



Creative Approaches

A cinematic conference exploring artistic participation in Scottish community regeneration



A SURF event in cooperation with:



~~~ and a cast of thousands ~~~



# About this publication

This publication highlights the main messages derived from an innovative national conference on creative approaches to community regeneration in Scotland.

The purpose of the collaborative event was to:

- Showcase different visions and real successes
- Promote practical policy lessons from proven creative approaches
- Explore the best ways to support real community regeneration in the post-property-boom climate

The film-based conference programme showcased the success and diversity of existing projects that use creative artistic processes to involve communities in building on their authentic identities and assets.

The collaborative conference was conceived and delivered by SURF and Fablevision with support from the Scottish Wave of Change and the Heritage Lottery Fund (Scotland).

It was held in the Pearce Institute, Govan, Glasgow on 10th November 2010.

# Background

## The Future for Scottish Community Regeneration

In recent years, SURF and Fablevision have supported the concept and practice of 'Cultural Planning' as a process for successfully building on local assets and strengths to deliver sustainable community regeneration strategies and services. This is in contrast to the conventional 'deficit model' of social intervention and the property-led approach to physical regeneration.

Following the credit crunch, consistent messages from Scottish Government policy advisers and the wider SURF network have emphasised the importance of developing imaginative and creative, locally-rooted community regeneration efforts in response to severe financial constraints on public spending. SURF and Fablevision organised this conference to explore three central questions:

- How do we support already stretched communities to deliver such activities?
- What do we presently do to that end and what more can we do to consolidate success where it is already happening?
- What are the barriers at present and how can we remove/overcome them?

## A Collaborative Production

The conference programme drew together policy-makers and practitioners across different sectors and geographies to identify common threads of knowledge and build new networks of support and creativity.

The key points from these diverse speakers, and summaries the wide-ranging discussions they provoked, follow. Speakers were asked to select short documentary films from the Scottish Screen Archive to accompany their input. No PowerPoint was allowed.

The conference was filmed by Fablevision, and online video links to full presentations and panel debate sessions are included. We hope that this report inspires further discussions and decisions towards a more creative regeneration of Scotland.

## Additional Partners

SURF and Fablevision are also grateful to Creative Scotland, Moving Conversations, the Scottish Screen Archive and the Scottish Government for their assistance in making this a successful event.



*Our clapperboard conference cake*

# Visions of Scotland

## National scenarios and images

*Speakers in this first conference session presented their vision for national priorities for increasing creative regeneration activity.*

**Liz Gardiner, Director, Fablevision**

Short film selected: [Sawkins No.11](#) (1950)

### Main Messages

- The Scottish Government has a vision for a flourishing Scotland with high levels of participation.
- Every place has a distinct quality, in the landscape, buildings and people. A skilled hand can help uncover these attributes. A Cultural Planner can help engage and empower local people.
- Through artistic processes, communities can be helped to rediscover their own authentic identity and build community pride. Professionals must be careful not to make assumptions or 'take over' when supporting this process.
- There are currently numerous successful creative and cultural projects taking place in Scotland. These projects should be brought to national attention to 'showcase' what is possible, as well as sharing learning and developing skills.



See Liz Gardiner's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5xoeEkSaORs>

**Andrew Dixon, Chief Executive, Creative Scotland**

Short film selected: [Festival Locations, Edinburgh](#) (1971)

### Main messages:

- In this work, there are three important Ps – People, Place and Pride. These are the key ingredients that make community regeneration successful.
- Regeneration does not have focus on the physical. There is a lot to be learned from the people who live in a place, who understand the 'DNA' of their community and how that community can help develop a stronger local culture, making a local space become a prominent place.
- Culture has a huge impact on a city, and the overall image of that city. There are, however, some areas of a city at which large-scale regeneration is ineffective. Small, locally-based projects can be of as much worth as the very large city wide projects in terms of local outcomes.



See Andrew Dixon's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GDkLdrPCB4>



## Gerry Hassan, Director, Scottish Wave of Change

Short film selected: [Glasgow 1980](#) (1971)

Main messages:

- Regeneration is implicitly and explicitly linked to the future.
- The 'one certain future' that was shown in the selected film is now gone. It showed some innocence and naivety. At that time, modernity was the great new hope. There was a great deal of impatience to demolish the old and redevelop for the future, but the social problems remained.
- Present challenges are still based on the same issues. Success is still based on economic determinism, a dogmatic approach that can be self-destructive and counter-productive. Public policy, however, continues to operate within such a paradigm.
- The future challenges require people to question this. Values and stories from the community are very important. Local culture needs to be strong and visible in the face of an increasingly monochromatic view of Scotland.



See Gerry Hassan's full video presentation at: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkZNFk2s\\_EU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZkZNFk2s_EU)



# On Location

## Real Work in Real Places

*This second conference session drew out wider lessons from creative artistic processes that are complementing successful regeneration activities in four Scottish community settings.*

**Leith, Edinburgh—presented by Shaeron Averbuch, Secretary, Joined Up Master-Planning (JUMP)**

Short film selected: [Bathing Pool, Portobello](#) (1939)



Key points:

- It is important to reuse existing resources and materials to make the best of the local regeneration assets/location/site.
- When beginning a new project, getting to know the physical space and the people who inhabit it in some depth is key. A holistic understanding of the relationship between people, place and culture is pivotal to the success of a project.
- Making successful links within the community, and to the outside, can lead to influential participative processes that support the creation of a fundamentally better place for local inhabitants to live and thrive in.

See Shaeron Averbuch's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ln63U8t6le8>

**Govan, Glasgow—presented by Liz Gardiner, Director of Fablevision**

Short film selected: [Pearce Institute](#) (1954)

Main messages:

- It is important to harness the passion and creativity of local people to drive local regeneration. People-driven projects contribute fundamentally to community cohesion and sustainability.
- Govan presents a strong example of people-led creative regeneration in a community that is owned, loved and fully utilised by local residents.
- Govan is steeped in history and has always been a very resilient community with many successful community-based projects having been—and currently being—developed and delivered. Supporting and building on their success is key in the current climate.

See Liz Gardiner's 'On Location' presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6kDlrPz1HkA>

## Prestonpans, East Lothian – presented by Andrew Crummy, Chairman, Three Harbours Arts Festival

Selected short film: [Cockenzie & Port Seton Children's Gala Day](#) (1963)

- Local galas and festivals can do much to evoke a wealth of community pride in an area.
- Across Scotland, people are generally less inclined to show what they are good at. Community members sometimes need support to recognise that there is much to be proud of, and that achievements are to be celebrated.
- Communities should identify and make more of their local traditions. Arts and creative approaches are the catalyst for real community regeneration.
- There needs to be a reinvigoration of past projects, learning from the arts projects that once thrived in the community and using this knowledge to develop new, sustainable approaches.

See Andrew Crummy's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qmFd9RZ77vo>



## Neilston, East Renfrewshire—presented by Pauline Gallacher, Volunteer Manager, Neilston Development Trust

Selected short film: [Lofty Peak Flour Advert](#) (1966)



- A more holistic approach to regeneration is widely favoured. To quote the Danish architect Jan Gehl: "*first the life, then the spaces, then the buildings*".
- Community-based projects build strong and effective relationships across sectors, from health to housing.
- In reference to the Lofty Peak advert, communities are like a cake. People and funding are the key ingredients, with the added richness of discovering the skills and abilities available within the community and what people from outwith the community are willing to offer.
- It is a real skill to bring all of the ingredients together in order to produce great results. It requires time, scale and enabling by supportive and dedicated practitioners.

See Pauline Gallacher's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pbo8VprlrH4>

# Open Discussion 1

## Exchanging with the Experts

*The morning session of the conference featured questions-and-comments panel sessions with the key speakers Gerry Hassan, Liz Gardiner and Andrew Dixon, chaired by SURF Chief Executive Andy Milne. Some of the main questions raised in this session are as follows:*

- As a country ,we are struggling to get to a point where we have a shared pride of place. How can we do more to help people to take a pride in their place?
- We need to make ‘real’ living spaces, not just infill and new housing. Derelict land and gap sites should be used to develop new community projects. Do the panel agree?
- How do we find a balance between large and small-scale regeneration, and combine the old with the new?
- How can Creative Scotland support the ‘DNA’ of a place such as Cumbernauld, which may not have the image but has the individuality to be as successful as other towns and settlements in Scotland?
- How can local people support creative regeneration processes, and be involved in actual delivery and decision making, in a time of funding cutbacks?





- How are Creative Scotland going to help people feel a greater sense of pride for their own places?
- The linkage of people, place and work is key to successful regeneration. Where work is no longer abundant, is this viable, or is there an alternative model? Are we able to regenerate community in the absence of work? Can we use artistic regeneration to realistically help solve the employment issues in a place?
- Cultural Planning and participation is said to have a positive impact on the economy. Does Creative Scotland take economic outcomes into consideration in their projects, and how does that work with the people-centred approach?
- Might conventional conceptual frameworks be holding projects back? Those projects that are having to follow a conservative model, are perhaps being hindered when there is a wealth of new practices available in new and dynamic models.

See responses to these and other questions in a full video presentation of the open discussion session at:

Part 1: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VqWcposW2c8>

Part 2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=z7eBAXEJNwQ>

Part 3: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7\\_iWEOZnqQ](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=C7_iWEOZnqQ)

# Transatlantic Productions

## 'Finding the Rivers' from Pittsburgh to Falkirk

*Denys Candy, international expert on creative regeneration, produced a special short film for the conference.*

The USA-based Community Partners Institute is involved with a series of creative regeneration processes and projects on both sides of the Atlantic. One of the most important is 'Finding the Rivers', an ambitious project in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. This creative community participation enterprise seeks to enhance the role and prosperity of the dilapidated former steel-working communities in 'The Hill' area of the city by rediscovering its links to its local environment, its heritage and the future of Pittsburgh.

Denys Candy, facilitator, trainer and coach with the Institute, recently visited Scotland to work with the Helix Trust greenspace development project in Falkirk. Denys highlighted the relevance of 'Finding the Rivers' to the project in a film produced especially for the conference.

See Denys Candy's film at:

1: [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LA\\_yDw0x1iA&feature=related](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LA_yDw0x1iA&feature=related)

2: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TRCjYfd7Lro&feature=related>



# Close Ups

## A Closer Examination of Success

*The conference format included round table discussions for a closer examination of the experience of the projects, places and processes highlighted on p6-7. The remit was to uncover opportunities, linkages and solutions to overcoming barriers to a better climate for the flourishing of creative approaches by addressing the three central conference questions. Some of the key points made follow:*

### **Question One: How can we support already stretched communities to deliver creative regeneration activities?**

- Social auditing helps present a case for creative processes in economic terms
- Communities need to feel they can influence decision makers; it could be effective to provide community groups with more local decision-making power where it is not possible to maintain traditional funding streams
- Improve consistency of contact between sectors – too often, staff change and projects end; energy is lost through continually chasing funds and re-establishing contacts.
- Use creative approaches as a catalyst for involvement—start with identifying what interests and motivates people
- Mobility has a massive impact on how people lead their lives—take account of transport provision and patterns when considering opportunities for community cohesion and participation
- Community events, festivals and recreational activities, as well as more conventional forums, continue to be an effective channel for new ideas, participation and increasing local confidence

### **Question Two: What do we presently do to that end and what more can we do to consolidate success where it is already happening?**

- Umbrella bodies such SCVO and CSV can offer much-needed support
- Redirect funding to where there is demonstrable best value; many big impacts can result from a small pot of money—for example, a successful heritage trail in Craigmillar was created with just £1500
- Keep faith in success; long-term strategies and approaches are much better than short-term fixes
- Use creative methods of community engagement—not all local residents want to sit on committees, but can still offer valuable contributions through other channels—it's about being creative and flexible
- Stop operating in silos and develop a more shared understanding and more shared activities
- Recognise that small is good! Big, shiny projects should not be an automatic preference – small changes can make big differences too
- Devolve local authority funding to a local level to provide better and more flexible responses to local issues and circumstances
- Make better use of coverage in the local press and social media channels to help raise knowledge of, and support and participation in, community projects

### Question Three:

#### What are the barriers at present and how can we remove/overcome them?

- There is a lack of trust between the grass roots and local government; more mutually respectful and meaningful dialogue between these parties is essential
- Collaboration/consultation is often tokenistic; given the support and opportunity, people who live in the place can be key drivers in its regeneration
- One community project was quoted as having 23 different funders; with different reporting requirements, this represents an inefficient use of time, skill and money for all partners
- More community 'hubs' would be welcome, and they might not be the same type of place in every community – whether housing associations, community centres, libraries, or cafes, people need a place to meet, talk and organise
- Fleeting political fashion is a common barrier – if a project is not currently within the 'fashionable/trendy' category for MSPs, it can be difficult to get the necessary political buy-in and resources
- A lack of recognition and support for existing projects, with their funding diverted into new start-ups, hinders long-term success
- Councils are scaling-up to save money, often to the detriment of local projects; this is a false economy
- Community divisions create barriers in themselves – with resistance from some groups in the community, a very small issue can hold a whole community back. Often the most important stage is resolving intra-community conflict before a project can run successfully. Gatekeepers should be challenged at all levels
- A shortage of positivity can also create a barrier; creative activities can help people to take pride in themselves, their community and their environment as a first step to overcoming despondency



# Head Shots

## Future Prospects for Creative Regeneration

*This final conference session presented the approaches being taken by local and national government and relevant funding agencies to support creative community regeneration*

**Scottish Government—Diane McLafferty, Deputy Director of Housing and Regeneration**

Short film selected: [Sisyphus—A Scots Version of the Greek Myth](#) (1971)

Key points:



- People should have the ability to impact upon and change their own lives. There is no need for people to suffer in their circumstances when, where a little empowerment and support can be offered, aspiration can be raised (like Sisyphus and his rock).
- It is not a given that all individuals are a part of their community; isolation can be as a result of many factors, but some individuals are missing out on potentially beneficial support. Is there a solution for these individuals who are not easily able to engage in community life?
- Landscape, scenery and language can be vital in encouraging people from outwith the community to come and visit a cultural, vibrant and interesting place.

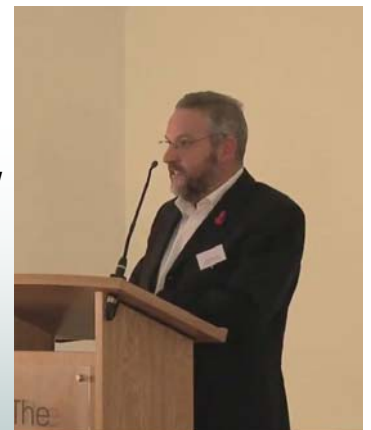
See Diane McLafferty's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H-ft3XMpOiQ>

**Dundee City Council—Stewart Murdoch, Director of Leisure and Communities**

Short film selected: [Clyde Film](#) (1985)

Key points:

- In Glasgow's regeneration history, there was widespread physical regeneration, but also widespread community break down as result of tenement demolition and the relocation of thousands of city dwellers.
- Lessons from the past have taught us that it is important to take the community with you, that the community should have an active part in regeneration from the outset. Or, as is still happening now, deep set problems from 30 years ago will still impact upon a place.
- There is no room for complacency. Practitioners need to be aware of the local situation and be constantly looking for opportunities to make positive changes.



See Stewart Murdoch's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tlqMD8J4TM>



## Big Lottery Fund—Jackie Killeen, Acting Director (Scotland)

Selected short film: [Songs of Scotland](#) (1963)

Key points:

- The 'DNA' of a place has been proved to be an important factor in the health and vibrancy of the community, but how do funders identify this?
- It may not appear that funding itself can be creative, but it is often applied by community representatives and practitioners in a way that is both creative and culturally significant to them.
- Community-based arts projects can grow into social enterprise projects, allowing the community to help boost their local economy and reduce reliance on outside funding.
- For funders, there needs to be regular reappraisal of the funder-recipient relationship. Funding bodies must understand how to better serve recipients and how to help them gain more control over how funding is used.



See Jackie Killeen's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wNdkcheheZE>

## Heritage Lottery Fund (Scotland)—Colin McLean, Chief Executive

Selected short film: [A Farm is Reclaimed](#) (1945)



Key points:

- Being actively involved in creative and cultural activities in your community can improve wellbeing at an individual level as well as at a community level.
- The word 'heritage' suggests a physical asset; however, creativity and tradition can be part of a community's heritage as well. The passing down of skills, arts and music is as much a part of a community's heritage as a building; especially as such traditions are often unique to that area.
- Having an active role in the heritage of a community can not only help individuals to bind together as a strong group, it also helps to build a sustainable future for the community.

See Colin McLean's full video presentation at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GO1A6ZJSA1l>

# Open Discussion 2

## Engaging with the Agencies

*The afternoon session of the conference featured questions-and-comments panel sessions with the key speakers Diane McLafferty, Stewart Murdoch, Jackie Killeen and Colin McLean, chaired by Andy Milne, SURF Chief Executive. Some of the main questions raised in this session are as follows:*

- There is an assertion coming from the Scottish Government that the community should have greater control of its assets; but when community groups attempt to engage with the relevant local authority departments, it can often be a difficult and frustrating process. How will the Scottish Government deal with officials who are still working in a mindset that does not involve the community?
- How do you approach a project in a community that is brand new? When dealing with new communities which have no identity, is creative regeneration always based on heritage?
- With the transfer of assets to community groups, it has been found that some groups are less willing to take on the liability that is attached to acquiring that asset, often wishing the local authority to retain it. There is a paradox that while some communities are very keen and driven in their desire to acquire assets, there are also communities that are being offered the opportunity but are not willing to take on the responsibility for the liability of buildings. How do we resolve this?
- Are we making best use of Development Trusts in helping practitioners understand the benefit of improving community participation and community asset building?
- Is it a danger that assets are used by a smaller group while the wider community, in effect, miss out?

See a video from this session with responses to these questions at:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BUu6alycd7w>



# About the Event Partners



**SURF**  
Scotland's Independent Regeneration Network

As Scotland's independent regeneration network, SURF uses its extensive cross-sector membership, which includes over 250 organisations, to explore current practice, experience and knowledge in community regeneration.

SURF provides a neutral space to facilitate this sharing of information through a programme of activities that includes seminars, conferences, international policy exchanges, annual awards for best practice and the distribution of the regeneration policy journal, *Scotregen*.

Constructive feedback from the SURF membership is used to positively influence the development of more successful regeneration policy and practice through SURF's links with key policy-makers in the Scottish Government and elsewhere.

Further information is available from the SURF website:  
[www.scotregen.co.uk](http://www.scotregen.co.uk)



A cultural social enterprise with charitable status, Fablevision is a "group" of social enterprise companies whose members (individually and collectively) share values and working practices.

The Fablevision Group supplies a wide range of services in community cultural development: from cultural planning consultancy to project development and delivery; and from supporting emerging cultural social entrepreneurs/enterprises to training and learning in applying the methodology at a community level.

Further information is available from the Fablevision website:

[www.fablevision.org](http://www.fablevision.org)



A Scottish Wave of Change is about people bringing about change, Scotland and international connections and exploring the potential of the Olympic and Paralympic values and vision.

It is also about developing national and international connections for Scotland between the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games and Glasgow 2014 Commonwealth Games.

It will create forums of discussion, debate and action, it will explore what kind of Scotland, society and communities we want to see in the future, through imaginative activities including volunteering, participation in events and community action.

A Scottish Wave of Change will produce a range of materials to aid thinking, imagining and doing. It will be a mass imagination project, opening up and democratising the debate about the future and involving story competitions and commissions, events and a final project book that will provide a lasting legacy beyond 2012.

Further information is available from the Scottish Wave of Change website:  
[www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk/ascottishwaveofchange/](http://www.peoplemakingwaves.org.uk/ascottishwaveofchange/)



The Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF) sustains and transforms a wide range of heritage through innovative investment in projects with a lasting impact on people and places.

As the largest dedicated funder of the UK's heritage, with around £205million a year to invest in new projects and a considerable body of knowledge and evaluation over 15 years, HLF is a leading advocate for the value of heritage to modern life.

From museums, parks and historic places to archaeology, natural environment and cultural traditions, HLF invests in every part of UK heritage. HLF has supported more than 30,000 projects, allocating £4.5billion across the UK.

HLF is administered by the National Heritage Memorial Fund (NHMF) which was given the responsibility of distributing a share of money raised through the National Lottery for Good Causes, to heritage across the UK, in 1994. HLF is a non-departmental public body accountable to Parliament via the Department of Culture, Media and Sport.

For information on the work of HLF in Scotland, visit their website at: [www.hlf.org.uk/inyourarea/Scotland/](http://www.hlf.org.uk/inyourarea/Scotland/)



The Scottish Screen Archive is a film and video collection of over 100 years of Scotland's history.

The archive reflects: 20th-century Scottish social, cultural and industrial history; the lives of ordinary Scots across the generations; and the achievements of Scottish film-makers in the craft of film production.

The archive houses more than 32,000 items, mostly non-fiction.

For more information, visit the Scottish Screen Archive website: <http://ssa.nls.uk/>



Moving Conversations<sup>®</sup>, created by Michael Groves, is a proven format where expert guests use news and archive film from ITN Source and the Scottish Screen Archive to explore and shed light on a topic. Its aim is to entertain, challenge and inform.

Moving Conversations<sup>®</sup> has been used by business, government and NGOs to debate many topics at venues across the UK and Ireland.

For more information, visit the Moving Conversations website: [www.futuristcinema.com/moving.htm](http://www.futuristcinema.com/moving.htm)

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