

Research and Knowledge Exchange Civic Engagement at the University of Greenwich

A collection of best practice examples
of Civic Engagement projects delivered
by the University of Greenwich
academic and research community.



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Cooperation Africa: Promoting knowledge exchange and cooperative financing in Africa: A Ghana case study.

Dr Adotey Bing-Pappoe

Dr Adotey Bing-Pappoe is the co-Chair of Cooperation Africa a civil society membership organisation that promotes cooperative formation and development in Africa, based in Accra, Ghana.

This project designed a knowledge exchange system for cooperative members and resources persons. The project also instituted a pilot project to help identify the best way to provide finance to cooperatives. The project was delivered alongside the Ghana Credit Union Association. The Apex body of Credit Unions in Ghana.

The Cooperative Support Network will allow cooperatives in Africa with the necessary computers and software to indicate their technical needs and then for resource persons to indicate their availability to provide the support the cooperatives have indicated that they need.

The pilot project has been designed to allow cooperation Africa to learn ways of disbursing funds especially to young women and men who wish to start or grow their worker cooperatives, as a way of demonstrating a way of reducing the high levels of unemployment in African countries.



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Our Time is Now

Alison Palmer

An Exhibition of diverse photographic portraits celebrating girls and women's grassroots football across the UK.

The body of work commissioned by the National Football Museum recorded over 60,000 visitors to the exhibition. During the summer of 2025 I was interviewed on ITV and Times Radio about the work.

Our Time is Now, was selected to show at the Heritage Gallery Greenwich in March 2025 where I gave an oral presentation of the work highlighting the multiple community groups, organisations and sporting bodies that I collaborated with. Among others, I worked with Holbeck Moor Women's FC, Leeds, Frenford FC and Muslimah Sports Association, Football Unites, Racism Divides, Sheffield, the FA and Lioness Nikitta Parris.

My approach was documentary based; I researched all stories and wrote the interviews. The intent was to give voice and visibility to those girls and women who previously had felt unseen, in sport, but also in their own communities. Grassroots football was giving them a sense of 'belonging'. I wanted to capture, share and celebrate those stories to inspire others who may have also felt discluded.

The portrait of Yasmin Hussain FA Coach at Frenford, highlights the barriers that young girls in her community were facing. The elders were not allowing the girls to play as the coaches were all men.

Yasmin trained as an FA Qualified Coach setting up sessions for the girls which the elders agreed to. These girls are now thriving and feel like they belong, demonstrating living and lasting impact.



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Collaborative working with local charities to enable effective monitoring and evaluation of interventions

Dr Amy Moon and Professor Claire Monks

Dandelion Time (DT) are a Kent-based charity delivering a systemic, nature-based intervention with children who have experienced multiple acute childhood experiences (ACEs) and are at high risk of negative outcomes and their families. Their 12 session programme is facilitated by a trained therapist and involves the whole family in outdoor and craft activities.

DT initially approached the ILD to conduct a summative review of their intervention with the aim of quantifiably evidencing their intervention success by conducting a secondary analysis of their pre-and post-therapy outcome measure data.

However, on our recommendation, the charity also commissioned us to collect some primary qualitative data through interviews and focus groups with families and referring practitioners to identify the stronger and weaker aspects of the approach.

Researchers in the ILD provided training to all DT practitioners in ethical data handling and research practices to ensure that families didn't feel coerced and to ensure that quantitative data was collected in a scientifically rigorous manner to allow for meaningful statistical analysis. Weekly management meetings between the research team at the ILD and the DT senior management team supported a strong collaborative working relationship.

Findings were presented to 40 DT staff and governing board members at the end of the project. Future collaborative work with the charity is ongoing, for example (1) an NIHR bid to conduct a cost-effectiveness evaluation, (2) on our recommendation the charity started developing a tool to scale-up their approach, engaging with local schools to provide a more preventative approach.

Supporting People Living with Dementia through Civic Action and Engagement

Professor Andrew Clark, Gill Eaglestone, Dr Tiffeny James, Dr Aysegul Kafadar and Dr Purity Mwendwa

[View the project poster here](#)

Dementia is an umbrella term for symptoms affecting memory, problem-solving, language and behaviour, caused by diseases that damage the brain. In 2021, 57 million people worldwide had dementia. Currently in the UK, nearly 1 million people live with dementia, around 525,000 of whom live in the community.

Research at University of Greenwich highlights how civic, municipal and neighbourhood activities and spaces both enable and limit opportunities to create good places to live with dementia.

Members of the Institute for Lifecourse Development work with civic and third-sector organisations to improve life for those affected, focusing on non-medical settings where care, connection, engagement and belonging can be supported.

Projects are delivered in partnership with local municipal planning and commissioning teams, organisations, charities, dementia groups and people with lived experience. Benefits include: more inclusive research and knowledge exchange; more authentic stakeholder engagement; greater visibility of experiences often marginalised or hidden; services and policies that address real needs; increased awareness and reduced stigma; and contribution to a global community working to improve the lives of those impacted by dementia.



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10 Years of SOUND/IMAGE Festival & Loudspeaker Orchestra Concert Series

Professor Andrew Knight-Hill and Dr Emma Margetson

Since 2015 the Loudspeaker Orchestra has presented concerts of sonic arts and electronic music to diverse audiences across south east london. Our site-specific concert programme is a laboratory of investigation, curating and adapting works to iconic andmarks in communities and connecting academic research to diverse audiences.

We have hosted over 70 individual concert events in our 10 year history, in spaces as diverse as The Brunel Museum Caisson, Crossrail Place Gardens, Crystal Palace Park, Garrison Church, Royal Observatory, Queen Anne Undercroft, St Alfege Church, and the Cutty Sark, working with Local, National and International partners to create connections across and between researchers and publics.

Described by leading contemporary music magazine as a "nomadic" programme, our work adapts usually exclusive academic contemporary music practices to diverse public audiences, and professional practitioners in the creative industries, linking film and television professionals with immersive work and innovative research into sound practice, while creating a public profile for the university as a world leading hub of innovation in creative practice research in spatial and immersive audio.



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Medway Together: A better future for you. A better future for Medway

Professor Andy Frost

In collaboration with several Voluntary and Community Sector partners including Medway Voluntary Action, Disability Assist, Carers First, Mid-Kent College, YMCA, Medway Diversity Forum etc.

Supported by the Community Renewal Fund (CRF), Medway Together project was ambitious from the outset within a short timeframe. It sought to combine the muscle of the University of Greenwich located within Medway along with the trusted and grounded expertise of several Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups with a common goal, to bring about change and provide real employment opportunities to underserved groups regarded as persistently economically inactive.

This project was very personal, undertaken by groups working in and for underserved groups in Medway; groups that understood Medway and wanted to make a difference. The project was designed as a feeder into the Shared Prosperity (SP) initiative. Whilst subsequent funding allocations for SP did not materialise as expected, this project served to demonstrate the potential within Medway and the power of the partnership assembled.

This CRF project demonstrated much success in addressing the real needs of underserved groups – and developing/adapting programmes of support that were fit for purpose. As such this initiative was successful in attaining its twofold aims, to pilot innovative pathways into real employment opportunities and strengthening the relationships between third sector, employers, and statutory services within Medway.

This initiative has generated significant social value and demonstrates the power of the community and voluntary sector when working together in a coordinated manner. As such this initiative has set a foundation upon which further funding will be sought and is currently being utilised in preparing a Medway Solidarity Fund bid to the National Lottery Community Fund.



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Landscape Encounters

Anushka Athique and Dr Hannah Lammin

Landscape Encounters is an ongoing project that is developing and testing a participatory creative-practice-action-research methodology, inspired by decolonial pedagogies, and using diverse embodied experiences as a starting point for the co-production of knowledge by inviting participants to reflect on their own umwelten and to explore how these might be different from each other.

Following a pilot project in July 2024 with community woodlands Wilderness Woods and DCI students we were commissioned by creative consultancy Beyond the Box CIC to run two community workshops as part of the People's Pavilion Summer programme - a youth-led cultural space championing creativity, community and inclusivity located in the Grounds of the William Morris Gallery, London

The event was a community workshop for all ages, which mostly engaged under 10s and their parents / guardians. In order to imagine the life-worlds of the plants and animals we encountered in the gardens we used moving, drawing and making as approaches to collectively explore the relations between ourselves and the things that live in the gardens, getting closer to the plants and animals we share our environment with, encouraging empathy with other species and so a more sustainable relationship with our planet.



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Co-creation in the creative economy: a living lab approach to innovation in heritage and creative sector

Dr Athina Piterou and Professor Jin Chan

PLLACE (Penang Living Lab for Advancing the Creative Economy) is a joint project involving four universities and local support partners (Penang Institute, Penang Women's Development Corporation, Penang Art District). Penang hosts a UNESCO World Heritage Site (WHS) in its capital, George Town, which is recognised for its unique architectural and intangible heritage. Since the WHS inscription in 2008, the creative industries in Penang have experienced substantial growth though new creative ventures still face challenges in accessing support and training.

The researchers implemented a Living Lab (LL) approach in collaboration with local partners and creative sector businesses (from traditional crafts to digital). The LL, which ran over six days in August 2025, applied a variety of co-creation tools to provide feedback on policy recommendations and priorities for Penang's creative sector, as well as to support the co-design of business skills curricula for creative entrepreneurs.

A living lab (physical or virtual) addresses societal challenges by bringing together various stakeholders for collaboration and collective ideation. PLLACE LL employed a "frugal" approach in designing co-creation activities using plain materials. The LL was supported by strategic alliances in the sector with Digital Penang (the LL host), Malaysia Creativepreneurs Strategic Alliance and Malaysia Digital Economy Corporation. Students facilitated the co-creation process.

- 8 businesses received feedback on their business idea (product, price or business model).
- 25 speakers (including the Penang State Exco for Tourism & Creative Economy) participated in 6 panel discussions on the creative economy
- 285 visitors: 236 visitors engaged as co-creators.



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Repair Future: Building Collaborative Communities of Repair in England and Wales

*Dr Azar MahmoumGonbadi and
Professor Jin Chan*

The Repair Future event, hosted at the University of Greenwich, brought together over 70 participants from across London and Wales's repair ecosystem, including Repair Café organisers, community repairers, ReLondon (London Councils), the Restart Project, and academic researchers. The event provided a platform for knowledge exchange and collaboration between grassroots practitioners, policy stakeholders, and university partners, centred on the shared ambition of promoting repair as a civic practice that strengthens communities and supports environmental sustainability.

The initiative was designed to highlight the vital role of repair in addressing issues of waste, resource inequality, and social isolation. Through lightning talks, collaborative workshops, and informal networking, the event enabled practitioners and researchers to share lived experiences, practical challenges, and innovative approaches to embedding repair within community life.

The benefits were twofold: for practitioners, the event created new opportunities to learn about updated best practices and policy advocacy, as well as connect with policy and research partners, access university resources, and amplify the visibility of their work. For academics, it opened pathways to co-develop impactful research with communities, grounded in real-world practices and civic need. Ultimately, Repair Future demonstrated how the University of Greenwich can act as a convener and facilitator for civic engagement, supporting the repair movement in London to grow, collaborate, and contribute to flourishing local communities



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Environmental & Horticultural Skills Sessions

Dr Catherine Maffioletti

The knowledge exchange project, Environmental and Horticultural Skills Sessions (EHSS), took place in collaboration with Greenwich Youth Justice Service, a service that provides support and opportunities for young people who are facing challenges and barriers to training, education and employment (NEETs) in the Royal Borough of Greenwich. Emma Clements, Head of Greenwich Youth Justice Service and member of the FLAS Institute of Inclusive Communities and Environments Board, indicated in advance of the project, that engaging the young people that are supported by the service in gardening has had notable benefits for the community.

Professor of Landscape Architecture and Nature-based Solutions, Benz Kotzen and I brought together the project to enhance young people's skillsets and the Institute of Inclusive Environments funded the activity. The ambition for each session was to engage a maximum of 5 young people between the ages of 15-18. The project had demonstrable successes in terms of engaging discussions, activities, and exploration of Stockwell Street Rooftops and surrounding areas. EHSS explored ways to build confidence, and develop Curriculum Vitae skills and experience in order to help redefine a sense of self in relation to activities for self-development.



Help to Grow (H2G) – Supporting our Business Communities

Professor Chris Birch, Aaron Tan, Siddharth Joshi and Dr Edmore Chinhamo

Help to Grow is a government sponsored initiative aimed at supporting growth, productivity, profitability and sustainability within our multifarious local businesses and other organisations. To date, we have run 5 cohorts, with 97 attendees, representing 77 organisations. This includes 60 online and place-based sessions, and a total of 5000 hours of learning engagement. In reality, many will have done much more.

The H2G twelve week programme was devised and designed externally and delivered by accredited partners, holding the Small Business Charter Quality Assurance Award. It was overseen by the Chartered Association of Business Schools (CABS). Client feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, supportive and grateful. We are undertaking ongoing longitudinal impact research. What is becoming clear is that Product, Market, Process and Brand developments are being implemented by companies and that all are creating their bespoke business growth plans and beginning the implementation of these, using the theoretical frameworks they have been introduced to. In our presentation, we will highlight examples. This is a great example of a project that demonstrates the mutual value-added we can create by working together.

This unique programme and partnership has identified that:

1. There is a market for this type of intervention.
2. That ambitious SMEs will make a direct contribution to the cost.
3. That Universities can play a key role in the National agenda to promote and nurture sustainable economic growth.
4. That our curriculum design and delivery can learn from H2G.
5. That we need to look carefully at pedagogy, andragogy in the light of ongoing technological, demographic and geo-political change.
6. That new learner markets can be created if we can be agile, adapt and adopt.



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Creative U: Unlocking the potential to reintegrate through creative entrepreneurship

Chryssi Tzanetou and Dr John Tull

Creative U co-created entrepreneurship education principles to improve opportunities for prison inmates in resettlement as returning citizens. Through our “people-to-people” ethos, and with the recruitment of GBS student Research Assistants, we co-designed creative entrepreneurship through four onsite workshops with young inmates aged 18-25 in HMP Isis in the Borough of Greenwich. Supported by NUSC Research Centre, our unique methodology blends entrepreneurship education, design thinking, and applied theatre. Participants visualised their entrepreneurial futures through art and storytelling, developing rough business ideas into concepts that our expert entrepreneur panel validated (onsite) as feasible and exciting.

We brought together our community partner Untold, two GBS students, Central Saint Martins’ Design Research Lab, HMP ISIS and two successful entrepreneurs.

Creative U fostered trust, agency and entrepreneurial skills, enabling participants to shape content and their confidence. It strengthened prison education services at a time when funding is being cut. Feedback has informed our plans to develop a full course with train the-trainer services for scaling.

Participants drove sessions actively, with their increased confidence and entrepreneurial identity development seen in all “strongly agreeing” that:

- “The course increased my confidence.”
- “This programme contributed to the development of my personal identity.”
- “I enjoyed participating in this educational programme.”

The work has forged new partnerships, expanded Untold's prison education portfolio, and established foundations for transferability/scaling through further civic engagement and funding. Student contributors gained valuable employability skills as credible peer-age messengers.



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The Civic University: What is the future role of the university? University of Greenwich as a place-based civic institution.

Danielle Broadhurst

In my PhD, I am taking a participatory action research approach to work on a vision for the University of Greenwich as a Civic University. This research will be in two main parts.

The first, will involve mapping the civic impact the university is currently having. The second, will involve working with Citizens UK and people in the community to co-produce the vision for what University of Greenwich as a civic institution should look like.

I hope that the end product of my research can be used by the university in some way to support the university's future Civic University work.



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Designing Open Third Spaces: Building Equitable Partnerships Between Universities and Communities

*Dr David Hockham, Dr Pamela Zigomo,
Pamela Franklin, Doreen McKenzie,
Katarzyna Zaremba-Byrne*

DOTS - Designing Open Third Spaces is a framework developed through five years of collaboration between universities, cultural organisations, and community groups in South East London. DOTS responds to the challenge of designing equitable partnerships by focusing on how projects are initiated, shared, and sustained across institutional and community boundaries.

We worked with a wide range of partners including the Caribbean Social Forum, Dead Rabbits Theatre, and intergenerational community groups. Together we developed projects such as a community-led programme of workshops What About Us (2019), a hybrid exhibition preserving Caribbean oral histories, Let Our Legacy Continue (2022), and a co-devised theatre performance Grandma and the Rum Shop (2024). Each project was co-created to address specific challenges identified by communities, ranging from social isolation, cultural marginalisation to the preservation of cultural memory.

The benefits of these collaborations have been significant. Communities gained access to space and resources sharing their knowledge and creativity. Students and researchers engaged directly with lived expertise, developing new skills in facilitation, empathy, and co-design. For universities and cultural organisations, the projects demonstrated how civic engagement can be deepened when communities lead the agenda.

DOTS provides a practical framework for recognising the affective, relational, and material dimensions of collaboration. By focusing on three modes of practice: assembling, leading, and mediating, it helps partners navigate power and co-create solutions that are locally situated.



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Greenwich Youth Justice and the University of Greenwich; Building a long-term participation partnership.

*Dr Elaine Williams, Professor Maria Arche,
Dr Ella Simpson, Emma Clements*

This partnership was initiated through the EU funded Cooperation in Science and Technology (COST) Action 22139, 'Justice to youth language needs: human rights undermined by an invisible disadvantage (Y-JustLang)'. Bringing together multidisciplinary and multi-national experts from research, policy and practice this cross-Europe action addresses the absence of consistent policies defining the language abilities and needs of children and adolescents in conflict with the law. Navigating the criminal justice system is highly complex and often experienced within high stress contexts. In addition to this, children in conflict with the law are six times more likely to have speech and language difficulties.

Partnering with the Greenwich Youth Justice Service on this project has enabled the contribution of community practitioners and local children with lived experience of the youth justice system to contribute and coproduce outputs on this project. Greenwich University facilitated five workshops with eight young people (all with lived experience of youth justice) from the Greenwich Borough to share their experiences of language, authority and the law. Their quotes were edited into a short film that will be shared with policy makers and legal professionals.

Building on this work, the collaboration between the University and Greenwich Youth Justice is continuing to grow into a long-term participation partnership that will increase the University's community engagement and enable knowledge exchange within the Borough.



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Community Assets and Civic Engagement: Tackling Health Inequalities for Refugee, Asylum-Seeking and Migrant Communities

Professor Elena Vacchelli

We conducted collaborative participatory action research to identify and strengthen community assets that improve health outcomes for refugee, asylum-seeking and migrant communities. Our multi-method approach combined secondary research and demographic profiling with co-produced digital asset mapping. We recruited and trained Community Co-Researchers who conducted 80 walking interviews, complemented by 21 community workshops and 36 co-creative sessions across three regions: North London, South London and East of England.

This research involved 19 academic and community partners, including Local Government East, GYROS, Cambridge Refugee Resettlement Campaign, Greenwich Citizens, Creating Ground, Migration Works CIC, Lewisham Refugee and Migrant Network, and Barnet and Greenwich Citizens. We worked directly with four migrant populations—Hong Kongers, Afghans, Syrians, and Ukrainians—plus EU and non-EU communities at each site, ensuring community voices shaped the entire research process.

The research identified critical barriers migrants face accessing services, including language barriers, complex eligibility criteria, housing challenges, culturally inappropriate food provision, and digital literacy requirements. Crucially, we revealed how faith organizations and voluntary groups function as vital civic assets, facilitating statutory service access while providing language support, employment assistance, information, and social opportunities. Our findings enable policymakers and practitioners to better support community-led solutions that genuinely improve migrant health outcomes, demonstrating the power of collaborative civic engagement in reducing health inequalities.

More information on this project is available at www.migrefhealth.co.uk



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Doing Creative Justice with Knowledge Exchange

Dr Ella Simpson

- What does research look like when it's co-produced with women in prison?
- What does a creative-critical education project in prison look like when it's co-created with academic researchers?
- What does knowledge exchange look like when you throw all of this together?

This abstract outlines the ambitions, methodology and rationale of a 12-week creative-critical education project in a women's prison, committed to co-creation and troubling the contours of power that shape the carceral terrain.

Working with Open Book at Goldsmiths, Clean Break Theatre Company and the Universities of Greenwich and Wolverhampton, this project was committed to moving away from measurable outcomes that flatten the nuance of experience and focused instead on capturing the 'moments of significance' experienced by participants, facilitators and researchers alike.

The results were unexpected, sometimes uncomfortable and always driven by a commitment to co-creation.



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Working together to create videos to promote health in people with learning disabilities.

Dr Genevieve Breau

Since 2023, I have been working with a group of self-advocates from the Bexley Mencap Friday Respect group. Mencap supports people with learning disabilities in the community, and the Friday Respect group have experience working with university researchers, health professionals, and local NHS bodies to promote health among their peers with learning disabilities.

In 2023, we met twice, and discussed the importance of engaging with NHS-led bowel screening, since many people with learning disabilities don't engage in routine bowel screening to detect bowel cancer early. Then, in 2024, we made a video about the need and importance of bowel screening for older adults with learning disabilities, including what bowel screening is and why it is important to engage with this screening.

Since we first began working together around bowel screening two years ago, 15 people with learning disabilities who are engaged with the service provider have completed bowel screening kits. By promoting understanding of the need for bowel screening, we are helping to close the inequality in screening that this group experiences. We have plans to develop a further educational intervention around the need for and process of bowel screening, and deliver this intervention to other groups in the UK.



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The Kentish Stour Monitoring Program (StoMP)

*Dr C. A. Iain Goodall, Dr Sarah Harris
and Dr Dale Harrison*

Chalk rivers are an almost uniquely British habitat, with 85% of the world's 200 chalk rivers found in England. The Kentish Stour, as a chalk river, is of European and global significance due to multiple Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and Ramsar wetlands along its route. The Stour Monitoring Program (StoMP) was formed in September 2023 to work with Canterbury City Council, local angling clubs, punt companies and environmental groups to provide weekly measurements of coliform bacteria as indicators of sewage releases and track any subsequent impact on water quality.

StoMP was expanded in 2024 at the request of the Environment Agency to monitor ammonia, nitrite, nitrate and phosphate concentrations in the Stour, with livestock, arable farming and sewage releases being the main drivers. Nitrogen and phosphorus have a significant impact on the SSSI sites downriver of Canterbury as increased levels speed up algal growth, disrupting natural processes and severely impacting wildlife. Nutrient monitoring has taken place weekly across 2024-2025 producing year-round nutrient tracking data and is the first time this has been done on the Kentish Stour.

Moving into 2026, StoMP is further expanding through a collaboration with the Atlantic Salmon Trust and the Kentish Stour Countryside Partnership. Using environmental DNA trace analysis, the aim is to locate and identify populations of rare and endangered mammals, such as beavers, otters and water voles, and fish species, namely salmonids and European Eels.



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The Spirits of the Black Meridian

Dr James McLaughlin

The Spirits of the Black Meridian project was delivered in association with Dervish Theatre. Working with a range of partners including Culture&, Emergency Exit Arts, the Old Royal Naval College, Royal Museums Greenwich, The Caribbean Social Forum and Soul City Arts, this project examined how innovative immersive theatre techniques can be used in conjunction with historical research and interviews with community partners to decolonize the architecture of the Old Royal Naval College, and to amplify the narratives of marginalized communities (especially those of Caribbean heritage with connections to the Windrush Generation).

It challenged the dominant colonial narratives of imperialism surrounding the maritime heritage of Greenwich and supported local communities in re-centring themselves and their families in the stories of that place. In doing so it sought to support local communities in the creative reimagining of the place they live.

The play was performed over five nights (20/5/25-24/5/25) on the grounds of the Old Royal Naval College. Undergraduate students were engaged as placements on the production. The targeted community groups were engaged and invited, with a dedicated performance for the Caribbean elders who informed the production. We are continuing to engage with our community partners to assess the impact of the original production.

We are seeking to further extend the impact of this work through the development of an immersive virtual reality experience of the performance to be experienced by members of the local community and undergraduate students.



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Subject Leaders as Agents for Change

Professor Jenny Field, Claire Pike, Sarah Moriarty, Sarah Murrell, Torie Fryer

As Leader of a National Research and Innovation Work Group (RWIG), I spent a year working with seven schools across Sussex. These schools had mixed levels of Pupil Premium. Working with Senior Maths Leaders, we investigated 'How can subject leaders co-create knowledge which allows them to act as key agents for change in their own disciplined inquiry; identifying needs and designing an 'inquiry-based action research cycle' which positively impacts maths within their own school context?' Each school created their own bespoke research question, which focused on the individual needs in their own particular setting; completed classroom based pedagogical research and disseminated their findings. They worked closely as a group across their schools, which created maximum benefits.

Seven Mathematics Subject Leaders in Primary Schools across Sussex. They, in turn, worked with their staff, their children and their Senior School Management. Participants felt empowered and benefited from professional collaboration. Some teachers were researching approaches to problem-solving and reasoning, which is timely following the recommendations in the recent Ofsted Maths Subject Report.

The participants grew in confidence as researchers and went on to disseminate their findings in various way, at School Level, Academy Level, Regionally and Nationally. We co-presented at a National Mathematics Poster Event, delivered a Keynote at a Sussex Local Leaders in Mathematics Regional Day; and in September 2025 we co-published together in a Mathematics Professional Journal. None of the participants had published before.



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Improving living conditions for private rented sector tenants.

Dr Jill Stewart

[View the project poster here](#)

In recognition of the changing nature of the private rented sector and vulnerabilities of those housed there, I developed and delivered a successful CPD course entitled Private Rented Housing: Effective Regulatory Strategy. This was directed toward those working in local authority housing teams, many of whom are struggling to recruit and retain suitably qualified workforce in a rapidly changing space. This is a niche area of work and focuses on the regulatory framework and interventions to help successfully intervene into this highly complex area. I am the only person who had developed a course delivered by respected experts.

I worked with internal and external colleagues to support the delivery of this course. I recruited multiple recognised experts in the field to deliver sessions across 3 days. These experts included solicitors, tenants rights specialists, environmental health officers and other academics.

The primary benefit was to get like-minded people together, to learn from each other and to help support the development and delivery of more effective front-line services, to help protect and improve the living conditions of private rented sector housing tenants. The feedback was excellent, shared on LinkedIn.

Following successful delivery and income generation, I was able to reinvest funds into creating learning resources to help plug some gaps. These included two app-based housing learning walking tours and booklets around terminology and deficiencies, suitable for practitioners and tenants alike, which were received with great praise.



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Supporting Local Leaders of Maths Education in Schools to Design and Lead Research-Informed Practice.

Jill Trinder

I worked with our local Maths Hub to design and deliver a project with primary and secondary maths leaders aimed at providing opportunities for them to evidence their impact when working with partnership schools.

I developed the professional practice of one primary maths lead and one secondary lead enabling them to supervise and support teacher colleagues to design and carry out an action research project in their own schools.

Both of these lead teachers were able to identify the impact of their intervention with their colleagues in partnership schools. The professional practice of these teachers was enhanced as they were able to see that their own research-informed interventions made a positive impact upon pupil understanding, attainment, confidence and contributions.

Both lead teachers now have the skills and resources needed to support a new 'generation' of teacher-researchers to embed action research into their professional practice. This year, I am working with one of the lead teachers from the project who is supervising 13 colleagues within his own school to explore the impact of a disciplined inquiry approach to developing professional practice.

Creative Ageing in Greenwich: Wellbeing Through Creative Engagement, with Insights from Older Adults and Local Practitioners

Dr Jingxi Huang, Dr Athena Piterou, Professor Jin Chan, Alex Bruno and Dhara A Thakkar

With support from a small grant from the NUSC research centre, our ongoing project explores how older adults in Greenwich or the surrounding area engage with creative activities (e.g., choir, painting, dance) and how such participation supports well-being. We conducted 4 focus groups with older adults involved in activities such as Silver Swans ballet (Angelina Jandolo Dance School) and volunteering at the Old Royal Naval College. These were complemented by interviews with creative programme practitioners, such as ballet teachers and volunteer mentors, to better understand motivations for older adult engagement, participation barriers, and connections to well-being outcomes.

Preliminary findings highlight a wide range of drivers for participation, including accessibility, opportunities for self-development, and social connections. For some, creative engagement also served as a means of reclaiming identity in later life. At the same time, practitioners noted persistent challenges in reaching older audiences, particularly due to barriers around visibility, digital engagement, and sustaining participation.

By bringing together voices from both participants and organisers, this project generates practical insights for designing more inclusive creative ageing activities. Future plans include preparing an academic publication and organising a feedback session to share results with local partners and older adults. This will provide space for informal discussion and reflection, helping to ensure the findings remain relevant and useful for those directly involved. In this way, the project supports civic engagement by fostering collaboration between the university, local organisations, and older residents, contributing to a stronger and more inclusive life in Greenwich.



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Executive Education at Charlton Athletic Community Trust

Julia Tybura, Professor Chris Birch, Cath Farrant, Dr Alei Duan, Rhonda Best

This is an ongoing programme of work as part of our ongoing partnership with the Community Trust. It is focussed on supporting the development of leaders and managers at the Trust, to enable us to co-create and steward increased civic impact in the local community.

We initially engaged with the Director of People and Organisational Development (POD) to identify the key needs and steps required around leadership development at the Trust. They had already identified the need for a 'finance for non-financial managers', so co-design of this by Prof Chris Birch and the Trust's CFO led to a workshop being delivered in January 2025.

The Trust's Director of POD identified the need for a management and leadership development needs analysis. Julia Tybura and Cath Farrant co-designed and facilitated a half day workshop for the Trust's Executive Team in December 2024. From this workshop, the Trust developed a leadership and management development programme. Following this, Julia and Cath were asked to research inclusive succession planning for leaders and managers.

From this development needs analysis, the Trust identified a need to support the development of managers' knowledge and expertise around the use of and interpretation of data in support of organisational success. Alei Duan and Rhonda Best co-designed a workshop delivered in September 2025. The Executive Team deepened their thinking of the culture of the Trust through the discussions on the management and leadership development programme and the Director of POD had a clear mandate to develop the programme.

The participants of the Finance workshop fed back that they benefit in their day to day work from better understanding of costing, pricing and budgetary processes and the impact on profitability and liquidity. The participants of the AI/Business intelligence workshop expressed confidence that using PowerBI to build dashboards would streamline their reporting processes and enhance their decision-making capabilities. We continue to work with the Trust and will share our story as it unfolds further!



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OMED 1065: Life, Health and Wellbeing: Biopsychosocial Perspectives

Linda Cole

As part of the BSc Public Health programme, guest speakers from practice are regularly invited into class to talk to students about real world issues in public health with a focus on employability.

In OMED 1065 Life, Health and Wellbeing: biopsychosocial perspectives, which is a 2nd year module that explores life events across the life span, guest speakers from several organisations come into class to present their work and interventions that target health inequalities. This includes employment support for people with mental health conditions; supporting young refugees into society and reducing loneliness and isolation in older people. Students gain valuable insight into the application of theory, policy and interventions in practice. Students also gain an understanding of the social determinants which determine people's ability to engage with services, thus improving health and wellbeing outcomes.

During the session, students have the opportunity to interact with the speakers and ask questions about the organisation, its work and relevant employability skills required. This further enables students to develop their professional network and connect with future employers, e.g. through LinkedIn, where students can follow the organisations' work and keep up to date with developments within public health.

Following the introduction of guest speakers in OMED 1065, students have proceeded to secure work experience for their 3rd year OMED 1204 Employment Based Learning module, with many of the organisations that have been into class. This has also led to some students gaining paid employment after they graduated.



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Hitting the Ground: using storywork and somatic practice to understand gender based violence in food systems

Dr Lora Forsythe, Dr Joanna Wheeler, Paula Rameriz, Amala Okwuosa, Stella Igwe, Diana Lopez, Angel Gamboa, Ingrid, Misha Myers

Part of a three year project to address gender based violence in food systems in Colombia, Nigeria and beyond.

Hitting the Ground seeks to shape a new agenda for policy, research, and practice that addresses gender-based violence (GBV) and fosters food systems that are safe, dignifying, and empowering. The project focuses on women food system workers in Colombia and Nigeria—particularly those in precarious roles within the rice and cassava sectors—to explore GBV linked to these staple crops. Our approach combines somatic practice, storywork, arts-based methods, participatory action research, and GBV prevention expertise.

The partnership includes GBV response organisations, somatic practitioners, researchers from the arts and social sciences, and—most importantly—women food system workers. Early findings reveal the systemic nature of GBV in food systems, filling a critical gap in existing literature. Through listening space exercises and somatic engagement, women were invited to share their stories—of pain, resilience, and joy—in a safe, collective setting, often for the first time. These stories were documented and will be presented in formats chosen by the women themselves to national and global decision-makers, calling for urgent action.



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The Innocence Project London: Supporting innocent people in prison to access justice

Dr Louise Hewitt and Serpil Tas

The Innocence Project London (IPL) is a charity that operates pro bono, supporting convicted individuals maintaining their innocence to make applications to the Criminal Cases Review Commission (CCRC). It is based in the School of Law and Criminology in the University of Greenwich. Students from across the Faculty of Law, Arts and Social Sciences apply to the associate (non-credit bearing) programme to work for the IPL, alongside academics and lawyers. They deconstruct claims of innocence, combing through evidence and case files, trying to identify new evidence and/or a new legal argument both of which are required by the CCRC.

The benefits of this work are two-fold: First, for students working on innocence cases shapes their critical perspectives of the criminal justice system, empowering them with the belief that they can enact positive change. Students report that their involvement in the IPL gives them a sense of agency, allowing them to contribute meaningfully to society, even in small ways. The IPL's work extends internationally, as the programme frequently hosts interns from universities abroad, furthering its impact on a global scale.

Second, for our clients many are not in a position to be able to afford to engage a lawyer to do this work so our pro bono work to investigate claims of innocence is truly valuable. We also help individuals obtain their legal casefile which regardless of their claim of innocence is an important asset for them to have in their possession.



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Healthy Packed Lunches Competition: facilitating early engagement in healthy eating and hospitality careers

Dr Maria Gebbels

This exploratory study examines the impact of hands-on experiences and early engagement with healthy eating on children's and parents' perceptions of hospitality careers. Conducted in partnership with an executive chef, two primary schools, and three four- and five-star hotels in East Sussex, the project involved Year 4 and Year 5 pupils and their parents/guardians.

The hospitality sector continues to face challenges in recruiting hard-to-fill roles such as chefs, despite its importance in sustaining local tourism economies, particularly in seaside towns. As part of the project, children first attended a healthy eating workshop and a presentation on hospitality careers in their schools. They were then invited to enter the Healthy Packed Lunches Competition, which required them to design a lunchbox reflecting what they had learned. Ten winners and their parents/guardians from each school visited a participating hotel, where they prepared their lunches and participated in a hotel tour.

During these visits, both children and their parents/guardians took part in focus groups to discuss their knowledge of healthy eating and hospitality careers. In addition, children completed an online questionnaire to capture their eating habits and career preferences.

Over two years, the project reached more than 200 primary school children, with 30 children and their families visiting hotels. Findings indicate that children with greater involvement in kitchen activities at home display healthier eating behaviours and develop positive perceptions toward hospitality careers. Early exposure to professional hospitality environments can generate curiosity, raise awareness, and foster appreciation of the sector among children and their families ultimately promoting hospitality as a viable professional career, and helping the sector overcome its staffing challenges and ensuring growth for local communities.



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Civic engagement and local history in an East London Borough in 2019

Dr Mary Clare Martin

This abstract focuses on civic engagement work from 2019 when the London borough of Waltham Forest was named the first London Borough of Culture. It demonstrates aspects of the “public sphere” (Habermas, 1989) in a borough of 250,000 people which has strong traditions of community engagement.

The backstory was a long-standing connection with local history and archives for my PhD thesis. The framework was the Waltham Forest History and Heritage Network which was co-established in 2018-2019. My connection with local history societies originated in 2007, in successful collective protests against the proposed council part closure of local museums and archives.

In 2019 I co-organised an afternoon event at a local church entitled “Radical Childhoods in Waltham Forest” with activities organised by local history societies, and two interactive, hands-on exhibitions on my project on “Multi-Cultural Toys”. Children were invited to play with the toys on display and the project was discussed with adults.

The first exhibition was as part of the E17 Art Trail, a long-standing biennial event in Walthamstow, in which individuals offer displays in their own homes at pre-advertised specific days/times. A further one-off interactive exhibition was held at the local Pump House museum in September 2025.



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Windrush Folk Stories: Arts and Heritage-Based Mental Health Interventions

Dr Myrtle Emmanuel and Dr Dave Hockham

This interdisciplinary project addresses entrenched mental health disparities among African-Caribbean communities by integrating folk songs, narrative therapy, and storytelling into culturally relevant care strategies. Led by Dr Myrtle Emmanuel (Principal Investigator), with co-leads Dr David Hockham (Faculty of Liberal Arts & Sciences, University of Greenwich) and Tracey Durrant (Everyone's A Singer), the AHRC-funded Re-igniting Windrush Folk Stories project centres co-creation with community members in Lewisham and Greenwich.

Working in partnership with Everyone's A Singer, Partisan Media, and local authorities, the team developed a mental health toolkit comprising a short film, community-led workshops, and a thematic resource pack. Outputs informed the Black Mental Health Manifesto and contributed to the AHRC policy report *Designing the Future of Care with Seldom-Listened-To People*.

The project was showcased at the Black Mental Health & Healing Forum, featured in BBC Arts & Ideas Podcast, and presented at an international symposium. It continues to support NHS and community practitioners in applying culturally grounded approaches.

This collaboration demonstrates measurable civic impact, advancing SDGs 3 (Health), 10 (Reduced Inequalities), and 17 (Partnerships), and exemplifies the transformative potential of arts, heritage, and academic-community partnerships.

The Kent Food Partnership: Building a Sustainable Food System Through Cross-Sector Collaboration

Professor Nazanin Zand

The Kent Food Partnership is establishing a Community Interest Company to transform the regional food system across Kent. The partnership developed a comprehensive food strategy through extensive consultation with organisations across the county, identifying seven strategic objectives spanning food governance, healthy food access, sustainable food e

The partnership brings together diverse stakeholders including Social Enterprise Kent, Bore Place, University of Kent, University of Greenwich's Natural Resources Institute, NIAB-EMR, NHS, Kent County Council, Public Health teams, and the Food Foundation (Anna Taylor, Chair). The governance structure includes a steering group and six working groups aligned with Sustainable Food Places framework. The partnership works closely with Medway Food Partnership and aims to join the national Sustainable Food Places network.

The partnership creates a coordinated approach to food system transformation, reducing duplication and amplifying collective voice for policy change. It provides strategic guidance for stakeholders, establishes research and data infrastructure, develops community food networks, supports local food businesses, and creates pathways for sustainable funding. The framework enables Kent to leverage its "Garden of England" heritage while addressing inequalities and building a resilient, healthy, and environmentally sustainable food system for current and future generations.



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The Kent and Medway Partnership for Enterprise, Food and Health: Strengthening Local Food Systems Through Community Collaboration

Professor Nazanin Zand

The Kent and Medway Partnership for Enterprise, Food and Health was an action research project commissioned through the UK Community Renewal Fund, implemented between January and November 2022. The project employed participative research, consultation and reflection to explore how the local food system could better serve communities facing increasing financial pressures and food insecurity.

The project engaged diverse community stakeholders including food banks, social enterprises, business clubs, associations, government bodies, tertiary education institutions, voluntary sector organisations, and health partnerships such as ASPIRE (implemented by Medway Health Partnership).

The project revealed how changed circumstances - including financial crises and geopolitical pressures - impact all sectors of the food system. Despite identifying significant challenges, the research uncovered comprehensive existing support networks whose impact could be enhanced through increased partnership working. The project produced 15 actionable recommendations and proposed establishing a one-year pilot innovation partnership with a dedicated coordinator (£60K budget identified).

The core benefit is a framework for collaborative working where existing organisations can address food system challenges together, ensuring the whole becomes greater than the sum of its parts and maximising the food system's contribution to community health and economic prosperity.



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Building community connections through knowledge exchange: engaging families, students, and interdisciplinary partners

Dr Oindrila Dutta, Dr Laura Katus and Dr Bosiljka Milosavljevic (Queen Mary University of London)

We organised a knowledge exchange event, supported by the UOG KE4Impact (kick-starter strand) fund, to create meaningful engagement between the university and local families. The event was held on Saturday, 29 March 2025, and welcomed ten families with young children. The activities encouraged peer support among parents and fostered shared reflection on the challenges of early parenthood.

The project was delivered in collaboration with community families, MSc Psychology students, and colleagues from the School of Stage & Screen. Psychology students (currently enrolled in MSc programmes) were recruited and trained as event assistants. Their involvement provided them with practical experience in supporting families, applying theoretical knowledge, and developing communication skills. Students from the School of Stage & Screen documented the event through film, offering them a chance to apply their creative skills in a real-world setting.

The event benefitted families by providing a supportive space to connect and share experiences. For students, it enhanced employability and transferable skills. For staff, it created opportunities for interdisciplinary collaboration and generated resources for teaching and research. The filmed outputs will be used for knowledge dissemination, supporting future research bids and informing teaching practice.

This initiative demonstrates the civic impact of academic research when translated into practice, showing how partnerships with local communities and across disciplines can foster mutual learning and long-term collaboration.



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Working with the Women's Budget Group for a caring and sustainable economy

Professor Özlem Onaran, Dr Cem Oyvat and Dr Robert Calvert Jump

We have been working closely with the Women's Budget Group (WBG) to support their campaigning with our research providing evidence about the effectiveness of fiscal policy and shorter working week for a caring just green transition to a sustainable economy.

The WBG is a UK-wide think tank focused on exploring the economy through a gendered lens and campaigning for gender equality. The organization works within the UK and internationally to build and exchange the evidence, data, knowledge, and capacity, acting as a link between the women's voluntary sector, think tanks, academics, and policymakers. PEGFA staff have research collaboration with the WBG. Onaran is a member of their Policy Advisory Board.

There are two strands in our research which has been relevant to the work of WBG: The first strand of research (Onaran and Oyvat, 2024, 2023, 2022, Onaran, Oyvat, Fotopoulou, 2023, 2022) provides a macroeconomic analysis of the impact of public spending in the care economy, the green economy and public physical infrastructure on employment of men and women, GDP, productivity and public finances in the UK and emerging economies. The research then presents policy scenarios of a mix of public spending or labour market policies for an equitable green transition to a caring and sustainable economy. This research has informed the policy responses of the WBG to the budget of the UK governments, have been summarized in policy papers and blogs and referenced in their own policy briefs. The research has also been presented to WBG staff and advisory board as part of a macroeconomy working group on gender-sensitive macroeconomic modelling.

The second strand of research (Onaran and Calvert Jump, 2022) funded by the Feminist Green New Deal Project of the WBG and Women's Environmental Network focuses on the role of a shorter working week as part of a green, caring economy. This research both contributed to the campaigning ability of WBG and led to they permanently introducing a four day working week for their staff.



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A global teacher education vision for designing inclusive anti-violence learning activities for young people

Dr Priti Chopra

This project explores ways in which educational strategies can engage young people in creating norms that address intersectional inequalities, support nonviolence, promote social responsibility, and foster equitable relationships. Based on completed mixed methods research in India, Jamaica, Uganda and the UK, it presents a participatory and collaborative approach to co-creating globally relevant and inclusive learning activities that aim to engage young people with challenging gender-based violence constructively.

Situated in the principles of UN SDGs the activities focus on the holistic development of young people, the enhancement of their skills, knowledge, attitude, and capability, rooted in their lived experience. The learning design, developed through an iterative process of stakeholders' consultation, ensures that the activities are sustainable, adaptable and maintain purposeful context relevance for youth serving professionals and teacher educators. The activities are cost-effective and rooted in democratic and social justice principles that are centred on strengthening the voice, visibility and agency of young people in an empowering and enabling process of learning.

The design and content is shaped by an interdisciplinary youth-centred approach that draws on and combines critical pedagogy, creative and performing arts, an ecological framework for human development and integrative and intercultural therapeutic practice. Critical pedagogy is embedded in learning activities to develop critical awareness and enable reflection and action for change within self and others. Creative and performing arts are integrated to enhance self-expression, co-creation and multimodal ways of noticing, expressing and challenging lived realities and to build awareness, reflection and potential for transformation. Applying an ecological framework for human development to learning design creates space for the exploration of interconnections, interdependence and independence in challenging inequalities through learning activities. Integrative and intercultural therapeutic practice is drawn on to facilitate sustainable wellbeing and develop empathy, across diversity, to function and live in constructive and fulfilling ways.



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Collaborating with the Autonomy Institute and Four Day Week Foundation for a Shorter Working Week

Dr Robert Calvert Jump

Since 2019, I have worked with the Autonomy Institute and Four Day Week Foundation on various projects to encourage shorter working hours in the public sector. These are both third-sector civil organisations – a thinktank and campaign group, respectively – that are central to public campaigns for shorter working hours.

There are 6 pieces of research which have been relevant to the work of the Autonomy Foundation and Four Day Week Foundation, which are detailed in a draft ICS for GREATImpact 2025.

These pieces of research contributed to a Scottish government four day week pilot project in 2024, the final report of which will soon be published, as well as a four day week before recommended to the Welsh government by the Senedd Petitions Committee.

In addition, the work improved the campaigning ability of both civil society organisations, and ongoing work will attempt to encourage more district-level local authorities to introduce four day weeks.

This work is also connected to similar work done with Professor Ozlem Onaran on shorter working weeks with the Women's Budget Group.



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Eitai: Civic Impact through Storytelling and Community Collaboration in Eastern Uganda

Dr Sally Bashford-Squires

Between 2021 and 2024, I conducted doctoral research in Teso, North-Eastern Uganda, examining the health impacts of community-led social enterprise projects (SEPs). These initiatives responded to the intersecting challenges of poverty, climate change, alcoholism, and gender-based violence by creating economic opportunities and fostering peer support and communitarianism through culturally embedded practices, including music, dance, and drama.

To honour the participatory ethos of the research, I directed, wrote and co-produced a documentary titled Eitai (meaning “community togetherness”) in collaboration with the Iteso community and East African filmmaker Sonyanga Weblan. The film centres Indigenous voices and captures lived experiences, resilience, and grassroots climate justice activism.

Supported through ILD funding, in 2025, I returned to Uganda to screen Eitai in rural communities and at a high-level event hosted with Makerere University. Over 300 people attended, including representatives from civil society, NGOs, academia, and political parties. A key outcome was that four featured NGOs began working together to address shared challenges - this is especially vital in the context of international aid cuts.

In the UK, Eitai has reached over 1,000 viewers through screenings in cinemas, universities, and Parliament. MP James Naish hosted a discussion and shared the film’s insights with the International Development Committee. The film is now embedded in health and visual arts curricula across UK and international universities. Following school screenings, pupils raised £5,000 for a borehole in Teso.

Named one of Springer Nature’s 100 Most Influential Global Health Films, Eitai demonstrates how co-created, decolonial research can inspire civic action, educational impact, and international solidarity.



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Stories of No Recourse to Public Funds – Working with the Community Organisation Family Hub, Newham

Dr Sally Mann

This project delivered 2 professionally edited films from the original PAR footage from the research collaboration with BDCA Object Lessons in “No Recourse to Public Funding” project. These have been hosted on the BDCA YouTube channel. A Knowledge Exchange event took place on 21 March 2024. This was co-hosted with Sir Stephen Timms MP and planned and presented in collaboration with Family hub members with lived experience of NRPF.

Both films were shown to over 40 invited guests and delegates. The event was attended by Family Hub participants, the project’s funder Cadent, local councillors Sarah Ruiz, Susan Masters, Neil Watson and Sabia Kamili, and several community organisations including Alternatives Trust, Community Albums, Community Links, Newham ACT Committee, MAUK, NewWay, Seedbeds, URC Thames North Trust and Welcome Newham.

The event was attended by Family Hub participants, the project’s funder Cadent, local councillors Sarah Ruiz, Susan Masters, Neil Watson and Sabia Kamili, and several community organisations including Alternatives Trust, Community Albums, Community Links, Newham ACT Committee, MAUK, NewWay, Seedbeds, URC Thames North Trust and Welcome Newham. Sir Stephen Timms MP co-hosted the event and has made the outputs available to the national Poverty Strategy Group.

Impact:

- By working in a continued and developing relationship with the partner charity BDCA . The final film provides a valuable case-study of the impact of this local charity.
- Relationships with further stakeholders, gathered at the Knowledge Exchange, will be maintained through disseminating the film for their use and by inviting them to take part in future collaborative projects.
- The relationship with Sit Stephen Timms MP, and the possibility of future work with the Poverty Strategy Group, will be maintained in close collaboration on this Knowledge Exchange.



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Let's Talk About Food and Nature in Medway: Creativity and Collective Engagement for Shaping and Co-creating Policy for Healthy People, Food and Nature Futures

Professors Tanya Stathers and Valerie Nelson

To enhance the relevance, local ownership and citizen engagement of Medway's inaugural Food Strategy, we collaborated with Medway Council's Public Health team. Together, we co-designed activities enabling citizens to share their diverse experiences, priorities and ideas for achieving healthier more sustainable people, food and nature futures.

Co-designed activities included an online survey 'Let's Talk About Food and Nature in Medway', which gathered residents' insights on what works well and not-so-well in the local food system, and future priorities. We convened a Community Learning Event where alongside speakers from community-based food initiatives, participants created photo collages stimulating discussions on ways of knowing and valuing food from past to present, and imagined desired and feared food futures and pathways. We partnered with arts agency Cement Fields and artist-chef Cherry Truluck, to pilot creative arts-based food methods, engaging diverse groups, e.g., Medway Afro-Caribbean Association.

Residents' concerns included food poverty, rising cost of healthy food, limited access to locally-grown produce, declining food skills, community disconnection, and reliance on industrialized food systems. They wanted stronger action on food education, reducing waste, packaging and corporate control and improving access to local, sustainable food.



The project built trust and capacity for collaboration, including a joint UKRI proposal, a PhD placement within the Council, and national recognition with Medway Food Strategy shortlisted for the LGC Community Involvement Award. Combining action research, creativity, and community voice, we showed how citizen engagement can support local policy, strengthen partnerships, and build momentum for healthier, fairer, more sustainable food futures in Medway.

The role of profits in food and energy price inflation: analysis and toolbox to fight inflation

Thomas Rabensteiner, Ines Heck and Ben Tippet (King's College London)

The recent inflation episode in 2021-23 has exposed the vulnerability of the European economies to supply-side shocks and the inadequacy of existing monetary tools to deal with them. Our study looked at food and energy supply chains during the 2021-23 inflation crisis and found that companies made unusually high profits while ordinary people struggled with rising prices.

Some companies benefit from concentrated markets where just a few big players control trading and transportation or engaged in commodity speculation which drove up commodity prices further. Our study also introduces a policy toolkit to tackle inflationary shocks, that help avoid a repeat of the recent crisis, including price controls, tackling speculation, taxes on excess profits, and reducing our dependence on fossil fuels.

This externally funded project shows how collaborative research can create both academic knowledge and practical tools that help communities and policymakers tackle shared economic issues. We worked directly with policy think tanks, trade unions, and community organisations to turn our research into practical solutions. Through international partnerships with FEPS, a European policy think-tank, Fondazione Pietro Nenni, an Italian cultural and research institute, and TASC, public education charity, we brought our findings directly to Italian trade union members, policymakers, and community groups dealing with inflation's impact.

The work reached decision-makers at the highest levels through presentations at the German Chancellor's office in Berlin, at the European Economic and Social Committee in Brussels, to trade union members in Rome and to policymakers in Bratislava. We also made sure that our findings are presented in an accessible format through social media, short videos, podcasts, and easy-to-understand infographics.

[Our published report can be found here.](#)



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Transformative Research Actions for Resilient Coastal Communities (TRACC)

Professor Tim Acott, Dr Victoria Leslie, Professor Valerie Nelson and Charlotte Sowerby

Transformative Research Actions for Resilient Coastal Communities (TRACC) is a UK Research and Innovation (UKRI) funded research and action project running from 2024-2028 (£2.9M). University of Greenwich is the lead organisation for a team including eight universities, the Coastal Partnership Network, Natural England, Plymouth Marine Laboratory, Humber Nature Partnership, Clyde Marine Planning Partnership, Freestater consultancy.

TRACC brings together different forms of knowledge from diverse social groups and movements, decision-makers, researchers, and other stakeholders to co-design new approaches to tackle coastal challenges and help positively shift values, goals, and paradigms towards sustainability and resilience.

TRACC is working in four case study areas, Lough Foyle in Ireland, Firth of Clyde in Scotland, The Humber Estuary in England and mid-north Wales coast. These coastal communities in Great Britain and Northern Ireland are faced with many pressing social, economic, and environmental resilience challenges. Addressing these in an inclusive, holistic, and sustainable way requires a transformation of the way research, communities and governance work and interact.

TRACC is setting up Resilience Collectives (RCs) in each of these locations to explore and co-create with local communities' transformative pathways for coastal resilience. The experiences from the RCs will be shared nationally through a newly constituted Resilience Assembly.



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Knowledge Exchange Activities by Greenwich Mathematicians

Dr Tim Reis

Mathematics is not always popular with young people! Yet we know an understanding of the subject can bring many opportunities and change lives. With this in mind the mathematics team at Greenwich have delivered a number of large scale community events to showcase the world of mathematics to school-age students.

Targeting local comprehensive schools with below average attainment levels and in areas of deprivation, we create hand-on activities, discuss careers, and invite inspirational speakers to discuss lesser-known application of mathematics to inspire those who may not have been made aware of how useful maths can be. Feedback from school's and pupils has been extremely positive, and our efforts are widely celebrated by the mathematics community and its learned societies.

Through this project, we explore in more detail our motivation for organising events for local schools, share some of our stories, and highlight some impact of related activities. For example, university applications from students from lower quintiles of the multiple deprivation of for STEM subjects have increased (which we do not take full credit for!!), and the feedback from students who attended out events inspired us to create a new degree to widen participation in mathematics.

We also highlight Greenwich's involvement with the national "Mathematics Knowledge Exchange Hub", and give a flavour of the projects that have come out of this – from scheduling aeroplanes to growing potatoes!



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Creative Methods for Wellbeing and Social Justice: Working with Creating Ground CIC

Professor Tracey Reynolds

This project demonstrates how creative, participatory methods can advance wellbeing, social justice, and systemic change. Working in partnership with Creating Ground, a not-for-profit organisation supporting migrant women, the project integrates creative health practices into housing and healthcare to tackle inequalities and amplify migrant voices.

Key creative outputs include Count Yourself Lucky, a theatre performance co-developed with migrant mothers and now used as a training resource for midwives to highlight barriers to maternal healthcare, and Light the Way, a film documenting community organising for housing rights. These outputs have been embedded in professional training for housing officers and health practitioners, strengthening awareness and practice.

The collaboration has generated significant civic impact, most notably Greenwich Council's decision to provide free Wi-Fi for families in temporary accommodation following the #NoticeUS campaign—later adopted by Lewisham Council. Another major outcome is the development of a training resource toolkit, now being rolled out across South East London, equipping all midwives to understand the specific housing and healthcare needs of mothers living in temporary accommodation.

Beyond these policy and practice changes, the partnership has built community resilience, developed leadership skills among migrant women, and fostered solidarity across diverse groups. This case illustrates how arts-based, co-produced approaches can drive civic engagement by building trust, empowering marginalised communities, and influencing local policy and professional practice—offering a replicable model for embedding creative methods into systemic change initiatives.



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Multi-species & justice-oriented civic engagement and societal change

Professor Valerie Nelson and the Political Ecology, Arts and Culture Research Group

The Political Ecology, Arts and Culture (PEAC) Research Group at the Natural Resources Institute is part of the Centre for Society, Environment and Development, engaging in transformative socio-environmental justice work. Comprising staff, students, and external collaborators—including researchers and artists—the group specializes in participatory, feminist, decolonial, and critical methodologies. PEAC focuses on engaging with communities, social movements, and non-human actors to catalyse just and transformative change.

Their work spans regions including Sub-Saharan Africa, Latin America, Asia, and Europe, using creative and participatory methods such as community video, soundscapes, learning journeys, and filmmaking. Central themes include commoning, explored through dialogues with global thought leaders; patriarchy, gender, and intersectionality, including research linked to biodiversity policies; and transformative change, contributing to international science-policy platforms like the IPBES, with a focus on challenging colonial modernities and fostering relational approaches.

Key initiatives include:

- Entangled Tales – Listening as the River, blending storytelling, speculative games, and soundscapes to deepen local engagement with the River Medway.
- TRACC Project, fostering coastal resilience through multi-actor learning across four UK coastal regions.
- Transformative Change for Biodiversity and Equity, a €3 million Horizon-funded project exploring agrifood trade impacts and involving Indigenous communities and universities in Colombia, Kenya, and Cameroon.
- Medway Food and Nature Futures, collaborating with Medway Council on arts-based futures work.
- Ongoing PhD research addressing more-than-human relations focused on deer governance, Mau Foresty politics and relationalities, and soil relations and justice.

Collectively, PEAC reimagines who and what constitutes agency and justice in shaping sustainable, flourishing futures.

[View the project poster here](#)

The Food Accelerator Programme: Supporting Kent and Medway Food and Drink Businesses Through Innovation and Collaboration

Valerie Pondaven

The Food Accelerator Programme is a 4-month intensive business support initiative run by the University of Greenwich's Medway Food Innovation Centre. The programme provides tailored technical, business and financial support to food and drink entrepreneurs and businesses looking to launch, scale or innovate their products. Participants receive customised workshops, expert guidance, peer-to-peer networking, and access to cutting-edge facilities and equipment. The programme helps businesses develop viable prototypes, test new processes, assess market gaps, and define clear pathways to commercialisation.

Since launch, the Food Accelerator has engaged with over 150 food and drink businesses across Kent and Medway, including start-ups, established enterprises seeking new directions, and entrepreneurs with innovative ideas. The programme is delivered through Growing Kent & Medway, a UK Government 'Strength in Places' funded project led by NIAB EMR, working in partnership with businesses, suppliers, investors and sector networks across the region.

The programme strengthens regional economic competitiveness by de-risking innovation, fast-tracking growth, and providing businesses with tools, skills and connections previously inaccessible to many SMEs. By offering expert support and facilities, the Food Accelerator helps businesses save time and money, improve efficiency, enhance sustainability, and successfully bring new products to market - ultimately creating jobs and strengthening Kent and Medway's food and drink sector.



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Thamesmead Creative Playspaces

Walter Stabb (Presenter), Dr Hadi Bastani, Natasha Bird (TACO!), Dr Valentina Signorelli

Thamesmead Creative Playscapes seeks to unlock insights into the complex relations that form conceptions of place, cultural heritage and identity by engaging children and families in experimental and immersive filmmaking exploring the built environment through the lens of ‘play space’. Over a series of six creative, participatory, practice as research workshops (2024 & 2025) we tested a method of co-production with community stakeholder organisation TACO! and their experimental art space for children and families – The Hundred Club. The goal was to explore how creative participatory research practice can embody, evidence and celebrate the unique potential film and artistic practice has in addressing the built environment and spatiomaterial relations.

The project design centres the participants as artistic producers and provides them with filmmaking and immersive technologies and digital skills with which to undertake their own creative exploration and share their own unique insights into their local environment through creative practice, leveraging the production resources of the School of Design and Creative Industries and the research laboratories of SHIFT. Engaging a ‘Bricolage’ approach (Kara, 2020) the multisensory process of filmmaking has allowed the development of artistic and research processes and outputs that amplify the voices of children and families as they record, reimagine and reflect upon their local built environment and the affordances it offers for living and playing, a topic of critical local and national concern (Centre for Young Lives, 2025).

Thamesmead Creative Playscapes is a successful prototype of practice research engagement. Working with organisations embedded in communities fosters impactful change and leverages the resource expertise available within the university to support often marginalised voices thereby broadening critical debate into play, planning, population health and social justice.



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