

Institution: Heriot-Watt University		
Unit of Assessment: D25 Area Studies		
Title of case study: “Community Placemaking” through Heritage Work		
Period when the underpinning research was undertaken: 2012 – 2020		
Details of staff conducting the underpinning research from the submitting unit:		
Name(s):	Role(s) (e.g. job title):	Period(s) employed by submitting HEI:
Mairead Nic Craith	Professor of Cultural Heritage and Anthropology	2012 – present
Ullrich Kockel	Professor of Cultural Ecology and Sustainability and Economy	2012 – present
Thomas Farrington	Assistant Professor	2012 – present
Period when the claimed impact occurred: 2015 – 2020		
Is this case study continued from a case study submitted in 2014? N		
1. Summary of the impact		
<p>Connections between people and place can be disrupted by historical divisions, incomers/migrants. Research at the Intercultural Research Centre (IRC) addressed the concept of placemaking in international locations. Lessons learned from international case-studies had impact in three distinct UK places (rural, urban and island): Lough Neagh (Northern Ireland), the Northern Isles (Orkney/Shetland) and Leith Late (Edinburgh city). IRC research has rejuvenated a sense of belonging among local groups through archaeology, community mapping, workshops, and the co-creation of cultural heritage work. These activities have rejuvenated community relations between Protestants and Catholics (LN), migrants and incomers (NI), artists, tourists, and local communities (LL).</p>		
2. Underpinning research		
<p>Research from IRC staff has focused on cross-community relations in Europe and Saudi Arabia. Our Research in Germany and the Baltic States [3.1] highlighted the pivotal role of heritage in resolving the displacement that prevented the development of sustainable communities in areas with migrants. Through analysing festival and pilgrimage settings [3.2, 3.5 and 3.6], our research identified common themes and challenges faced by communities, groups and individuals across heterogenous European and Asian settings, including the various effects of migration and tourism. Our research highlighted the significance of place in developing new community relations. By proposing a new way of thinking which links the built environment with people’s stories (which may be at odds with one another), the research highlighted the importance of material objects, communal storytelling and cultural heritage for a sense of belonging among locals and tourists, incomers and outsiders [3.4]. IRC case studies focused on festivals in Scotland, Germany, Romania and Saudi Arabia as well as their processes of inclusion and exclusion [3.5 and 3.6] With funding from the Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities and Museums Galleries Scotland, and in collaboration with regional museums and local heritage groups, IRC research in the Northern Isles (Scotland) highlighted constraints that small island communities face, whether islanders or incomers [3.6]. That research informed a Horizon 2020 Work Package ‘Cultural forms and expressions of identity in Europe’.</p> <p>IRC research has also explored relationships between local communities and tourism in the UK and in the Mecca. Research in those locations highlighted the importance of opportunities for</p>		

'cosmopolitan' social interactions between tourists and locals such as shared eating spaces and group tours and activities [3.5]. The potential of artwork, storytelling, and festivals for cultivating a better understanding of place features strongly in IRC research [3.2, 3.5 and 3.6]. Our research noted that this is especially the case when such work is co-created in collaboration with communities who have not worked together previously. This co-creation of a shared heritage served as a catalyst for developing sustainable place relationships. Our research into cultural heritage, sustainable tourism, restoration, and renewal has had a clear impact on our approach to engaging with communities.

3. References to the research

[3.1] Kockel, U 2012, Toward an Ethnoecology of Place and Displacement. in U Kockel, M Nic Craith & J Frykman (eds), *Blackwell Companion to the Anthropology of Europe*. Blackwell Companions to Anthropology, Blackwell Publishing Ltd, Malden, pp. 551-571.

[3.2] McDermott, P, Nic Craith, M & Strani, K 2016, 'Public space, collective memory and intercultural dialogue in a (UK) city of culture', *Identities*, vol. 23, no. 5, pp. 610-627.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/1070289X.2015.1054828>

[3.3] Kockel, U 2017, On Becoming Indigenous: Building, Dwelling and Thinking Future Heritages of a Nordic Scotland. in H Hieta, A Nieminen, M Mäki, K Siivonen & TJ Virtanen (eds), *Rajaamatta: Etnologisia keskusteluja*. Ethnos, pp. 367-389.

[3.4] Nic Craith, M & Kockel, U 2015, (Re-)Building Heritage: Integrating Tangible and Intangible. in W Logan, M Nic Craith & U Kockel (eds), *A Companion to Heritage Studies*. Blackwell Publishing Ltd, pp. 426-442.

[3.5] Gannon, M, Baxter, IWF, Collinson, E, Curran, RWFA, Farrington, T, Glasgow, S, Godsman, E, Gori, K, Jack, G, Lochrie, S, Maxwell Stuart, R, Maclaren, A, MacIntosh, R, O'Gorman, KD, Ottaway, L, Perez-Vega, R, Taheri, B, Thompson, J & Yalinay, O 2017, 'Travelling for Umrah: Destination attributes, destination image, and post-travel intentions', *Service Industries Journal*, vol. 37, no. 7-8, pp. 448-465.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/02642069.2017.1333601>

[3.6] Clopot, C & McCullagh, C 2019, The construction of belonging and Otherness in heritage events. in *Heritage and Festivals in Europe: Performing Identities*. Routledge, pp. 47-62.
<https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429202964-4>

4. Details of the impact

IRC research had major social impact in creating a sense of belonging among Protestants and Catholics, Islanders and incomers, tourists, and local groups. We developed the concept of "Community Placemaking" to describe this work which emerged from a series of interlinked projects with a common focus on placemaking, sometimes on contested issues. Each of our three case studies facilitated discussions and provocations helped create new shared meanings/connections to heritage. Partnerships with local communities were key to all three cases studies.

The **Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership (LN)**, a GBP3,500,000 Heritage Lottery Funded Cross-Border Project 2016-21 in Northern Ireland, created sustainable communities of place aiming to develop economic and social opportunities linked to telling new stories about contested heritage. The LN case study enabled people to engage in community archaeology, helping locals connect with the locality not just in their time but also in former times, i.e., 'connecting with the ancestors'

Given the contested nature of landscape in Northern Ireland, a powerful feature of this project was community engagement with buildings and artefacts that were previously regarded as

belonging to either Protestants or Catholics, rather than shared heritage. Nic Craith and Kockel's research on a holistic approach towards living heritage and the built environment influenced the approach of the LN project. While previously, the built environment and living heritage would be treated as separate strands, the Cultural and Built Heritage Manager, from Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership Ltd, said the research had motivated him to adopt an interconnected approach to the many strands of cultural, built and natural heritage. This generated more interconnections in public policy, including local councils in Northern Ireland which have adopted "reading the landscape" courses through the five associated council areas. Previously these would have been expert led. Now they are community-led [5.1].

Moreover, "Living History" classes tailored to the contested heritage of Lough Neagh were delivered to local communities. Part of this programme involved "get togethers" enabling people to "read their landscape" in a new way. Many oral histories have been collected and uploaded onto the Lough Neagh website.

Since it engaged local communities in the co-creation of story mapping, the LN project has considerable impact on creativity and culture. These stories included oral histories of the bog, of eel fishing and polla fishing (unique to LN). LN also collected stories of the World War 2 around LN and the five British and American local airfields. Stories of traditional knowledge practices concerning old sand dredging from LN have been published on-line and are available in an open-access *Historical Environmental and Cultural Atlas of Lough Neagh*.

The **New Connections Across the Northern Isles** case study (NC) was funded by Museums Galleries Scotland's Museum Development Fund, the Hugh Fraser Foundation and a Scottish Graduate School for Arts and Humanities ARC Studentship. Like the LN project, it initiated a new partnership - in this instance with Shetland Museum and Archive and the Orkney Museum, working in collaboration with Cunningsburgh History Group, the Old Haa, Orkney Historic Boat Society, and Westray Heritage Centre. Moreover, the NC project enabled a formal partnership agreement between Shetland Amenity Trust – Shetland Museum and Archives, and Orkney Islands Council – Orkney Arts, Museum and Heritage. This new partnership has enabled both organisations to establish and seek resources for additional inter-archipelago heritage initiatives – and has created the infrastructure, and aggregate of resources for developing large scale projects and investigations

The NC project benefitted professionals by facilitating the launch of a community-based maritime heritage forum, networking museums, heritage centres and history groups and societies across the Northern Isles. Twenty-four research participants (museum/heritage centre curators, archivists, tourism officers and marine spatial planners) co-curated aspects of their island group's maritime heritages. Visitor numbers highlighted the extent of the project at Shetland Museum and Archives (15,894) and the Orkney Museum Kirkwall (11,228). Over 100 people participated in two launch conferences in Shetland and Orkney in 2019. The Virtual Museum was accessed by 5,741 people, and the Vimeo site was visited 3,821 times. The Sketchfab site has had 3,030 visits, and the Wordpress site 3,680 visits in the same period [5.2, 5.3].

The Chair of the Orkney Historic Boat Society, has spoken about the significance of being involved in the project: "*Participating in co-curating New Connections has provided invaluable opportunities to build on our expertise for preserving historic boats; the related skills and crafts of traditional boatbuilders, and for sharing the stories of the boats they have built. We have benefited through developing curatorial skills, learning together with others concerned with the importance of maritime culture, history and heritage in the Northern Isles*" [5.4].

Like the LN project, which collected oral histories, the NC project "collected" new creative responses to local places, including seven film shorts expressing individual, group and community engagements with a sense of place. Musicians recorded new performances and commentaries. A local artist created two new bodies of work, responding to a sense of place in Orkney and Shetland for inclusion in the 'New Connections Across the Northern Isles' virtual resource [5.5]. In 2019, the works were exhibited at Shetland Museum and Archives, the Orkney

Museum the Old Haa and Yell. Films were made as a result of the research to document performance and practice of traditional maritime heritage crafts of wooden boat building in Orkney; sixern sailing in Shetland and placing of the practice of using soe pots at fishing craigs in Shetland. The virtual museum highlights the continuing heritage of making new Hardaanger fiddles in Shetland, continued by Tommy Isbister, boat builder, fiddle maker and participant in the research.

A direct impact of the NC project was the co-production, with 70 participants, of the virtual museum resource 'New Connections Across the Northern Isles'. This demonstrates the importance of maritime heritages for a sense of place in the Northern Isles. The NC project helped support Shetland's Museum, an accredited museum that also curates a Recognised Collection (Archaeology and Marine Archaeology); to (i) raise awareness and appreciation of their Nationally Significant Collections, maximising their potential to celebrate Scotland's culture - locally, nationally and internationally; (ii) to inspire and deliver new forms of access to and public engagement with the Nationally Significant Collections. Shetland Museum's Curator of Collections, says: "*We have been able to arrange reciprocal visits for members of museums and heritage teams between the two archipelagos and through these swaps we are discovering amazing links in the maritime heritage of both, from souvenirs and traded goods such as Skovie kapps from the Baltic and bösts from Norway, to migrations and present-day links between fishing families in Scalloway and Westray*" [5.3, 5.6].

Museum Galleries Scotland recognises collaborating with organisations from outside the museums and galleries sector offers development opportunities for museums and galleries, as well as bringing involvement by new groups of visitors and participants, increasing the impact of museums in communities. In their 'Realising the Vision Together', report (2019) they acknowledged the NI project harnessed collections and collections knowledge to illustrate a partnership approach to unique heritage [5.7].

The NC project has also benefited Northern Isles schools, with Aith Junior High School, Shetland, having accessed the online museum as a useful way to consider skills for leaning, life and work. NC also gave pupils the opportunity to develop skills in the four learning capacities which are the foundation of Curriculum for Excellence: becoming successful learners, confident individuals, responsible citizens and effective contributors. The school received extremely positive feedback, including from the Education Department who have in turn shared their work with others to highlight good practice in this partnership using local heritage relevant to young learners and developing ICT skills [5.8].

The third case study, **LeithLate** (LL) is a multi-arts charity based in Leith, responsible for various public art projects and the LeithLate festival. A similar approach to the other two projects was adopted by LL which initiated (and maintain) productive partnerships between tourists, visual artists, local Leith communities, academics, the City of Edinburgh Council, and various funding bodies. This holistic approach highlights positive social, cultural, and economic impacts of public art projects for both tourists and locals and specifically where that art is developed (co-created) in consultation with local communities. This element of co-creation featured in all three projects. The Project report, '*Art in and out of Lockdown*' (2020) noted: "We saw first-hand the essential role that some cultural spaces play in socially and financially disadvantaged neighbourhoods that aren't fully integrated into the city centre's cultural scene" [5.9].

Like the NC project, LL had a virtual dimension. LeithLate's projects include the commission, restoration, and highlighting of artwork such as murals in Leith. LeithLate's 2020 'Leith100' programme was bookended by the *Light Up Leith History* Mural event, during which a contemporary animation was projected onto an existing mural, with a bespoke soundscape. The result was the co-creation of a site-specific artwork, which a total of over 1,500 locals and tourists attended over one night in February and ten nights in October. The Phoenix Choir gave performances of popular Leith songs, and a local pavement artist created new artworks alongside the mural.

The encouragement of a shared understanding was central to all of our projects. In LL, three facilitated discussions captured conflicting meanings attached to aspirations for the mural. While some sought to restore this heritage artefact, others (including the original artists) wishing to see work by new artists painted over now faded sections, so highlighting community change and progress. Although these aspirations appear contradictory, both seek to honour the mural as something of continued value for locals and visitors alike. Discussion and consultation will continue towards the 40th anniversary of the mural in 2025.

Recognising the often-transitory nature of public art and creative spaces internationally. LL has also undertaken a dynamic archival project in the form of a Virtual Mural Tour and Virtual Open Studios map. Made in collaboration with the Culture & Community Mapping Project, the map affords free, inclusive access to high resolution imagery, video, and transcribed audio to guide the user through Leith's various murals and creative spaces. The project employed a range of artists, software developers, designers, a tour guide and an events producer to preserve the current and past creative landscape of Leith, and can be easily augmented to include future art and spaces [5.10].

While all three case-studies took place in different settings (rural, island and urban), both across the UK and internationally, together they illustrate the importance of fostering dialogue for the co-creation of new shared spaces. Without the input of all stakeholders, a consensus on community placemaking would not have been achieved, and opportunities for the co-production of a range of oral, visual, textual and musical creative outputs, both tangible and virtual, would have been lost.

5. Sources to corroborate the impact

[5.1] Letter from Lough Neagh Landscape Partnership – confirming the project approach was influenced by research on a holistic approach towards living heritage and the built environment

[5.2] Curator of Archaeology, The Orkney Museum can be contacted to confirm impacts from the NC project

[5.3] Curator of Collections, Shetland Museum can be contacted to confirm impacts from the NC project

[5.4] Letter from Orkney Historic Boat Society – confirming the impact from the 'New Connections Across the Northern Isles' project on Orkney Historic Boat Society

[5.5] Letter from artist and publisher – confirming impact from the 'New Connections Across the Northern Isles' project

[5.6] Letter from Shetland Amenity Trust – corroborating the impact the 'New Connections' project has had on Shetland Museum and Archives' relationships and collaboration

[5.7] Museums Galleries Scotland Report - *Realising the Vision Together*, 2019 (p20)

[5.8] Letter from Aith Junior High School, Shetlands – detailing the impact of the NI project on pupil's learning experience and Education Department good practice.

[5.9] 'Art in and out of Lockdown' report (2020)

[5.10] Letter from LeithLate Board – confirming IRC has played a significant role in LeithLate's organisation and shaping events.