

## Culture and Placemaking Programme

### Introduction

The Culture and Placemaking Programme will complement the proposed Culture Hub by providing a programme of events and cultural activities in Blyth Town Centre. It will build momentum and stimulate support for cultural activity in the town, helping to pave the way for the opening of the new Culture Hub in 2024.

### Pilot Projects – Phase 1

The development of the Culture and Placemaking Programme is being informed through the delivery of a range of Creative Pilot Projects, working collaboratively with people in Blyth. The first three pilots took place in February and March 2022. They were:

#### Mapping the Future

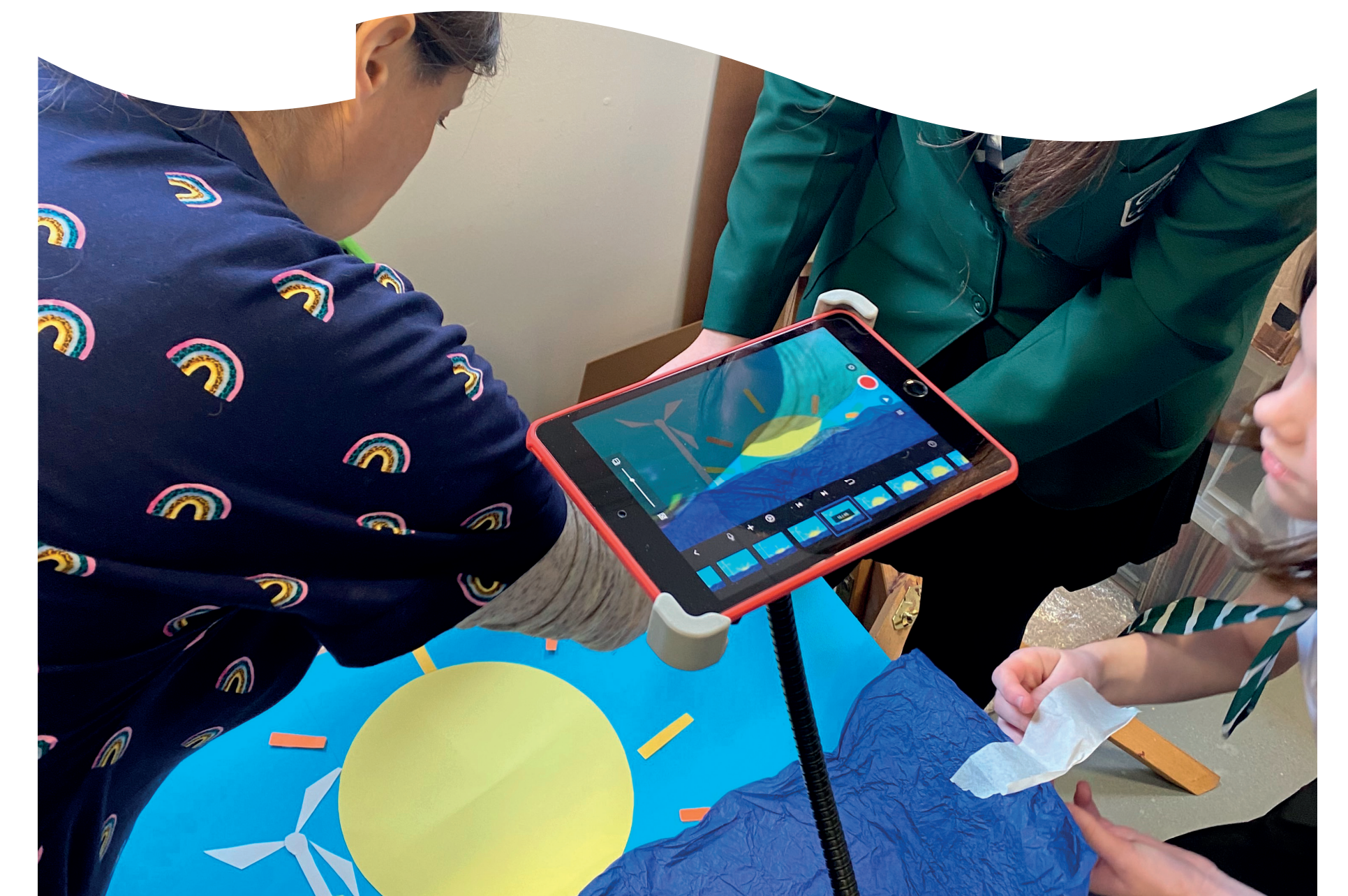
- ✓ This was an interactive mapping project where local people shared thoughts, ideas, opinions, experiences and aspirations about living and working Blyth.
- ✓ We explored public spaces and events, how people orientate themselves around the town as well as what made Blyth special.
- ✓ Key insights were gathered into people's views of the Market Place stimulating discussions around improvements and activities for the Town Centre.
- ✓ The information gathered will be used to shape and inform creative thinking around infrastructure improvements, navigating Blyth and cultural event programmes and events.

#### Icons & Text

- ✓ Artist-led printmaking workshops were carried out to design a visual language for the town, using design, graphics, typography, shape, and colour to explore Blyth's identity.
- ✓ Local community groups, schools, and residents of Blyth across the town got involved to develop a series of icons and visual identities that capture the diversity of Blyth and its vibrant local culture.
- ✓ Artworks and themes generated in the workshops will be used to inform a cultural brand identity for the town and can be developed further for temporary public art installations within Blyth.

#### Animating Space

- ✓ Animation workshops were led by an experienced artist and animator focusing on engaging young people to think about their environment within Blyth and learn new creative skills in stop-motion animation to express their ideas.
- ✓ Young people used original drawings, cut outs, and designs to create unique animations in response to the town centre and coastal environment.
- ✓ 'Things to do' was a focus, along with places to go and places to meet friends. The idea of a cinema in Blyth was very popular.
- ✓ A series of short animations have been created from these workshops and compiled into one short film.





# BLYTH TOWN FORUM

## Pilot Projects - Phase 2

### Environment and Ecology

Several workshops will be held focusing on aspects of Blyth's natural environment and coastal ecology, exploring playful spaces, that contribute to a greener and more sustainable town centre.

A series of designs, planting, patterns, colours and shapes will be created and designed working with local community groups.

Ideas will be documented and presented to the Energising Blyth Design and Landscape Architecture Team to inform the ongoing development of the Programme.

### Living History

In July 2022, The Caravan Gallery was on tour visiting key sites throughout the town to engage with local people to find out what makes Blyth special, collecting stories, objects and information all about Blyth.

The touring exhibition gave people a taster of what they can expect to see in the Blyth Pride of Place Project later in the year and provided information about ways in which local people can get involved.

Blyth Pride of Place Project is an evolving exhibition starting with a celebration event on 30 September 2022, and will grow day by day as visitors add their own observations, little known facts and creations.

Throughout the Blyth Pride of Place Project exhibition there will be opportunities to showcase what's going on in Blyth through presentations, talks, live music, performances, workshops and taster sessions from community groups and individuals each with a unique talent representing the diversity of what Blyth has to offer.

### Animating Spaces

Animation workshops will continue in the autumn building on the creative outputs of all the Creative Pilot Projects.

Participants will design, develop and edit their own animations working with experienced animators and artists.

Final works will be edited and brought together to be screened in various public spaces and community settings within the winter months.





## Culture Placemaking Programme

### Cultural Events Programme

- ✓ A new programme of cultural and heritage inspired events, providing enjoyable activities for thousands of local people and visitors will be rolled out in Blyth.
- ✓ The events programme will complement Blyth's existing popular events programme and include two signature annual events themed on Play and Light, which will take place annually in February and July.

### Branding Campaign

- ✓ The annual events programme will be accompanied by a high-profile branding campaign.
- ✓ Working in partnership, the branding campaign will be designed to improve perceptions of the town and establish a coherent visual identity across all of the Energising Blyth regeneration investments.

### Physical Improvements

- ✓ Physical improvements will be made at key heritage, cultural and landmark sites across the town including 'Blyth Beacons' artists commissions to improve signage and wayfinding.
- ✓ Lighting is to be installed to illuminate key heritage, cultural and landmark buildings across the town.
- ✓ Public art will also be present at key locations across the town.

