

# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT.... GEOGRAPHY

In order to understand the cultural offer for people living in Inverclyde you can't take into account cultural activity in Inverclyde alone. For communities on the edge of the district, Greenock might not be their nucleus for the arts. E.g. Kilmacolm is closely linked to Kilbarchan and neighbouring places, Paisley Art Centre is also where local people might go to access arts. In Wemyss Bay the community activity is largely partnered with Skelmorlie it's neighbour, across the 'border.'

There are quite a lot of community based classes going on in community centres, but people don't always know how to reach them, information and times for classes. There is a need to highlight information about public transport also.

Inverclyde is geographically 'Stretched'. The linear arrangement of towns, villages, communities, drawn out along the coast mean that it is very difficult to gather together a volume of activity, despite lots happening throughout the region.

Port Glasgow, Greenock and Gourock can feel like very different places. What might work in one might not work in another, it is important that a strategy doesn't over look this.



# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT... CONFIDENCE

The Arts Community need to establish a working relationship with practitioners and partners. The arts heavily rely on funding filtering down through the Beacon, which doesn't always happen. They need a bigger independent funding driver from another source, in partnership with the Beacon.

Artists have a stronger place in society if they can come together.

Young people need to be supported to access space and equipment outwith school education, so that they can gain their own confidence with developing their creative skills and interests.

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Bartering and dealing with sellers/shops can be off putting for artists. Many don't know how to have discussions with regards to selling work  
- There is a need for artist support and professional development.

Inverclyde has really talented people in it, but most don't get past the hobby stage

Improving emotional literacy among young people is a key driver for educational work in the area. Art should play a critical role in supporting young people to express themselves building their confidence.

Have confidence in using local artists, don't immediately go to the big names in the cities/internationally. Utilise established artists to train and build the local skillset.

Gourock has a wealth of local arts, gift, craft shops. Build confidence in Gourock becoming Inverclyde's "Arts Town" and less about the 'Tart & Tat' that tailor towards the Cruise Ship clientele.

There is a feeling amongst artists that you have to 'go away and prove yourself.' It is not always believed that you can be a successful artist if you stay in Inverclyde. Some artists here will profile themselves internationally as being 'Glasgow based' as this appears to have more credibility.

People in Inverclyde can be quite apathetic and down on themselves about where they come from, at times a bit negative. There is a need to recognise their talents and appreciate their environment, it's a lack of confidence.

It is not a bad or unnatural thing that young people move away to prove themselves and access experiences and opportunities outwith the region. We should let go of this preciousness about wanting to drag them back.



# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT... EDUCATION

The Curriculum of Excellence has prevented the arts from becoming more innovative. Where the Sciences and Maths have embraced new innovative techniques in education, the arts haven't felt the same need to innovate and apply creative techniques to teaching.

Adult literacy is a significant problem in Inverclyde and the arts need to be identified as a pathway to improving this.

Hierarchy in the arts isn't a problem as long as it is transparent and people at all levels understand that they are still learning. The problem is it is not always transparent.

How do you apply for funding, or approach potential funders? Artists need to know what to do, and how to write applications, to ensure that large organisations and artists from outwith the region don't always receive local funding opportunities.

Arts related work is often short term. How can we ensure that it is continued, or that those who benefit from it are supported to carry it on themselves? How does arts work translate into empowering, up-skilling and giving people the confidence to self sustain?

In Education, the arts are not frequently presented as a viable career path. The arts are often used as a means to tackle certain social or health issues, which is important, but not the arts are not always presented as a professional pathway.

There could be more work done to introduce and educate skills in new and varied art forms.

The problem with arts within schools is a lack of funding and time. Some local artists could bring innovative approaches and skills to the classroom, but are usually expected to source their own funding externally to come and work in the school.

There is a lot of arts provision for young people, some for the retired, but for 25 years+ there is a huge lack of opportunities. A lot of people over 25 have not have the opportunities that children have today to learn art, drama, music etc, in schools and so can be really missing this experience.



# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT...

# VALUE

Inverclyde has to acknowledge its professionals in order to keep them. If Inverclyde doesn't retain skilled and qualified artists then the pool of artists to commission locally shrinks and work will continue to be out sourced or lower quality.

Local people aren't prepared to pay for art. There is an issue with valuing the arts as a past time. But they are prepared to support the members of their community. The people of Inverclyde are more likely to go to a performance or exhibition if it has some one they know in it. They are willing to support teams. Local productions are much better attended than outside productions

The arts are not taught as a viable career option. People understand it as a 'hobby' and are not encouraged to pursue it as a career.

In school education it is felt that sports at present are given more emphasis than the arts. Sports have been strengthened and supported locally and now the same needs to happen with the arts.



# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT...

# ECONOMICS

Amateur groups are being charged increased prices to put on productions in venues such as the Beacon. This means they have to put up their ticket prices to cover this. So a professional production and an amateur production can cost the same to the audience. As a result many amateur performers are now using church halls and other cheaper venues that might not be so well suited to showcasing their art form.

People simply cannot afford to attend productions, exhibitions, classes regularly. They have little to no disposable income to match the financial commitments of pursuing the arts as a career. Plus the ultimate result of gaining necessary experience through unpaid internships and voluntary work, is an expensive unsupported market. People in low economic situations, simply can't afford to fail.

Funding and commissions seem to always go to the same organisations or individuals, and don't necessarily filter down to others.

Some of the Public Art commissioned in Inverclyde has resulted in a shared opinion that art can be a waste of money

Travel and the cost of travel are significant barriers for young people accessing the arts, it is important that arts organisations can engage with young people on their own terms and also that they can respond to the interests and ideas of young people in the development of their programmes.

People don't understand the monetary value of the arts

We need to be realistic about how many people there actually are in Inverclyde. How many artists are working in the area? How many tourists are visiting the area?

There is a gap in the understanding between tourism, economic development and the opportunity of arts and cultural offer.

The arts are not viewed on the whole as a business and it is essential that we start to see it as one, in order to acknowledge those who can help to support it

The financial market following the recession is making it much harder to sell artwork, this is a challenge to galleries that would like to be able to host bigger exhibitions, annual programmes or solo shows from high profile artists, bringing inspiration and high quality arts to the area.



# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT... CONNECTIVITY

There are not a lot of opportunities for Artists to exhibit work locally. Artists don't always know who to contact or how to go about this. In Glasgow you know where you can plug into the arts. Things are hidden in Inverclyde.

There needs to be more done in the way of sharing skills and ideas, between artists, projects, service providers and their staff.

There is a lack of spaces for Artists to come together. Most artists and craftspeople in the area work from home. Making them less visible and much harder to meet one another, share ideas or resources. People do not want to work in a vacuum.

Community organisations can suffer from lack of ideas or inspiration, particularly when they are voluntarily run or when the main focus of the work is not arts based. E.g. feeling stuck making the same Christmas cards year on year.

It's a struggle for artists to get permission from planning / private landlords to use public/vacant space. There aren't enough precedents for this as a tested model of regeneration in Inverclyde and the pathways and contacts to negotiate this permission are not always clear.

There is only so much that can be communicated and absorbed through social media and emails. The benefits of meeting other organisations, artists, people working in the arts cannot be understated. There is a need for semi-regular catch ups.

People often want to be in a position to find out for themselves about what is going on in the area.

There is a lack of communication between services and artists. There needs to be a better two way exchange in order to ensure the correct work is delivered, and that there is a clearer understanding of expectations.

It isn't always easy or appropriate for organisations to publicise or promote ticketed events to the people they work for, if they know some people can't afford it, so this becomes a barrier to communication around arts activity.

Accessing shared studio spaces can be rare and expensive, making it difficult to share ideas and form a network within the arts.

A lot of community organisations don't list themselves as an arts provider, although they do use the arts for their work. This means it can be hard to locate or co-ordinate organisations. Artists are also hard to find as very few belong to constituted organisations, collectives or employ staff on an admin basis to facilitate that connection role.

It can be hard for service provider to know where to find/contact artists and how to identify the ones that are suitable.

"The Value of a Coordinator" previous arts development roles have developed projects/tools which have integrated services and organisations, connecting individuals. People shared ideas.

There is no clear platform for showcasing arts work locally. This needs co-ordinating and different artists /organisations contributing to it. Photographs of arts events/work rarely end up in the local press. There is no arts editor. This is a massive vehicle for communication which is being missed.



# HERE'S WHAT WAS SAID ABOUT...

# LEGACY

It can be a great thing to bring in artists from other places to work and deliver projects in Inverclyde, but it is not beneficial or sustainable for the area to have big and expensive things that suddenly appear and then disappear. When the excitement settles after the show, what happens next?

There is a disconnect between regeneration, planning and the arts. Regeneration should acknowledge the arts at every stage. The regeneration process for the Common Wealth Games did this at every point and was therefore a really successful example of a lasting legacy.

Inconsistencies in funding and support can raise expectations and then be cut. Resulting in demoralised youngsters with little confidence or support to pursue the arts further.

Champions for the arts need to be identified and connected into local arts work, as a point of inspiration and confidence building

Any arts education working with young people has to have a legacy. Sustained work resulting in development and building relationships with young people is far more valuable than one off experiences or arts activities. It is essential that we avoid tokenistic gestures.