

EcoGPX[®] Coventry Residency

A Creative-led Response to Local Community Issues

The [EcoGPX[®]](#) residency, part of Intercultural Roots' innovative project launched in May 2024, began its eco-arts response in Coventry on July 17th. Supported by a [£100,000 grant from Innovate UK](#), as part of its Creative Cluster Launchpad series, EcoGPX[®] integrates artistic creativity, ecological advocacy and a uniquely positive use of digital technology to highlight and address social and environmental issues in Coventry and Warwickshire.

[Intercultural Roots for Public Health \(IR\)](#) is a registered CIO charity focused on arts for health and social change, aimed at improving the ecological health of local communities and environments. With an inclusive network of over 600 diverse artists in the UK and internationally, including now over 25 artists in Coventry, it is well placed through EcoGPX[®] in developing new, ground-up approaches to engaging with local communities wherever they are - listening to their needs, issues and challenges as well as recognising and celebrating local achievements, aspirations and hopes. This article introduces some of the project's findings to date in Coventry and provides insight into how local eco-artists have been collaboratively responding through the support provided.

Context and Background

Before the Coventry residency began, Intercultural Roots had already received an Innovate UK Creative Catalyst 2023 Award and completed [a six-month pilot phase of EcoGPX[®]](#) in Ilkley, Bradford which concluded in January 2024. This initial phase saw the launch of an EcoGPX[®] app, an innovative tool designed to engage the public and eco-artists in local places through videographed performances and prompts that encourage people to more mindfully and healthily interact with their environment and local heritage. This phase of the project, celebrated at a significant event at Ilkley Manor House, engaged over 22 local contributors and international collaborators, and received enthusiastic feedback.

With Innovate UK recognition of the West Midlands as a 'Creative Cluster', Intercultural Roots' £100,000 EcoGPX[®] Launchpad Coventry and Warwickshire project followed from 1st May 2024 beginning with a two-month deep dive to engage with and listen to particular communities that have been made disadvantaged in Coventry to ensure that the EcoGPX[®] project would address local challenges and aspirations effectively. As well as studying locally generated reports, Intercultural Roots engaged directly with local communities by visiting various neighbourhoods, speaking with residents, meeting representatives from local arts organisations, and conducting an online survey. This effort revealed several key issues and also highlighted positive aspects of Coventry life that are perhaps less well-known as the following report summarises.

There is a strong community desire to celebrate Coventry's cultural heritage, with many residents calling for more artistic and cultural centres that prominently feature the city's history. This desire is coupled with concerns about the decline of community spaces that previously hosted cultural events. There is also a pressing need for increased access to green spaces and nature based activities. For instance, new developments in Binley and Willenhall have replaced cherished woods, reducing green space and limiting community access to natural environments that support well-being.

Improving social inclusion and addressing antisocial behaviour is crucial. In areas like Hillfields, issues with homelessness, particularly among immigrant communities, underline the need for creative approaches to build social cohesion and support mental health. Many residents also call for better coordination of cultural events and knowledge sharing across generations, with a more organised arts and culture calendar to facilitate local participation.

The community desires more public art spaces, particularly in Coventry's town centre, to offer local artists opportunities to showcase their work and for residents including students to engage with the arts. The recent closure of the Fablab at Fargo Village, a key venue for ecological art and innovation, and the uncertainty surrounding the

future of Litten Tree Building (LTB) Showrooms - which requires vacant possession by September 27, 2024 - heightened concerns about the loss of vital artistic and cultural spaces. Since opening, LTB has played a crucial role in engaging new audiences with culture and promoting grassroots interest in arts and heritage, enabling over 600 local individuals to showcase their work, participate in workshops, and host events, attracting more than 10,000 visitors. Its closure would be a significant loss for the Coventry arts community, as it has provided an essential platform for artistic expression and cultural engagement.

Despite these and other challenges, there are many commendable aspects of life in Coventry that residents have highlighted. The city is distinguished by its rich diversity, with over 200 languages and dialects spoken. Its historical and aesthetic appeal is enhanced by the careful conservation of its heritage buildings. The presence of two universities significantly contributes to the city's economy and infuses it with a vibrant student community. Coventry's global reputation as a leading centre for vehicle design reflects its historical expertise in textile, clock, bicycle, and car manufacturing.

Coventry and Warwickshire are also gaining recognition as a regional hub for the UK's 'Creative Cluster' in gaming and immersive technologies. The city is home to a remarkable group of local artists, creative professionals, cultural figures, and ecological practitioners, many of whom responded to the EcoGPX® [Open Call](#) and are now local Co-creators of the project. These positive attributes are integral to Coventry's unique identity and resilience.

Our Open Call led to the selection of 25 Co-creators for the Coventry residency, which was complemented by the involvement of [Intercultural Roots' EcoGPX® team members](#) and three first-year A-level students from Ilkley Grammar School: Ellie Fishwick, Iona Hardaker, and Xander Boyd.

EcoGPX® Residency Report

Morning Workshop Day 1 - Connecting Cultures Through Creativity, 17th July 2024

The day started with a poetry and writing workshop co-led by Emilie Lauren, Coventry's first Poet Laureate 2021 - 2023 and now, co-creating artist with EcoGPX®. The workshop, held at the Coventry Resource Centre for the Blind, where Jess Eastman has developed the writing club, [explored how blind and partially sighted individuals perceive the world through their senses beyond sight](#). Emilie's poetry, along with contributions from members of the group and their scribes, enriched the discussions and set a positive tone for the residency. The session sparked thoughtful conversations on accessible art, the transformative power of inclusive creative practices and how digital devices might bring added benefit to the experience even for people not physically present.



A notable moment was Tracy's first engagement with an apple tree when visiting Coventry. Tracy, who joined online from Jamaica, is a blind member of the Centre's writing club, and writing using alternative methods, describes her sensory experience:



"My fingers tenderly trace along the rough bark of the tree, and I feel as though I am honouring a sage ancestor. Unexpectedly, my hand brushes against something round and hard. 'What's this?' I wonder, exploring the smooth texture and searching for a scent. Realisation dawns as I exclaim, 'Oh, my gosh, an apple!' This discovery plunges me into a memory of my tween years when American apples were a rare treat. The joy of that moment floods back as I marvel at the apple before me, feeling a profound connection to this experience."

Tracy's discovery underscored the powerful ways in which non-visual senses can evoke vivid emotions and memories, showcasing the diverse ways people connect with their environment.

Derek Headley, a member of the Centre and its writing club, shared his reflective poem "The Dance," contrasting his past as a vibrant dancer with his current challenges due to diminishing sight:

"The dance was me, and I was the dance. People said not only did I shine, but I glowed. It was said I could fill a room, fill a house, or even the Albert Hall. But slowly and surely, the dance drifted away from me."

Derek's poem conveys his longing to reconnect with the dance despite his challenges:

"Now, I meet people who are accomplished at the dance. They swoop and glide like Astaire and Rogers or Kelly and Hayworth. I hear them spinning and twirling amongst the crowds. I long to join in, to take the floor, but to my despair, I look down to find not one, but two left feet."

His poem concludes with a hopeful message about seeking support and embracing help:

"To stay in the dance, I needed support. Though I may not be quite in step and slightly off the beat, I am happy to know I can muddle through. We all have our own barriers. Mine is the diminishing of sight. What we all need to accept is not to be too proud or feel ashamed, but to ask for help from each other so we can all share the dance of independence and confidence."

Joe, a scribe for the workshop, added his perspective:

"As a scribe, the trust that someone who cannot see puts in you to share what they envision and have it written down and read back is absolutely extraordinary. The depth of connection and understanding achieved through this process far exceeds what I might have expected initially."

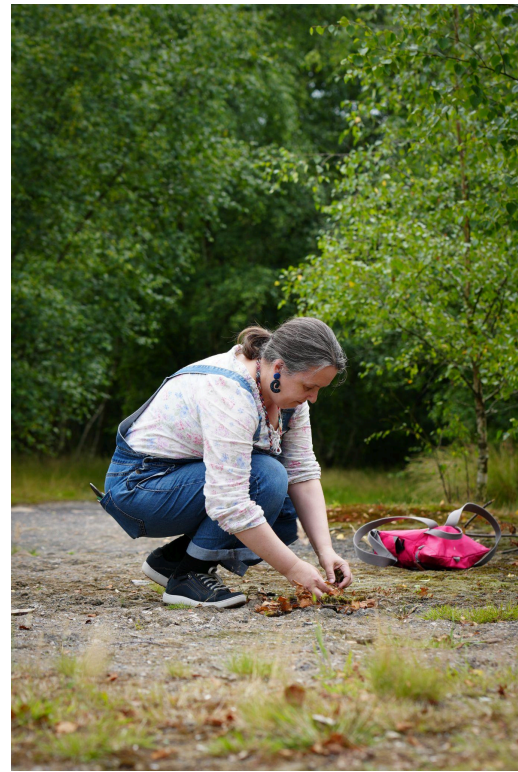
Emilie Lauren reflected on the experience:

"The workshop brought together a diverse group from Intercultural Roots, associated artists, and the Centre's writing club, including a participant joining remotely from Jamaica. It was heartening to see writers expressing their desire to be recognised broadly, not just as 'non-sighted writers.' The supportive atmosphere was truly engaging."

Maryam, Community Liaison Manager for EcoGPX® and an Intercultural Roots (IR) Trustee, stressed the significant impact of the creative writing experience on individuals adapting to vision loss. She remarked, *“This creative writing experience helps these extraordinary people reflect on their situation and how others treat them, as well as their own experiences of life and the world around them.”* Maryam underscored that creativity empowers participants to explore and express their perceptions of the world, not just their challenges. She noted that the group's supportive and joyful interactions created a vibrant atmosphere, which she described as *“full of life in all its beautiful expressions, without taking any part of it too seriously.”*

Afternoon Adventures in Willenhall

The afternoon transitioned to Willenhall, where participants gathered at the John White Community Centre before heading to Binley Woods. Co-creators and artists Janaki Sinjali, a photographer and filmmaker, and Janet Tryner, a contemporary visual artist known for her multidisciplinary approach, collaboratively guided a session in creating land art with natural materials. Janet's practice, inspired by the environment, archaeology, and waste, showcased the integration of art with ecological awareness.



Fatima, one of the 25 local EcoGPX® Coventry residency co-creators , shared her reflections:

"I spent a lovely afternoon with like-minded people, creating art with natural materials. These simple acts of making art can be very comforting, especially for those who are grieving. When I saw the balancing stones art, it reminded me of my ancestors' journeys and connected me to my cultural roots. It brought to mind the Padrão dos Descobrimentos, the monument from which my ancestors set off to places like Brazil, Cape Verde, Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Mozambique, India, and Macau. This experience was both moving and uplifting.."



Local resident and co-creator Caz Bailey expressed frustration over the loss of natural spaces in Willenhall due to new developments:

"This used to be lovely until the council came and took it away. The new estate has replaced what was once beautiful woods. It's disappointing to see such changes."

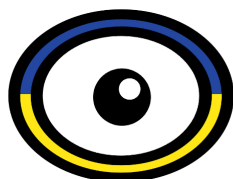
Caz reinforces the importance of preserving natural areas, not just for their ecological value but also for their role in strengthening community bonds. She pointed out that projects like EcoGPX® are vital for raising awareness and inspiring action to protect and rejuvenate such spaces. Her reflections highlight the need for development that respects and integrates the natural environment, aligning with EcoGPX®'s mission to support artists to respond to the needs of their community and environment..



Day 1 EcoGPX® Residency - Intercultural Roots team and local co-creating artists at Claybrookes Marsh

The day concluded with a celebratory gathering, where local artists expressed gratitude to the Intercultural Roots team for their support. The positive energy and collective effort throughout the day reflected a shared commitment to addressing community needs and creating a vibrant, creative environment. With Day 1 setting a high bar, the team was excited and ready to continue the journey into Day 2.

Acknowledgements



**Coventry Resource
Centre for the Blind**

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the Coventry Resource Centre for the Blind for graciously hosting us. Your support and hospitality were invaluable to the success of our workshop. We truly appreciate the opportunity to collaborate in such a welcoming and inclusive environment.

Morning Workshop Day 2 - Charterhouse: Crafting Connections, 18th July 2024

The second day of the EcoGPX® residency continued in Coventry on July 18th, supported by a £100,000 grant from Innovate UK. The project integrates artistic creativity, ecological advocacy and a uniquely positive use of digital technology to address social and ecological issues in Coventry and Warwickshire.

The day began at the historic Charterhouse in Coventry, a Grade I listed building dating back to 1381. Surrounded by serene gardens and steeped in history, Charterhouse provided the perfect setting for our eco-craft workshop. Participants were introduced to the rich history of the site by Jennie Rutte, the Charterhouse Heritage Park Lead, and Gianni Antoniazzi, the Gardener/Park Ranger, who shared insights about the diverse flora and the evolution of the gardens.



Our morning eco-craft workshop was led by local eco-artists and co-creators Fatima Reszczynski (sustainable living advocate), and Kopal Gotta, (naturalist and artist). Fatima demonstrated basket weaving, while Kopal guided the creation of willow heart decorations and bouquets. Their expertise brought a unique blend of traditional craft-kinship and environmental consciousness to the workshop. Participants found joy and fulfilment in creating something with their hands, discovering new skills, and reconnecting with the simple pleasures of crafting.



Safa Aswaisi, another of the 25 local residency co-creators, shared her experience: *"Thursday with EcoGPX® was absolutely amazing. We began with a guided tour of Coventry's Charterhouse and Gardens, followed by a session on wreath/heart making and sustainable basket creations. I personally found that I could do something I had never done before, which was incredibly fulfilling. Experiences like these are invaluable, as they provide emotional resilience and enrichment through shared expressions and connections."*

Fatima, workshop leader and residency co-creator, reflected on the morning: *"Today's residency was incredible. We began with a guided tour of Coventry's Charterhouse and Gardens, followed by a session on wreath/heart making and sustainable basket creations."*

Basma, shared her thoughts: *"After living around the corner from Charterhouse for over two years, I finally had the opportunity to visit, and it was truly inspiring. Exploring the site's rich history, from its ancient buildings to mediaeval and Elizabethan wall paintings, was fascinating. Fatima and Kopal's workshop in such a peaceful environment was particularly impactful for me, as someone with anxiety and ADHD. The serene setting was incredibly beneficial. EcoGPX® offers a unique way to bring these experiences into people's homes through technology, making Coventry's cultural heritage more accessible and engaging for everyone."*

 Kopal video of crafting.mp4

Afternoon Workshop - Exploring Joy and Grief Through Art and Nature

In the afternoon, our EcoGPX® residency group gathered at the historic London Road Cemetery, a serene and sacred arboretum space designed by the renowned architect Joseph Paxton. The cemetery, an early example of the 19th-century 'garden cemetery' movement, blends natural beauty with rich history. Its hilly layout, exotic trees, and notable monuments created a reflective environment, perfect for our creative sessions.

Three of our 25 residency co-creators led the workshop:

- **Navkiran Kaur Mann**, writer and poet
- **Jahnvi Sehgal**, multidisciplinary artist
- **Beebee Bassey**, singer-songwriter

Navkiran's workshop, held in the beautifully restored Anglican Chapel, focused on poetry about grief and joy. Each participant shared their personal views on these emotions, offering insight into the different ways people experience and express them. Some shared grief related to family conflicts, nostalgic smells, or items like forgotten gogo boots. Navkiran enriched the session by sharing her favourite poems on grief from different cultures and invited us to write

our own poems using the prompts: “My joy is...,” “My grief is...,” and “I hold joy and grief in both hands....”



Jahnavi led a drawing session where we created artwork inspired by various aspects of the cemetery, connecting our individual pieces into a collective work. This activity allowed us to express our creativity while engaging with the historical and natural elements of the space



The day concluded with Beebee’s musical performance, which beautifully wrapped up our time of reflection and creativity. Her music captured the essence of the day, blending the themes of joy and grief we had explored.



📺 Beebee singing Toxic Places

Fatima reflected on the day, saying, “*The workshop was a profound experience. Spaces like these allow for open and honest conversations among empathetic people. Expressing feelings of grief and joy can provide emotional strength and enrichment.*”

Maryam, our Community Liaison Manager, added, “*Thank you to our wonderful co-leaders today, Navkiran, Jahnvi, and Beebee. Your efforts helped us hold our ‘joy and grief in both hands,’ creating a supportive environment for our community and our environment.*”

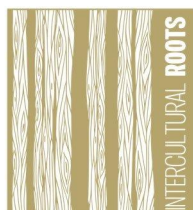
Alex Boyd, Founder and Executive Director of Intercultural Roots, captured the sounds and atmosphere of our locations through his videos, making you feel as if you were right there with us. His vivid descriptions brought Coventry’s cultural heritage to life in a unique and engaging way:

- 📺 Alex 1 min video cemetery.mp4
- 📺 Dear Metal, Dear Stone.mp4

Day 2 of the EcoGPX® residency was a day of meaningful exploration and connection. Through poetry, drawing, and music, participants engaged deeply with the London Road Cemetery and each other. The activities provided a platform for expressing and sharing emotions, building community, and appreciating the historical and natural beauty of the space. The workshops offered a space for reflection and creativity, highlighting the power of art to foster understanding and unity. The experiences and connections made today will continue to inspire and guide us as we move forward in this residency.

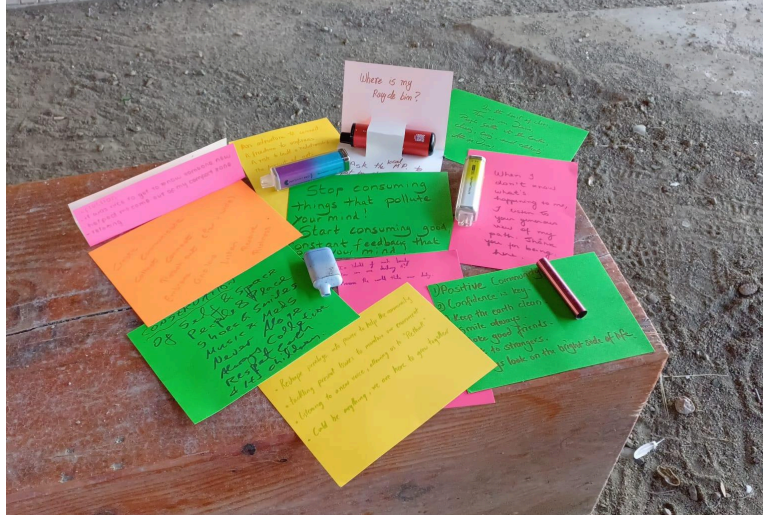
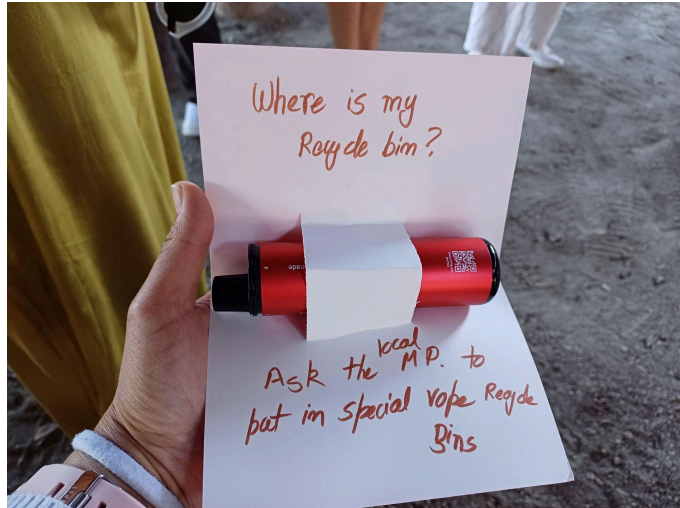
Acknowledgements

A heartfelt thank you to **Jennie, Gianni, and everyone at Charterhouse**, as well as to the **team at London Road Cemetery** and the **Coventry Historic Trust**, for making this day possible. Your support and dedication have greatly enriched our residency experience. We also extend our sincere gratitude to **Innovate UK** for their generous funding, which has made the EcoGPX® residency and all its impactful activities possible.



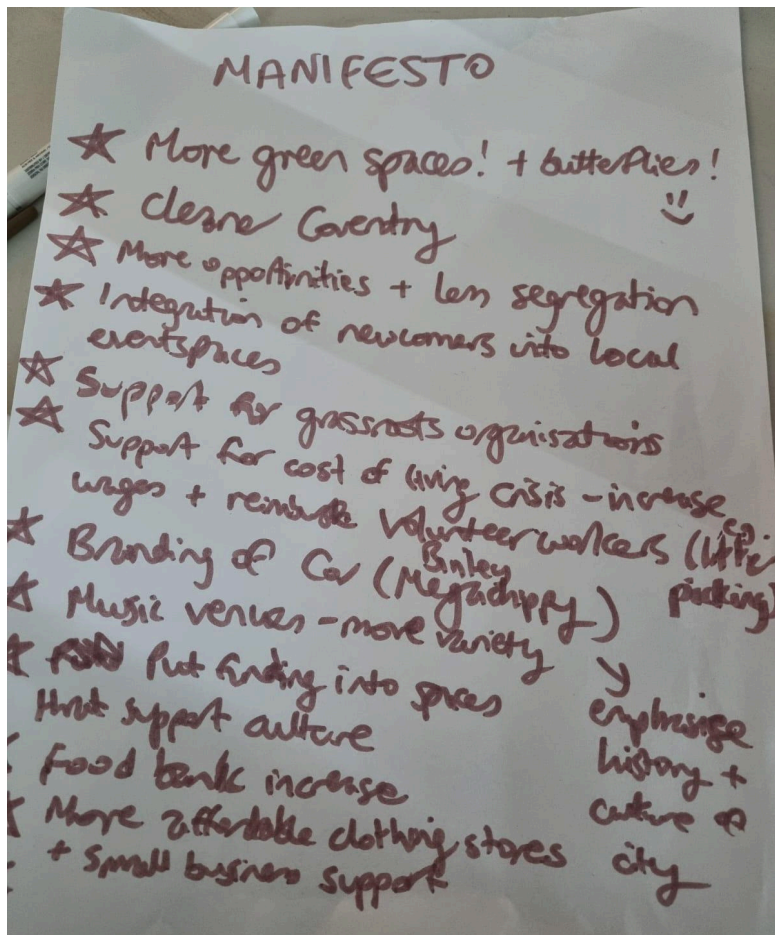
Morning Workshop Day 3 - Environmental Awareness and Creative Expression, 19th July 2024

The day began at Nauls Mill Underpark with a workshop led by Shaunak Samvatsar and Alice Motta. Shaunak, a cartoonist and writer, addressed the environmental impact of e-vaping products and the need for better recycling options. Alice, a poet and theatre-maker, highlighted the importance of sustainability in both environmental and personal contexts. Participants engaged in litter collection and creative activities, drawing inspiration from their surroundings.



Afternoon Workshop

In the afternoon, the workshop at LTB Showrooms was led by Wren James, Naomi Reid, and Frank Storm. Wren, an author and climate fiction advocate, guided discussions on community and creativity. Naomi, a mixed media artist, explored Caribbean identities through her work, while Frank, a poetic artist, used various artistic mediums to address emotions and identity. Participants created 'zines' and discussed how art can address local community needs.



Wren's manifesto included proposals for more green spaces, a cleaner Coventry, increased opportunities, reduced segregation, better integration of newcomers into local events, support for grassroots organisations, assistance with the cost of living crisis, enhanced branding of Coventry, greater variety in music venues, litter picking initiatives, food banks, and affordable clothing...

Fatima, who joined us again for Day 3, shared: 'Day 3 of the EcoGPX® Residency was filled with insightful sessions. Shaunak's focus on the environmental issues from e-vaping products and Alice's emphasis on sustainable living were impactful. The afternoon with Wren, Frank, and Naomi was both inspiring and enjoyable. We had meaningful discussions about how art can address community issues and support local needs. It's crucial to address waste from disposable goods and work towards more sustainable solutions.'



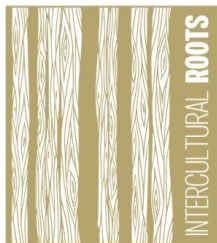
Maryam:

"It was great to explore both environmental and personal sustainability. Each session has been a reminder of the creativity and dedication within our group. Thank you all for your contributions and enthusiasm."

Acknowledgements

Thank you to LTB Showrooms for hosting us and supporting our afternoon session.

We are deeply grateful to Innovate UK for their generous support, which has made the EcoGPX® residency and its impactful activities possible.



EcoGPX® Residency Report

Morning Workshop Day 4 - Art, Music, and Community, 20th July 2024

We began Day 4 at Lakeview Park with Alex Jones from Warwickshire Wildlife Trust. Alex led an informative session on vegetation management, focusing on the removal of Himalayan balsam, an invasive species. His practical insights into the environmental impacts and management techniques provided valuable knowledge for all participants.

 Alex Jones explaining why we clear Himalayan Balsam

 Alex finds a frog.mp4



Midday Session: Creative Lunchtime

Our group met at the WATCH Charity Community Centre at Hillfields before heading to Fargo Village for a vibrant afternoon.



A quick stop at Yosuf bakery, before hitting Fargo Village.

Highlights included: a relaxing lunch break at Fargo Village, where participants enjoyed a pause from activities in a vibrant setting. The afternoon was filled with a variety of creative sessions: Jude Rees and Beebee Bassey delivered captivating musical performances that enchanted the audience, while Elizabeth Connolly led an engaging embroidery workshop that allowed participants to explore their artistic side. Adding to the day's creative flair, Harkiran Bains provided makeup artistry, enhancing the overall experience with her skillful touch.



Evening Gathering at Coniston House, Earlsdon, Coventry

The day concluded at Coniston House, where Safa Aswaisi led a delightful culinary experience. Originally intended as a cooking workshop, the session was adapted into a sharing and eating experience due to space constraints. Safa prepared a variety of Libyan dishes, including couscous salad, rolled chicken sandwiches with cheese, chocolate cake with coffee flavour, and Libyan biscuits stuffed with nuts. She explained the background and preparation methods for each dish, and the meal was met with enthusiastic reactions from the group. This gathering was a meaningful opportunity to connect through culinary traditions and share a piece of Safa's culture. It also enabled the group to sit and talk through a Speaking Circle where everyone present felt comfortable in sharing their own personal story of challenges, achievements and aspirations.



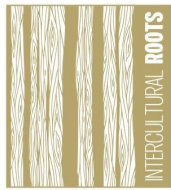
Harkiran shared: *"Thank you to everyone for your warm welcome and acceptance. Despite my initial anxiety, I ended the day feeling uplifted, singing and enjoying the music. Theo and I are truly grateful for the opportunity to connect with such passionate individuals."*

Fatima: *"Day four of the EcoGPX® residency was outstanding. I enjoyed volunteering at the Caribbean Festival and Reggae Fever, and dancing with amazing artists. Safa's Libyan culinary workshop was a highlight, providing a delicious conclusion to the day. Even though I missed some events, our WhatsApp group kept me connected and informed, showcasing the value of digital media in fostering community. It was a fantastic day full of creativity, community, and great food."*

Emilie Lauren, who was unable to attend Day 4, expressed that EcoGPX® allowed her to feel part of the events through the pictures and videos shared. She appreciated how the digital engagement made her feel connected to the day's activities despite her physical absence.

Acknowledgements

We extend our heartfelt thanks to the **Warwickshire Wildlife Trust** for leading the morning session at Lakeview Park, **WATCH Community Centre**, **Fargo Village** and **Coventry Resting Spaces** for hosting our midday activities. Your support and contributions made Day 4 truly special. We are also deeply grateful to **Innovate UK** for their continued support, which has been vital in making the EcoGPX® residency and its diverse activities a reality.



Day 5 (Final Day): Creativity, Community, and Reflection, 21st July 2024

Morning Exploration Sunday - Foleshill Creates, Coventry



We started our day with a vibrant session at Foleshill Creates, led by three inspiring co-creators:

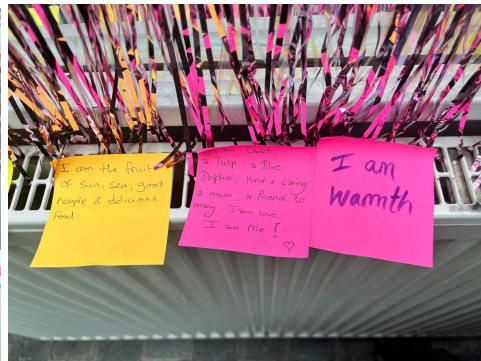
- **Emmanuelle Henry-Cottrel** from The House of Emmanuel I&I C.I.C. works primarily with individuals of African origin, using education, culture, and entertainment to nurture pride in shared roots and experiences.
- **Joshua Jehudah**, a Mindset Coach.
- **Elizabeth (Betty) Molyneux**, a fine artist and health advocate.

The workshop focused on positivity, storytelling, physical theatre, and painting. Emmanuelle, Joshua, and Betty highlighted the importance of storytelling, poetry writing, and singing to honour our roots. We discussed our innate longing for home, whether after a long shift at work, relocating/migrating, or even in palliative care.

 Emanuelle intro and co-leading.mp4

 Betty's reflections on 'home'.mp4

Together, we sang "Home, Sweet Home" and created drawings that depicted our personal interpretations of home—past, present, and future. Conversations then centred on cultivating a positive mindset, emphasising that self-care starts with being kind to ourselves.



Creative Lunchtime Sunday - Coventry War Memorial Park

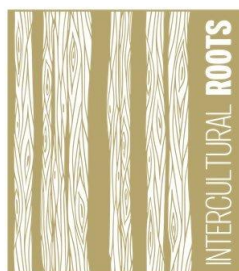
In the afternoon, we gathered at Coventry War Memorial Park for a Caribbean lunch, a walk, litter collecting, storytelling, painting, installation, and dance. The session was led by:

- **Mariam Abdurahman**, an artist who uses art as a form of expression to connect with others and share stories.
- **James Robinson**, a Coventry-based artist and teacher whose work explores mark-making inspired by East Asian creative processes.



In the serene setting of the Sensory Garden, we engaged in drawing, painting, and creating art from natural materials like branches and twigs. This creative session allowed us to reflect on our experiences and the themes we explored throughout the residency.

Participants shared that the day's events were deeply moving, emphasising the importance of honouring our roots through storytelling, poetry, and song. The morning session at Foleshill Creates fostered a sense of belonging and self-care, while the afternoon at War Memorial Park allowed us to create and connect with nature in meaningful ways. The day concluded with a sense of unity and a bond formed among everyone involved.



As we reflect on the past days of the EcoGPX® residency, we are filled with gratitude for the enriching experiences and profound connections we've made. We've learned a lot and collectively made positive changes in Coventry's communities. From the environmental workshops to the artistic and culinary sessions, each day has brought unique insights and creative expressions. While it is bittersweet to conclude this residency, we do so with the comfort of knowing that our journey together has only just begun. We look forward to future residencies, where we can continue to explore, create, and build a sustainable and connected community.

Acknowledgments

Coventry Resource Centre for the Blind, Coniston House, Fargo Village, Foleshill Creates, HillzFM Radio Station, Historic Coventry Trust, Imagineer Productions, London Road Cemetery, Lakeview Park, LTB Showroom, Nauls Mill

Underpark, Sitting Rooms of Culture, The Weaver's House and Workshops, Voluntary Action Coventry, Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and WATCH Hillfields.

We are profoundly grateful to Innovate UK for their ongoing support, which has been instrumental in making the EcoGPX® residency and its diverse activities possible.

About

Residency Co-creators

EcoGPX Coventry Residency Co-creators



**Alice
Motta**



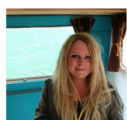
**Aliyah
Ahmed**



**Beebee
Bassey**



**Elizabeth
Connolly**



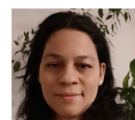
**Elizabeth
Molyneux**



**Emilie
Lauren Jones**



**Emmanuelle
Henry
Cottrell**



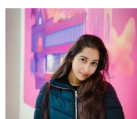
**Fatima
Reszczyński**



**Franklin
Lavender**



**Harkiran
Bains**



**Jahnavi
Sehgal**



**Janet
tryner**



**Joshua
Jehudah**



**Jude
Rees**



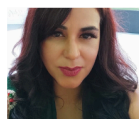
**Kopal
Gupta**



**Mariam
Abdurahman**



**Naomi
Reid**



**Navkiran
Kaur Mann**



**Safa
Aswaisi**



**Shaunak
Samvatsar**



**Wren
James**

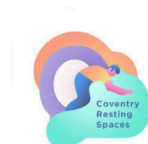


**James
Robinson**



**Janaki
Sinjali**

Caz Bailey



**Coventry Resource
Centre for the Blind**



**UK Research
and Innovation**



Alice Motta:

Latinx queer immigrant whose work delves into themes of identity, sexuality, safety, consent, and memory through her poetry and theatre performances. She is dedicated to exploring innovative ways to integrate various artistic practices and media, with a strong emphasis on nurturing connections within the creative community and fostering meaningful collaborations.



Beebee Bassey:

Nigerian artist, discovered her passion for music as a child with dyslexia, where rhythms helped make sense of words. Her journey includes being a top contender in Nigerian music competitions, winning the Karaoke World Competition in Nigeria, and placing 5th globally. A self-taught guitarist influenced by artists like Adele and Beyoncé, she now lives in the UK,

where she continues to perform, mentor young musicians, and advocate for domestic abuse victims with her latest song, "Toxic Places."



Emmanuelle Henry - Cottrell:

From The House of Emanuel I&I C.I.C, works with those of African origin primarily through education, culture and entertainment. Proud of our roots, shared experiences and use the present to create a better future through the lens of our culture and youth.



Fatima Reszczynski:

Dedicated to creating a sustainable world for future generations. Her dream is to establish a small farm where she can cultivate most of her own food while sharing knowledge with others. Fatima is passionate about fostering personal development, lifelong learning, sustainable living, self-sufficiency, and a deeper connection with nature.



Joshua Jehudah:

Mindset Coach who specialises in guiding individuals to think positively, develop emotional intelligence, and take smart, positive actions. His mission is to help others unlock their inner strength and live with purpose.



Jude Rees:

Genre-defying oboist and woodwind specialist with extensive experience in folk, contemporary and early music. As a freelance multi-instrumentalist and sought-after session musician, Jude has worked with some of the luminaries of the British folk scene and has guested on numerous albums and live tours. As well as her diverse performance career, Jude is a passionate music educator and an advocate for live community music in all its forms and theatre.



Kopal Gupta:

Naturalist and animal lover who often finds answers to life's challenges through nature's metaphors and ways of being. Passionate about working with clay, creating willow wreaths, and practising decoupage, Kopal can frequently be seen hugging trees, listening to birds, or playing with the grass.



Naomi Reid:

Mixed media artist exploring mixed Caribbean identities, community, and archives. Combines traditional crafts taught by her grandmother and photography. Advocates for community cohesion and multicultural learning.



Navkiran Kaur Mann:

Writer and poet with performances at the Commonwealth Games in Dubai and the Royal Shakespeare Company's "Faith" at Coventry Cathedral. Her poems have been exhibited internationally. Co-director of Thrive Poetry Festival, focusing on under-represented artists.



Wren James:

Carnegie-longlisted author, known as Lauren James. Notable works include "Last Seen Online" and "The Loneliest Girl in the Universe". RLF Royal Fellow and story consultant for Netflix's "Heartstopper". Founder of the Climate Fiction Writers League and organiser of a queer writers group.



Mariam Abdurahman:

Uses art for expression and communication. Believes art facilitates connections and storytelling, emphasising the importance of marking presence and sharing personal narratives.

**Jahnavi Sehgal:**

Multi-disciplinary artist working with both traditional and digital mediums to create unique and vibrant outcomes. Aims to inspire creativity and community involvement.

**Franklin Lavender:**

Queer punk poetic artist using body, creations, and shared spaces for comfort and expression. Works across various mediums, aiming to build community and safe spaces.

**Emilie Lauren Jones:**

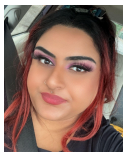
Coventry's first Poet Laureate, performing and writing poetry featured in national media. Facilitates workshops and visits schools and community groups.

**Elizabeth Connolly:**

Hand embroidery artist based in Warwickshire, with a passion for craft and a distinctive experimental style. Incorporates unconventional materials and believes in embroidery's mental health benefits. Explore her work at Elizabeth Connolly Embroidery.

**Safa Aswaisi:**

ESOL teacher with cooking qualifications. Owns a business teaching creative, low-budget cooking and essential kitchen skills, focusing on practical and affordable techniques.

**Harkiran Bains:**

Qualified makeup and hair artist using makeup as a coping mechanism. Creates characters to boost confidence and regain mental control, aiming to support others with similar challenges.

**Janaki Sinjali:**

Filmmaker, content creator, and social media manager. Specialises in crafting compelling visual stories and managing dynamic social media campaigns to help brands and individuals connect with their audiences.

**James Robinson:**

Coventry-based artist and teacher exploring mark-making in 2D and 3D, influenced by East Asian creative processes. Works in theatre set and costume design using diverse media such as watercolour, large-scale sculpture, and technical drawing.

**Shaunak Samvatsar:**

Indian cartoonist, writer, and film designer. New to the UK, exploring collaborations in zines, comics, and visual narratives.

**Janet tryner**

Contemporary visual artist using a multidisciplinary and hybrid approach in her practice. Draws inspiration from the environment, archaeology, and geology, with a focus on waste spillage and ecosystems of smaller worlds.

**Elizabeth (Betty) Mollyneux**

Nurse, mom, mixed media artist, and printmaker creating elemental, ethereal everyday art. Fellow in Global Arts in Medicine, using art as a vehicle for health and wellbeing.



REFLECTIONS

Extracts from artist co-leader reflections on residency:

'Coventry can feel very closed off at times; however, each new connection I made at the residency helps to weave a stronger tie between me, the place, and its people. It paves the way to exciting new possibilities and breaks down the walls between communities.'

'i feel a lot closer to a wider reach of community, both for having this created a further community of artists i can directly connect and collaborate with, but also due to the diversity within our collective i've felt the opportunity to hear and understand other cultural communities and experiences that are outside my own'

I ... realised that the creative community have the power to comment, advise and help bring about change at grass roots level directly related to well being, belonging and development of communities. Art intervention is needed to heal the community and create a sense of togetherness. You need such activities to be conducted at community centres on a regular basis .

'I came across so many artists and hidden gems in Coventry which I have just passed and never understood. The problems with the community were discussed and what an art based approach can do to help out the same.'

'the love and kindness your company models made all attendees feel valued'

Thank you. Collaboration with you was enriching and ultimately beautiful. I felt happier and, if you like, more creative after a weekend working with you'

'there was a buzz of creative, open energy shared by all, which was felt throughout. I also appreciated the 'talking circle' we created after the shared meal to go more in depth into Intercultural Roots as an org, and to speak freely about ourselves and what's brought us together - it was a beautiful way to bring us closer together, both as a collective and to IR.'

'the continual gentle developments each day enhanced exactly how community based creative minds work, this was so refreshing'

'I love meeting new creatives and it was great to see some of the unique things people in my city specialise in from traditional instruments to prosthetic makeup!'

It was exciting to work collaboratively with other artists both sharing knowledge and the experience of working together. This was very beautiful.

NOTES:

EcoGPX® Launchpad Coventry and Warwickshire

by Intercultural Roots for Public Health

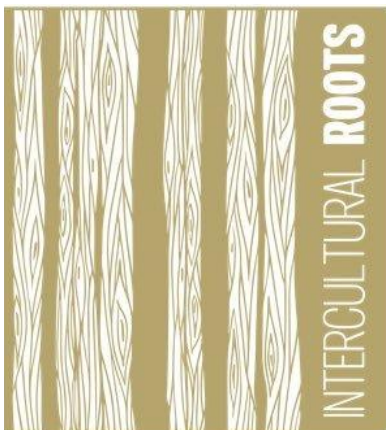
Coventry can feel very closed off at times; however, each new connection I made at the residency helps to weave a stronger tie between me, the place, and its people. It paves the way to exciting new possibilities and breaks down the walls between communities.

(Co-Leader feedback on EcoGPX® residency: 17th-21st July, 2024)

The EcoGPX® project brings communities closer to the places and issues that matter to them through an innovative model of co-created and place-based art/technology practice. Carefully weaving digital innovation with new protocols for inclusive community engagement, the project empowers local artists to respond to and celebrate the places in their community. The current iteration of EcoGPX®, funded by Innovate UK, is led by a diverse team of art/technology practitioners and operates across three strands of action: 1) Community engagement through the development of meaningful relationships with local practitioners and community leaders; 2) A series of eco-art residencies curated and facilitated by the core team in conversation with local contacts; and 3) Technology development in the form of a new mobile application.

The EcoGPX® community engagement and residency processes draw on a longstanding methodology developed by Intercultural Roots since 2018. Our approach is sensitive to the complex dynamics of local community ecologies, including people from diverse backgrounds, generations and abilities, as well as more-than-human participants like rivers, trees, parts, buildings, and dimensions of urban planning. Through an iterative experimental and devised process, these residencies are linked to the development of a new digital platform to support place-based practices.

The new mobile app “Places by EcoGPX®”, is currently nearing completion of front end design, with back end development well underway. The Places™ app is designed to allow local artists and practitioners to creatively engage with and share their deep knowledge of specific places with other artists, local communities, and people across the world. For public users, Places™ offers a dynamic and embodied engagement with the place you are in or one you would like to visit, through the curation of a set of creative, playful and interactive media, made by artists who know those places best. At the same time, it serves as a new kind of social media app for local artists, creative health, cultural and ecological contributors, bringing them into the international community fostered by Intercultural Roots and producing new opportunities for knowledge exchange.



Intercultural Roots for Public Health

UK Registered Charity Number 1179885

View our organisational [Policies & Procedures](#)

Read Intercultural Roots' Annual Report 2022-23: [Click Here](#)

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