



CREATIVE SCOTLAND FUNDING & PARTICIPATORY BUDGETING, GALLATOWN, KIRKCALDY 2013-2015

“People who get involved in creative activities – that creative way of thinking spills over into their lives in general”

(Danny Cepok, Fife Council)

1 SURF's 'Alliance for Action' purpose

In March 2013, the Scottish Government committed support for SURF's proposal to use its unique role, experience and cross sector networks to develop a collaborative 'Alliance for Action' initiative. The agreed main aims were to:

- **Enhance resilience and practical outcomes** in the two communities of concerted focus i.e. Govan in Glasgow and Gallatown in Kirkcaldy;
- **Identify and promote constructive debate on wider policy and resource considerations** for supporting community regeneration in the continuing recessionary context.

2 Creative Investment- Aims, Process, Outcomes, Connections

2.1 AIMS Creative Scotland was an early and pro-active partner in SURF's Alliance for Action initiative. Both organisations share an interest in exploring and supporting the potential of creative activities in enhancing inclusive community participation in local regeneration efforts.

To that end, in January 2014, Creative Scotland invested £8k in the Gallatown, Kirkcaldy focused Alliance for Action via SURF. The agreed purpose was:

- To promote local artistic activity and collaboration in and among those living and working in the Gallatown.
- To draw out more widely applicable learning from that practical process.

2.2 PROCESS SURF suggested using participatory budgeting (PB) as a means of achieving maximum benefit and cross sector engagement. In consultation with the community and in collaboration with Fife Council - also an early and proactive Alliance partner - it was agreed that the Creative Scotland investment would be deployed using a community budgeting process. The aim was to encourage maximum community involvement in that process and therefore the sense of ownership of the eventual spending decisions and subsequent outcomes.

Creative Scotland (CS) embraced the learning opportunity to be part of a participative fund distribution model they had not previously deployed. SURF and CS welcomed the interest and participation of Fife Council and of Fife Cultural Trust as additional investors and supporters in this CS instigated initiative.

A jointly agreed aim was to use the CS investment to secure some modest but important 'early wins' in more active community engagement by making small, well targeted investments in existing creative community projects and activities. Fife Council had particular interest in how this approach might help them in building greater community capacity in the Gallatown area. This was part of its wider strategy towards improving the delivery of public services via greater community involvement; as per the recommendations of the Christie Commission.

2.3 OUTCOMES That early strategic outcome was not achieved within the original timescale. However, considerable learning and unanticipated benefits have been gained from what became a much more extended but still productive process of exploring mutual understanding and active cooperation on creative processes in community regeneration.

Creative approaches were successfully promoted; meaningful community engagement succeeded above and beyond connections with the 'usual suspects'; and related learning experiences were gained, *even prior* to actually using any of the CS investment.

In addition, the eventual culmination of the process enhanced community and individual capacity. This enabled community members to take greater ownership of creative, learning and leisure activities. These enhanced activities are currently providing pleasurable, practical and visual benefits to the community - even to those who have not taken part in the process.

As well as enhancing existing creative community activities, the PB initiative additionally enabled the creation of new projects.

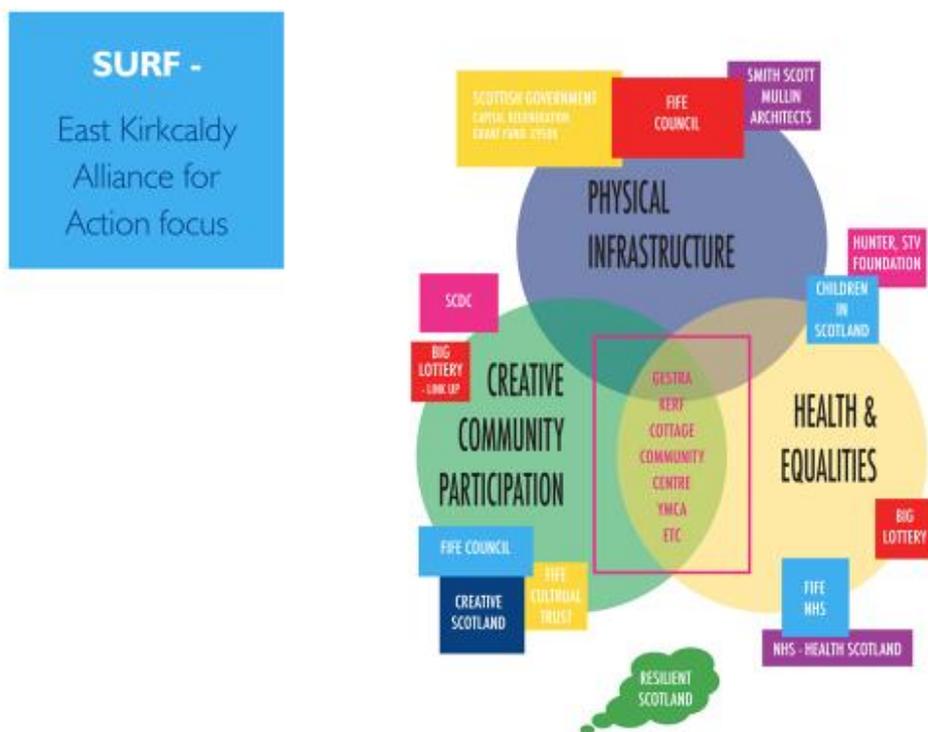
It should also be noted that despite the early difficulties of initiating the process, the local authority (which crucially took the lead in providing and funding the process framework) is already exploring ways of enabling both the Gallatown and other neighbourhoods to participate in further funding choices.

2.4 CONNECTIONS The diagram below illustrates the areas of focus originally identified by SURF's Alliance for Action activity as key to successful regeneration in East Kirkcaldy.

The PB initiative has reinforced those much needed connections between Creative Community Participation, Health and Wellbeing and Physical Infrastructure – and the ways in which together they support the wider regeneration effort. There are obvious links to the promotion of health and wellbeing in the way in which the PB process engaged and empowered the community, and those ongoing benefits accruing to the individuals who are participating in the resulting projects.

In terms of local infrastructure, some of the successful end projects will have an immediate physical visual impact on community buildings. Additionally the PB initiative’s links to the area of Physical Infrastructure have been further reinforced by the way in which the process itself was conducted in parallel with the much broader community consultation over the large investment in east Kirkcaldy from the Government’s Regeneration Capital Grants Fund.

Diagram of the agreed overlapping areas of focus in SURF’s Alliance for Action activity in East Kirkcaldy, Fife - also indicating the main investing partners



Notwithstanding these very positive outcomes, the process has had its challenges and critics. These are recorded as part of the learning. **The rest of this paper summarises the process and lessons learned.**

3 Key outputs

- **A pool of an estimated 100 new individuals engaged** with the PB process, above and beyond those who had previously been involved in community activities. People joined in through pop-up cafes and other staged consultation events and in response to direct appeals to housing associations, coffee mornings and previously ‘passive’ participants in existing projects.
- **Eleven discrete creative activities are now based in the Gallatown**, each initiated as a result of, or, enhanced by, the PB funding pot.
- **Between 130 - 150 adults and children are participating in a variety of regular creative activities** and will have the opportunity to continue doing so for at least the next twelve months. The participants are already exploring ways of becoming self-sustaining/sourcing more funding to extend that period.

“Everyone here wants things to keep going now it’s started. We’re looking at ways of paying for ourselves or getting more funding so we can keep going. It’s given us a real boost”

(Margaret Allan, Gallatown, Gala and Community Group)

- **Artwork in the form of murals and ‘graffiti boards’, designed and created by the community**, are now decorating the external walls of the local community hall, enhancing the local environment and also increasing a sense of ownership of place.

“You can see the children doing the mosaics all around us – that’s to go outside on the wall [of the Overton Community Centre] which will brighten up this place. Because what we need is colour – we all need a bit of colour!!”

(Anne Marie McMeekin, Gallatown Hotpots)

4 Key outcomes

- The initial donation by Creative Scotland was the catalyst for generating a final funding and resources pot worth more than **FOUR** times the original CS contribution.
- Council officers and community members who participated in the process are now committed to finding further similarly community-led funding opportunities, including plans to hold a second PB event in the Gallatown in 2016.
- **Partnership working** continues and expands to the benefit of everyone involved. As well as the sometimes tricky, but ultimately successful, relationship between the cross-sector national and local funders and drivers involved in the PB initiative, additional successes include the current involvement of the Scottish Community Development Centre (SCDC) in the Gallatown. At an early stage SURF encouraged

partner organisation SCDC to become involved in supporting projects to become 'PB ready' (see *Appendix 1; Timeline*) In the first instance the SCDC interventions were unsuccessful but now, post-PB, and with LinkUp support, three community groups are being supported by SCDC to consolidate and expand.

SURF was also able to facilitate a meeting between Fife Council and Dr Oliver Escobar who leads the community engagement section of *What Works Scotland*. Dr Escobar actively supported the Gallatown project and has offered to support ongoing and future Participatory Budgeting events in Fife.

- The charity, Youth Music Theatre Scotland (YMTS), which helped promote creative activities during the process and is supporting some of the newly funded projects, has been invited to use that experience in further community led projects elsewhere. The organisation's experience in the Gallatown will influence future programming decisions by the YMTS

"We've not done anything so community led before. You can kind of get stuck in a wee bubble where you sit in your office and you think – oh this must be what people think - and then you go and ask them and it's not what they want at all. So it's been nice to break out of that and talk to the people that it actually affects. We've now got a couple more community led commissions on the back of what we did here."

(Amanda Glover of Youth Music Theatre Scotland)

5 Key Transferable Learning Points

- **Holding Fast:** Funder flexibility and commitment to the 'big picture' are crucial, especially in terms of timescales. Credit should be given to Creative Scotland and other funders for holding fast to the initial PB concept and allowing that to play out. The eventual positive (and still ongoing) outcomes were only made possible because funders were prepared to 'ride out' the delays and difficulties where less committed participants might have been tempted to cut their losses.
- **You can't please everyone:** Evidenced positive outcomes do not invalidate criticisms of the process. Even genuine engagement with 'new' community members may do little to ameliorate historic community antagonisms towards agencies which are seen as 'authorities'.
- **Communication, communication:** It is impossible to be too transparent and too explicit about every single stage of the process.
 - I. Democracy isn't enough. Communities with historic suspicions of 'interventions' need explicit evidence of democratic consultation in action to allay their distrust. (Even then, not everyone will ever be convinced)

- II. There may be as many different forms of PB as there are different communities.
 - It was mistakenly assumed that all the partners shared the same end vision or big picture of a community making its own decision about spending need. More time could usefully have been spent early on discussing and agreeing what kind of PB model could best achieve that.
 - There may also be misconceptions about the reality of PB. One professional body was wary of the community being given what it perceived as too much autonomy, and had concerns that the community would have insufficient expertise in budget allocation. They thought a professional body like themselves should take a more active role in deciding on funding distribution.
- **Building trust:** Partnership working in this environment (see *Communication, communication*) benefits from the presence of a trusted and committed ‘honest broker’ (such as SURF). As well as introducing funders, drivers and participants in the first place, SURF’s role as an objective actor continued throughout the process with the SURF representative eventually being asked to MC the concluding event, because of what was recognised as SURF’s independent status within and by the community.
- **One size never fits all (1):** Successful PB initiatives have to be designed in a way which recognise and accommodate the limitations or state of readiness of the potential community beneficiaries. Early delays were caused by a failure to recognise how much support the community needed to become ‘PB ready’.

“ We realised there was a lot of groundwork to be done first which was not just about the participatory budgeting but about getting the community geared up to think about a wider canvas of projects that could be developed ... to find the hooks that would bring the community in and to get them thinking in a more creative way.”

(Danny Cepok, Area Services Manager (Kirkcaldy) Fife Council)

- **One size never fits all (2):** As above. The introduction of a standard programme of taster activities was paused because it did not recognise the particular needs of that community. A revised programme succeeded where parts of the first could not, because it was based on knowledge of the community concerned.

6 General Conclusions

- The success of the process and the benefits that have accrued are tangible and well evidenced. Partnerships succeeded. The community benefited (and is still benefiting) There is enhanced community participation in creative activities – and enthusiasm and commitment to expand those to become sustainable. Individuals within the community feel some ownership of that process. Some partners are already building

on the success of this PB process by committing to repeat the process elsewhere. Other partners have a new understanding and respect for the possibilities of community autonomy. The learning process has been valuable.

- The particular challenges which have been identified are most readily defined as being about trust and communication and the need for a recognition of the particular quirks and needs of individual communities (see [Key Learning](#)).
- Fife Council should be commended for the way in which it took the lead, especially with the stepping down of its originally intended programme coordinator. FC's Izzy Whyte worked hard with Amanda Glover to honestly review the strengths and weaknesses of the programme at the point they took over nine months in and were able to restructure it accordingly.
- Finally, Creative Scotland's local and national profile as a pro-active instigator of practical learning and cooperation on linking creative activity with other cross sector community regeneration efforts, has been enhanced.

The next several pages record more detailed background and learning resulting from the PB initiative and include a timeline of the process as *Appendix 1*.

Output Summary

As part of the taster sessions, Youth Music Theatre Scotland ran a two-week project of new writing for theatre based around the stories and lives of young residents of Gallatown. There were 14 young people involved and 5 young people took part in a performance of the work they had created at the end of the project. Young people worked with a theatre director (Amanda Glover – Creative Director of YMTS, a writer (Jonathan Durie – current Scottish Book Trust Callan Gordon New Writing Award winner), a composer (Kenny Forrest – currently studying MA Composition for Film at Edinburgh University), a choreographer (Julieann Crannie – YMTS and freelance dance artist) and two young artists in training. The young people wrote and composed four songs about living in Gallatown including; 'Rising Up' and 'The Granny Chop'. Two of the girls involved sang solos during the final performance. A subsequent event planned for the Spring holidays in 2015 was less successful, because of problems with transport and venue.

A total of 14 projects applied for funding as part of the PB process. Twelve were successful. The two applicants which failed to attract YOU Decide¹ funding were given guidance immediately after the event about alternative opportunities for support. A detailed process timeline is attached as *Appendix 1*. The names of the 12, successful, selected projects and the amounts distributed are included within the Financial Summary, attached as *Appendix 2*.

¹ YOU Decide was the name by which the PB process was known locally.

Outcome Summary

The additional funds attracted by the initial CS investment of £8,000 included £5,000 from Fife Cultural Trust and £5,000 from Fife Council all of which went to fund the YOU Decide distribution pot. The cooperation of the three investors was based on a shared interest in investing in and learning from creative approaches to more authentic participative community regeneration. The additional £12,000 cost of the preparatory work taster programme and process framework was met by Fife Council's Kirkcaldy Area Committee.

Further Local Challenges and Learning

Work towards delivering the Participatory Budgeting process took far longer than any of the partners originally anticipated. Issues contributing to the slower than expected development process include the following:

- Although there was initially universal enthusiasm for a Participatory Budgeting process, there was insufficient clarity and agreement between partners as to what that actually meant.
- Too much reliance was placed on the fact that Fife Council had previously undertaken successful Participatory Budgeting events. Not enough attention was paid to the difference in scale and content of the previous processes.
- It was crucial that the project was seen to be locally 'organically grown', and not something parachuted in to the Gallatown. The amount of time, support and additional funding needed to prepare enough community groups to be ready for full participation in Participatory Budgeting, was underestimated.
- The process was further delayed following the unexpected resignation of the YMTS manager who had been commissioned (by Fife Council) to take responsibility for the original design and presentation of the taster sessions. (As it happened, the project as a whole benefited as a consequence [see: [One size never fits all \(2\)](#)])
 - Although it can't be quantified, it is likely that the PB process benefited from being able to 'piggy-back' to some degree from the consultation over the substantial 'Gateway to Gallatown' physical regeneration investment project which was ongoing at the same time.

[End of report]

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Appendix 1
A summary of the Creative Scotland investment timeline



Summer 2013

- Creative Scotland expresses an interest in involvement in the Gallatown after being introduced to community representatives at a SURF conference on creativity and regeneration.

Autumn 2013

- Creative Scotland visits the Gallatown and takes part in a 'walkabout' with community members.

December 2013

- SURF facilitates a meeting in Kirkcaldy with Fife Council officers, community members, Resilient Scotland and Creative Scotland to discuss creative ways of capacity building. Part of the discussion identifies the benefits of Participatory Budgeting as a way of ensuring community engagement

January – February 2014

- Creative Scotland agrees to fund a creative capacity building project in the Gallatown and offers £8k to SURF to hold as an honest broker.
- Creative Scotland, Fife Council and SURF agree that funds should be distributed using a Participatory Budgeting process.
- Fife Council agrees to lead on the project, with SURF acting as an observing partner.

- Fife Council offers to top up the funding by a further £5k. Creative Scotland suggests that Fife Cultural Trust could become involved.

March - May 2014

- SURF and Fife Council agree to use a Participatory Budgeting model that is similar to a previous successful Fife-wide exercise. Interested projects would be invited to present their 'case' to an audience of community members who then vote on how the funds should be distributed.
- Early engagement with the community identifies that although individuals and some small projects have creative capacity building ideas, very few are at a stage where those projects could be presented in a meaningful way.
- Creative Scotland suggests that a professional community artist/ could be engaged, perhaps through Fife Cultural Trust, to enhance this process – and in particular the learning which may be derived from it.
- Fife Council begins discussions with Community artist Janet Robertson, of Youth Music Theatre Scotland (YMTS) and The Arts Hub in the Postings.

May-June 2014

- After several meetings between Fife Council and Fife Cultural Trust, the Chief Executive of Fife Cultural Trust offers to contribute an additional £5k to the project.
- Fife Council invites Janet Robertson to prepare a programme of supported creative/arts 'taster' events to engage the community and promote participation in the Participatory Budgeting event. Fife Council agrees to fund the additional cost of this preparation programme outwith the Participatory Budgeting budget, which now stands at £18k.
- Fife Council agrees that a YMTS event will be held during the summer holidays, followed by a six week programme of events to begin in September, to be managed by Janet Robertson and to culminate in a 'Funding and Futures' Café where the community will consider funding applications, with a view to agreeing on allocations in October.
- David Allan of the Scottish Community Development Centre offers capacity building support to community projects in preparing for the Participatory Budgeting event.

July-August 2014

- Janet Robertson resigns from her role at the Arts Hub and the YMTS to take up a new role with Fife Cultural Trust. For a variety of reasons, her successor is unable to meet the agreed timetable and the programme is postponed.
- Meanwhile Fife Council has funded a new post of Local Development Officer in the Gallatown area. Izzy Whyte takes over Fife Council responsibility for leading on the Participatory Budgeting project.

September- October 2014

- Izzy Whyte works closely with Janet Robertson's successor Amanda Glover to enable the musical theatre event to take place during the school October break. The original intention to hold the event within the Gallatown was not fulfilled and instead the event was held in town with young people being bussed there.

- The Scottish Community Development Centre again offered support to community projects, but after initial meetings no further action was taken by the community groups.

November- December 2014

- With Izzy Whyte's support the taster programme of a variety of creative activities begins in the Gallatown. Some activities are more successful than others and after reviewing the programme, the decision is taken to shut down the less popular activities and use the money to promote other activities in 2015.

January – 2015

- SURF facilitates a meeting between Dr Oliver Escobar (What Works Scotland) and Fife Council, where Oliver Escobar offers to support ongoing and future Participatory Budgeting events in Fife.
- Fife Council and Amanda Glover review the PB programme and agree a timetable of further tasters and the provision of support to existing projects to culminate in the final Participatory Budgeting funding community vote to be held in early April.

February 2015

- The numbers of participants in taster sessions and discussion groups increases but the poor weather has impacted on attendance at some events. It is decided, after a meeting to further review the programme, to extend the deadline for applications until May 8th and postpone the community vote until June 13th.

March – April 2015

- Planning meeting. A series of four 'YOU Decide' pop-up cafes are held at two popular venues in the Gallatown – at the Overton Community Centre and the OneNineOne church hall at the Kirkcaldy Free Church. Promotions made at six different community group meetings. Those who attended are given the opportunity to discuss creative project ideas, learn about funding options and offered help in putting their applications together.
- Five hundred leaflets distributed, some with letters to hundreds of homes and other leaflets and posters displayed in shops, community centres and public buildings in the Gallatown.
- Further planning and update meeting with YMTS and SURF

May 2015

- Two days allocated for supporting community groups and individuals with application writing, but one applicant sought help
- Applicant deadline of May 8th.
- Applicants shortlisted on May 15th.

June -2015

- Two Event planning meetings
- June 13th. YOU Decide event. Project winners elected and funds distributed.

Appendix 2 **FINANCIAL SUMMARY**

Investment Package

YOU Decide Distribution Funds

Creative Scotland Investment	£8,000	(Original CS core investment)
Fife Cultural Trust	£5,000	(Additional SURF secured investment)
Fife Council	£5,000	(Additional SURF secured investment)
TOTAL YOU Decide funds	£18,000	

Additional Process Support

Fife Council (Kirkcaldy Area Committee)	£12,000	(Additional SURF secured investment)
SURF staff and support 22 Days @£400 (via Scottish Government Alliance For ActioContract)	£8,800	
TOTAL process support funds	£20,800	

TOTAL INVESTMENT PACKAGE SECURED £38,800

Successful YOU Decide projects and funds allocated (used to initiate or support Community Activities)

Project	Funds allocated
Building Bridges - Overton Community Mural Project	£2,414.00
Gallatown Gala and Community Group	
Creative Crafters	£2,289.00
Gal'Toon Crafters	
CSI - CrimeScene Investigate	£406.00
CSIERS	
Gallatown Community Choir	£3,000.00
YMTS	
Junior Musical Theatre Class	£3,000.00
YMTS	
Mixing it Up	£1,194.00
The Gallatown Girls	
Piece'n it together in the Galtoon	£955.00
Gallatown Junior Youth Club	
Planting our feet in the future	£600.00
Green Gallatown	
Sprayin it like it is!	£1,230.00
Gallatown Senior Youth Club	
St Clair Street Toddlers	£995.00
Kirkcaldy Free Church of Scotland	
WheelyBikelicious	£1,140.00
Gallatown Hairy Bikers, Bike Club & Co-op	
Yummy yumyyyummy I've got art in my tummy	£777.00
Gallatown Hotpots/verton Mains Weans	
TOTAL FUNDS DISTRIBUTED IN COMMUNITY	£18.000