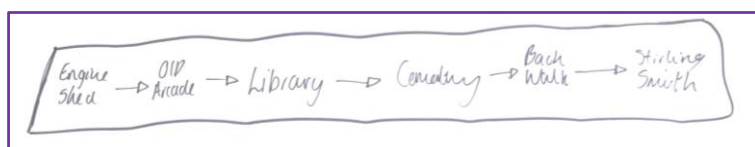
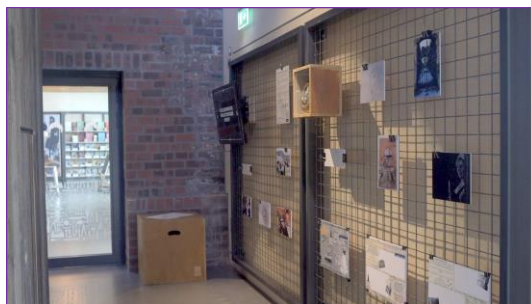


## SUMMARY: Stirling Heritage Arts Award evaluation

### Background and methodology

Stirling Heritage Arts Award was a year-long project delivered by See Think Make, in partnership with Scran (Historic Environment Scotland, and funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund. Structured around the Silver Arts Award, young people aged 15+ used Stirling's heritage and a programme of Partner-led workshops an inspiration for their own arts practice and ultimately to co-design a heritage trail through Stirling. Project partners included Scotland's Urban Past, The Engine Shed, The Smith Art Gallery and Museum, Stirling Castle, Historic Environment Scotland and Stirling Council, Forth Valley College, Dunblane High School and St Modan's High School, Media Education, Magic Torch Comics and Rachel O'Neill.



Ruth Stevenson of Ruthless Research evaluated the project, through creative sessions with project participants, email feedback, feedback cards at the

end of project event, and semi-structured telephone depth interviews with 12 project partners.

### Key findings

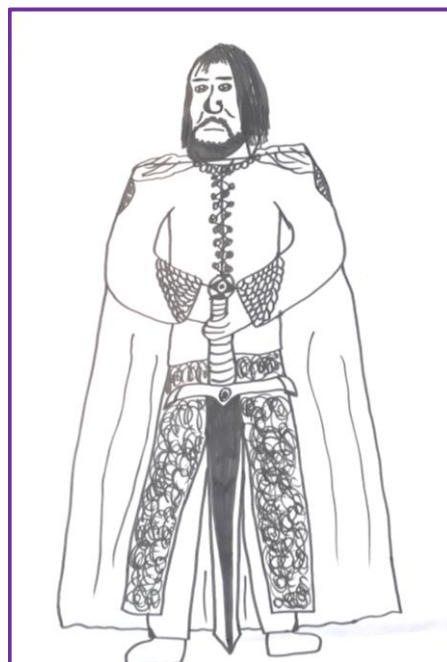
At the close of the evaluation, those involved with the Stirling Heritage Arts Award were very satisfied with the progress and outcomes of the project.

Positive impacts on participants included:

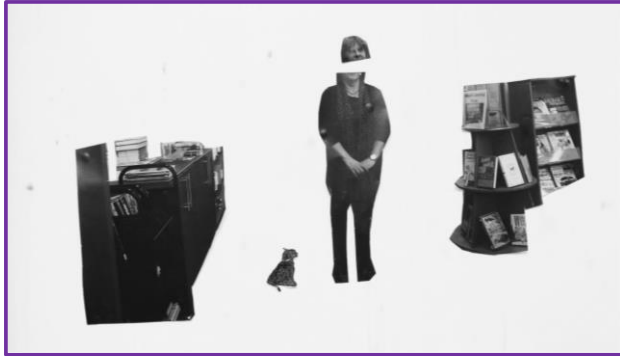
- Enthusiasm and enjoyment;
- Developing creative skills;
- Engagement with Stirling's heritage;
- Developing teamwork and connection with others;
- Enhanced confidence;
- A sense of pride and achievement;
- Gaining a recognised qualification;
- Access to an alternative route to learning.

Positive impacts on partners included:

- Personal interest and enjoyment;
- Learning about the Arts Award;
- Building professional networks.



As such, there is no doubt that the project attained and exceeded the Heritage Lottery Fund outcome: *Outcomes for People – With our investment people will have: developed skills; learnt about heritage; changed their attitudes and/or behaviour; had an enjoyable experience.*



This was a complex project to manage, and it was challenging to participate in due to its open nature which demanded a 'leap of faith' for partners and participants alike. The group was small and hugely varied, including young people with complex needs. It was not straightforward to pitch the project at an appropriate level or generate the cohesiveness necessary to enable the intensive stage to develop organically.

However, it worked. The project lead must be commended for her vision, and the time and energy that she put into building relationships with the partners and young people.

Retrospectively the partners were supportive of the model, and the approach taken including the Arts Award and the subject matter. Ultimately the project succeeded in delivering against the needs of multiple partners and providing positive impacts for the participating young people which will surely have a lasting legacy.



### Learning from the project

Good practice which may be useful in the planning of future projects:

- Engage with potential partners at the earliest opportunity;
- Work with a wide variety of partners to inspire participants;
- Expect a drop-off in attendance;
- Expect attendance to be unreliable, and plan to spend time getting to know individuals and encouraging them to participate on a case-by-case basis;
- Plan to provide bespoke individual attention throughout every stage of the project;
- Look for ways to manage the group dynamic and build teamwork opportunities in the early stages;
- Use Trello (or similar) to prepare portfolios.



For future projects, earlier consideration could be put into:

- Project timings, to optimise conditions for working outdoors;
- The balance of arts and heritage across the course of the project;
- Ways to engage partners and participants with an open process;
- Ways to support the young people to continue with their creative work after the project has ended.

The success of the Stirling Heritage Arts Award and the useful learning points identified through careful reflection should provide a useful model upon which others could base their work.