunities, expanded horizons and fostered a sense of creative community that's making a tremendous impact for the young people and community of the MacUíllíam area. We have seen and heard first-hand the sparks of new passions and nurturing of new interests that the participants have encountered in the mediums of theatre, music, dance, film, writing and visual arts. The beauty of this programme is that it invites a cross disciplinary perspective for the participants, where the learning and practice of one art form informs another.

In our specific experience of working within the realm of theatre with participants ranging from early years to adults (4-18), we deeply enjoyed teaching the fundamentals of theatre through play and engaging in it as a tool of self-expression for our young artists. We look forward to creating a programme of theatre workshops that continue and build upon our work with the participants, with the aim of enabling them to create work that is reflective of their interests, as well as enable a critical engagement with theatre that will encourage them to see it as an accessible medium they can shape and contribute towards.

Gerry Horan - NOISE Music:

Tallaght Community Arts have given us the opportunity to work with a community of young people in an area of Tallaght that is sorely lacking in facilities. The lack of a space that young people can take ownership of makes it very challenging to sustain a youth arts programme there. Tallaght Community Arts have made great efforts to engage the community over a long period of time, and the success of their outreach is evident in the level of engagement from the young people that we have encountered. The level of pastoral care provided by Jennifer, Tony, and Roland has enabled our musicians to focus fully on the delivery of our workshops. We have found that any challenging behaviour or other issues are dealt with in a positive manner which has invariably led to improved engagement, and young people have developed to the stage where they have performed live in ThinkPunk in Ballymount and are regularly creating new music. We intend to continue to develop this partnership with Tallaght Community Arts and increase the number of workshops we deliver to young people in MacUíllíam Estate. We will also facilitate the continued development of the young people through projects and events that will challenge them to foster their creativity and be beneficial towards their confidence and self-image.

Jenny Macdonald – facilitator:

I am a theatremaker and facilitator have worked with Creative Places MacUílliam on two projects over the past year: TogetherHere (a photography and writing installation) and a felt/storytelling workshop programme. As part of the team for TogetherHere, I wrote responses to participants' sharing's about photographs that showed themselves and the important people in their lives. I emerged with a strong sense of a resilient community full of people who are emphasising positive examples of care and connection in spite of challenges. I also had a sense that there is a strong will and desire to create an even stronger sense of community going forwards and that the arts can be a powerful part of this. The TogetherHere photography and writing installation was full of participants throughout the day with many people returning several times with new friends and family. Similarly, the felt/storytelling project began with a few young people and grew as they invited their friends and parents to share the experience. After an ongoing weekly programme, the participants reflected in the evaluation session that they had loved learning new creative skills and having a chance to express themselves in a safe and supportive environment. Tallaght Community Arts have built relationships of strong trust, care and creativity in the community and I have no doubt that future creative programmes would continue to thrive.

Martin Moran – Alt Ents:

Alternative Entertainments has engaged with the young participants in Creative Places MacUílliam on a number of occasions, through our SubSounds Youth Music Collective. SubSounds is a project in which young musicians aged 14-18 years compose, arrange, record, and perform their own songs. The project also offers opportunities to musicians over 18 years who are interested in exploring possible careers in music. Our work with Tallaght Community Arts in their MacUílliam initiative enabled us to advance both aspects of our work. It brought us into contact with a new cohort of talented young people who are interested in exploring music as a creative outlet, and it gave opportunities to four of our trainee mentors to develop their workshop facilitator and community engagement skills, while under the supervision of the experienced team behind the MacUílliam project. At performances in St Aidan's Community School, MacUílliam estate and the live music venue ThinkPunk participants and facilitators presented wonderful work highlighting the benefits they both had accrued from the experience. In addition to these opportunities our engagement with Creative Places MacUílliam has helped bring our work to the attention of a large new community in South Dublin County, many of whom are now members of the SubSounds collective.

Tatiana Santos - Dance Facilitator:

As someone who has collaborated with and closely seen the work of Creative Places, I have witnessed how diversity can lead to a flourishing of creativity, and I believe that this is something that should be encouraged and celebrated in all artistic endeavors. One of the most rewarding aspects of my participation at Creative Places has been seeing how young people who have had the chance to engage with various art forms, such as music, dance, film making, and visuals, have been inspired -- some were also determined to make a career in the arts. As an art facilitator, I was also inspired by young people's stories and passion, which makes Creative Places a space for exchange. Moreover, I believe that the fact that the team at Creative Places is itself diverse is crucial in terms of representation. As the saying goes, "we can't be what we can't see." By having a team that reflects the diversity of the communities we serve, we are better able to understand and respond to their needs and create an environment where everyone feels valued and included.

Jonathan Stokes - Photographer:

Working as a visual arts mentor with Tallaght Community Arts in MacUílliam was inspiring, not only for myself but enabling the young people to have the visual clarity in expressing themselves inspired them. Providing materials and the narrative to create work that opened a dialogue of who they are, where they live and how they engage in their environment. The use of photography, illustration, portraiture and design gave the young people a method of working and expression that might not have been previously revealed in their creative lives. There seemed to be new possible ways of communication through a visual language, by breaking from the normality of drawing and painting, but by deconstructing their view of what art was by giving new directions and unfamiliar tools to create a foundation of fresh thinking; to let go and be creative.

