

The NewBridge Project



2023 – 2024

About The NewBridge Project

The NewBridge Project is an active artist-led community that supports artists, curators and communities. We offer space for creative practice, making and an ambitious programme of exhibitions, commissions, artist development and events.

Our building in Shieldfield houses 120 artists and numerous project and production spaces. Our public spaces - which include a gallery, bookshop and event spaces - are places where artists and local communities can come together to work, learn and socialise with each other.

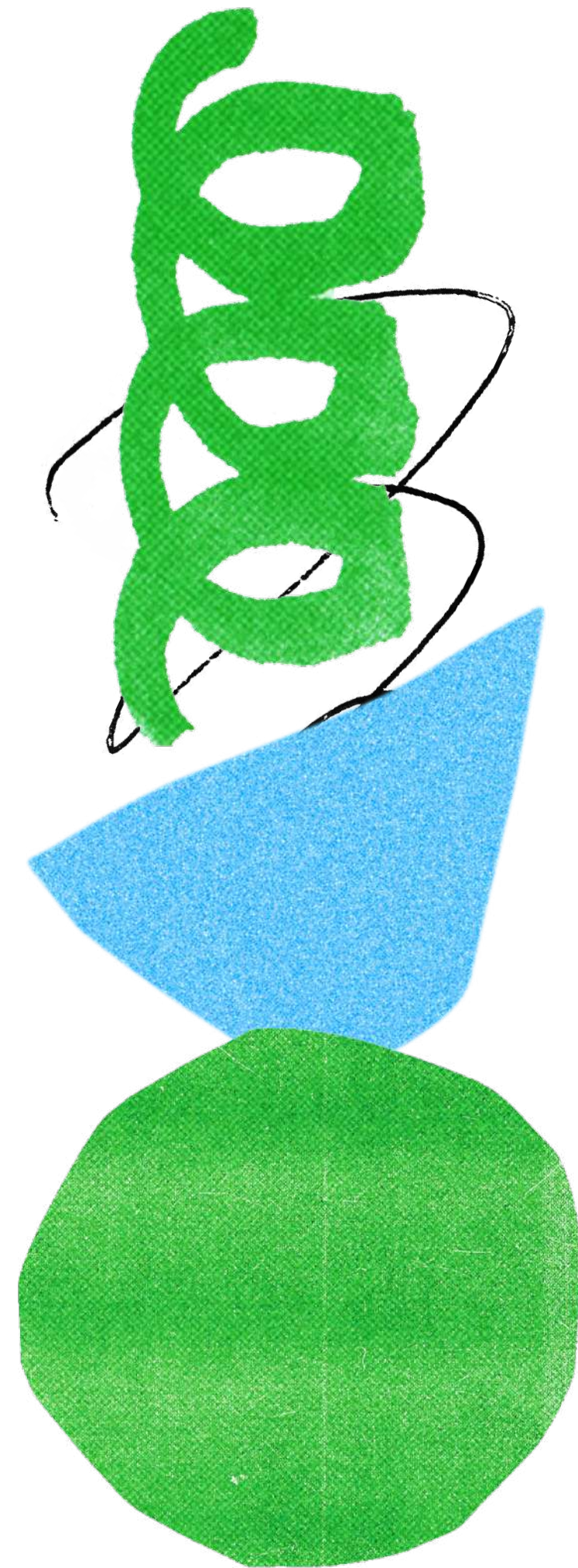


Eid al-fitr - image credit: Matt Denham

About The NewBridge Project

Our programme is made in consultation with our members, artists and local community. We aim to reflect the diversity of contemporary art practice, be responsive to our environment, build solidarity, and place community-centred, experimental, collaborative and socially conscious programming at the heart of all our work.

Since its inception in 2010, The NewBridge Project has grown to be an important and vital part of the cultural infrastructure in the North East. As a listening and learning organisation, our progression has been artist-led and community-led, consistently responding to the changing needs of artists, audiences, and the landscape in which we operate.



Since our move in 2021 to The Shieldfield Centre, this ethos has seen us develop our work in relation to the locality and in particular its community.



The NewBridge Project Launch Weekend – image credit: Matt Denham

Our Vision, Mission and Values

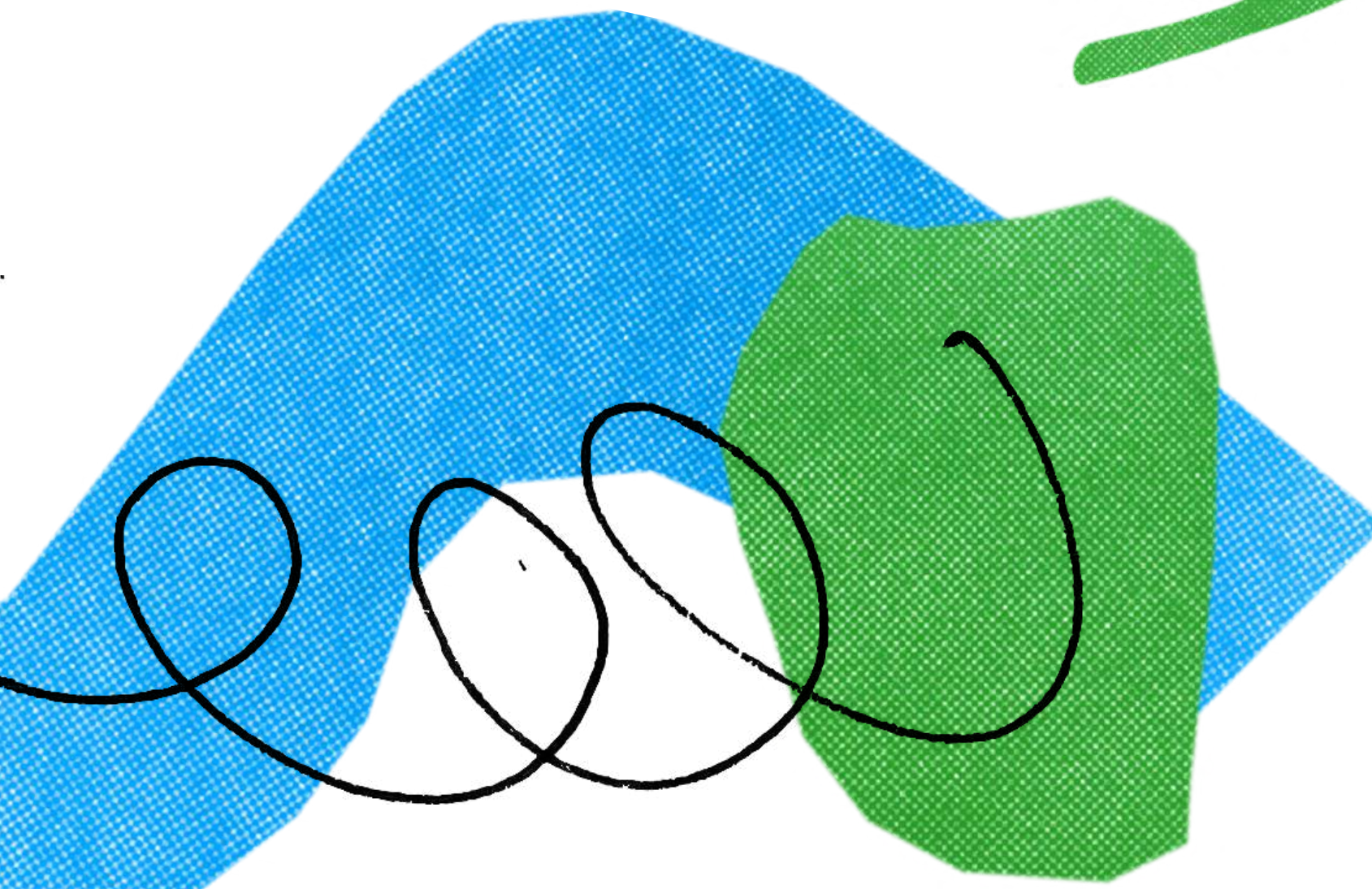
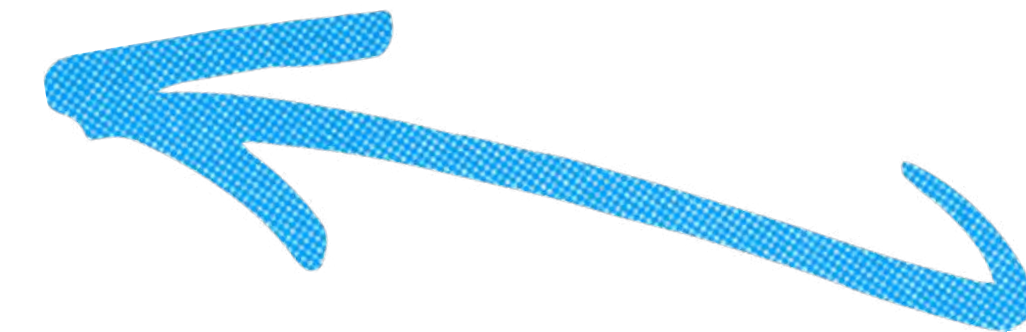
Our Vision

A space for production and presentation of contemporary art, that contributes to an active, inclusive region where artists and communities can live, work and learn.

Our Mission

The NewBridge Project is a vibrant organisation supporting the creation of new and pioneering contemporary art through an ambitious programme of exhibitions, commissions, events and artist development.

We create platforms for audiences to engage with the creative process, while nurturing artistic and curatorial practice in an engaged and discursive community. Our programme places collaboration and learning at its heart and seeks to be a genuine community resource.



*Ghadamès, Pearl of the Sahara -
image credit: Matt Denham*

Our Vision, Mission and Values

Our Values

Experimental in our approach

We provide artists with the flexibility to test out ideas, experiment and be radical, allowing innovative work and alternative approaches to develop.

Artist-Led An artist-led ethos is embedded across our organisation, generating a responsive programme and vision that is shaped by artists' needs and interests.

Learning We strive to be a learning organisation, that regularly reflects upon the way we work, and how we can develop responsively, meaningfully and with integrity.

Focused on collaboration and community We instil a spirit of collaboration, collectivity and a community in all our activities to generate peer learning, critical conversation and social interaction.

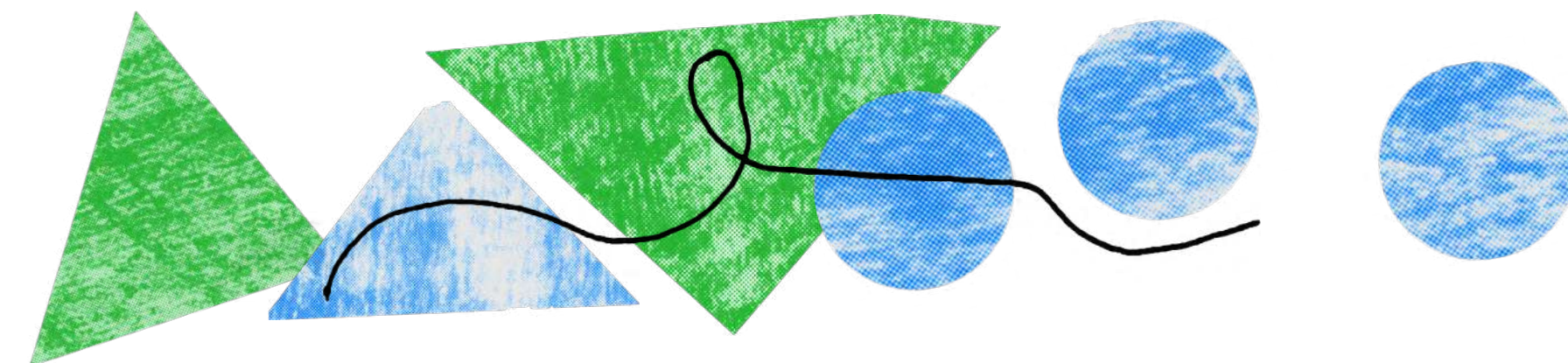
Solidarity We work in solidarity with artists, local people and community groups who are working towards social and climate justice.

Care We embed an ethos of care across our organisation, from the way we work with staff, freelancers, artists and communities, to the way we develop our programmes and policies.

Aware and responsive to the social, political and civic landscape that we exist in

We champion artwork that is reactive to the location, situation and time from which it emerges. We believe art has the power to have great impact, introduce new ideas, alternative thinking and challenge convention.

Development of artists at its heart We position artist development at the core of everything we do, creating informal and formal opportunities for artistic practice and talent development, supporting artists from all backgrounds to progress.



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

Strategic Goals

We have six strategic goals which form the basis of our work, ensuring we are delivering our Vision, Mission and Values.

This Business Plan sets out how we plan to deliver these throughout 2023-24, continuing and building on our previous work.



*Promises from Paradise -
image credit: Matt Denham*

Providing space

Developing artists

**Supporting and
presenting new
art work**

**Creating a
welcoming
space**

**Engaging
audiences and
communities**

**Creating a good
organisational and
working culture**

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

Strategic Goals



Image credit: Sarah Li

In addition to this, our development and planning responds to the current need and context:

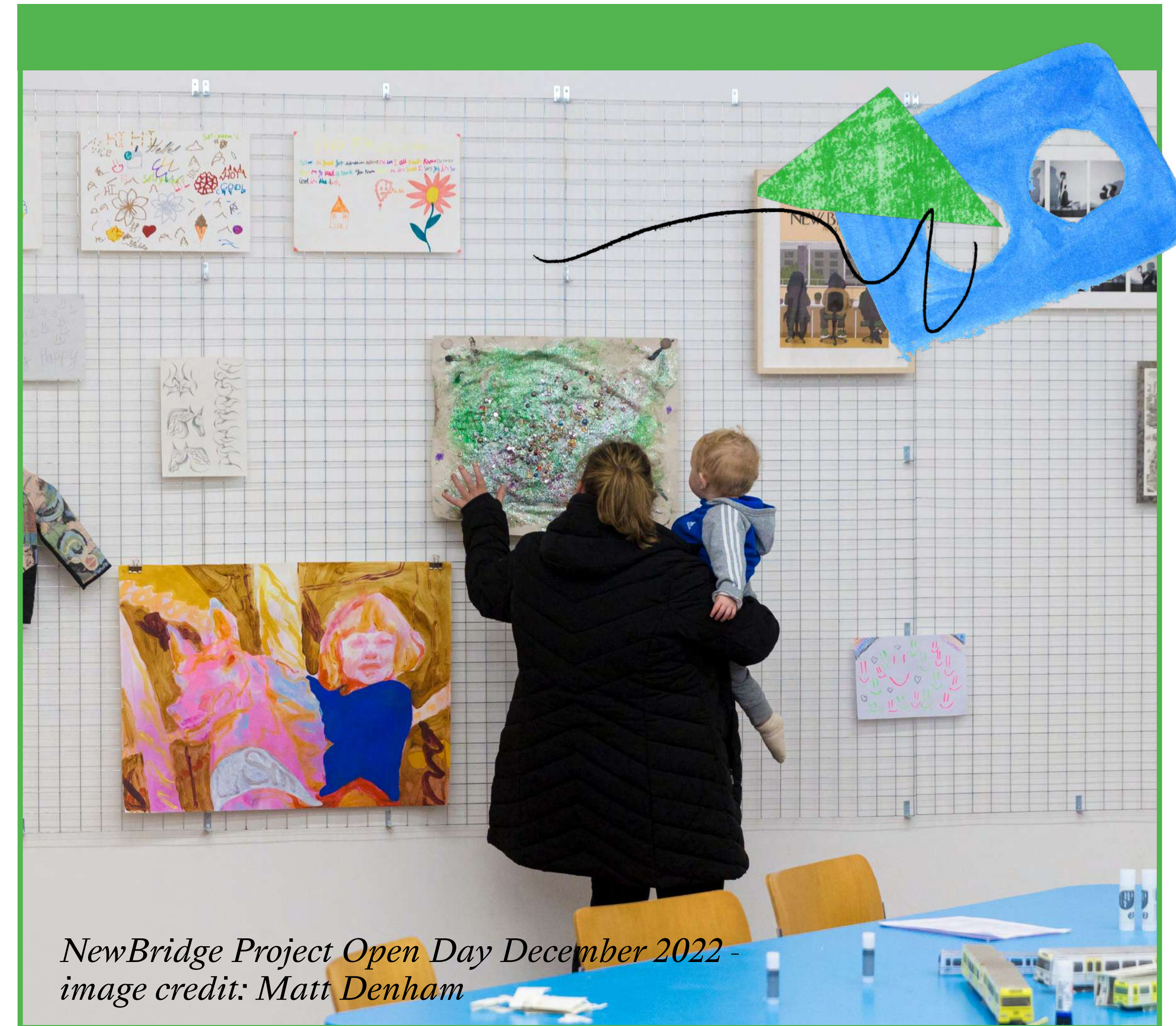
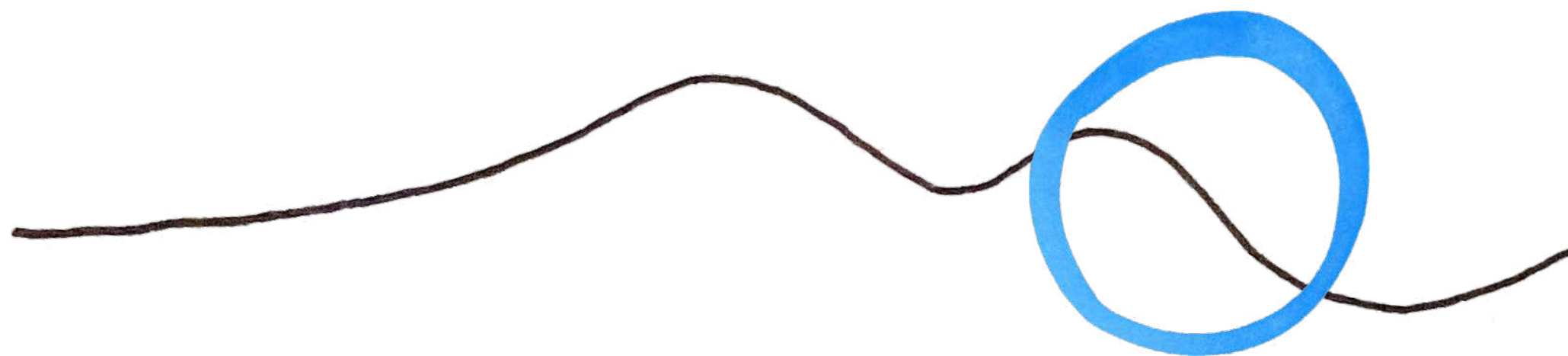
Artist's development – addressing diversity and career precarity amidst cost of living crisis

Supporting artists' practice in a grassroots, responsive and peer-to-peer manner is at the heart of NewBridge's work and we must ensure we are supporting artists to develop sustainable careers. To create a truly diverse sector within NewBridge and beyond, we must continue to be proactive in addressing barriers to inclusion and enable opportunity and access for practitioners under-represented across the cultural and visual arts sector.



Studio Provision – affordability and cost

Providing genuinely affordable studio space has always been at the heart of NewBridge's purpose. Retaining affordability is increasingly difficult in the midst of soaring energy costs, coupled with rising cost of living for our members. Last year we made the difficult decision to increase studio fees, venue hire costs, workshop fees and invested in our hot desk space to increase membership. We reviewed our business model, which previously ensured that studio fees covered 100% costs of building overheads, including relevant staffing, and is now partly subsidised with funding. This year we will be both keeping a close eye on costs and fundraising opportunities to minimise the impact on affordability.



*NewBridge Project Open Day December 2022 -
image credit: Matt Denham*

Strengthening Co-investigator voices

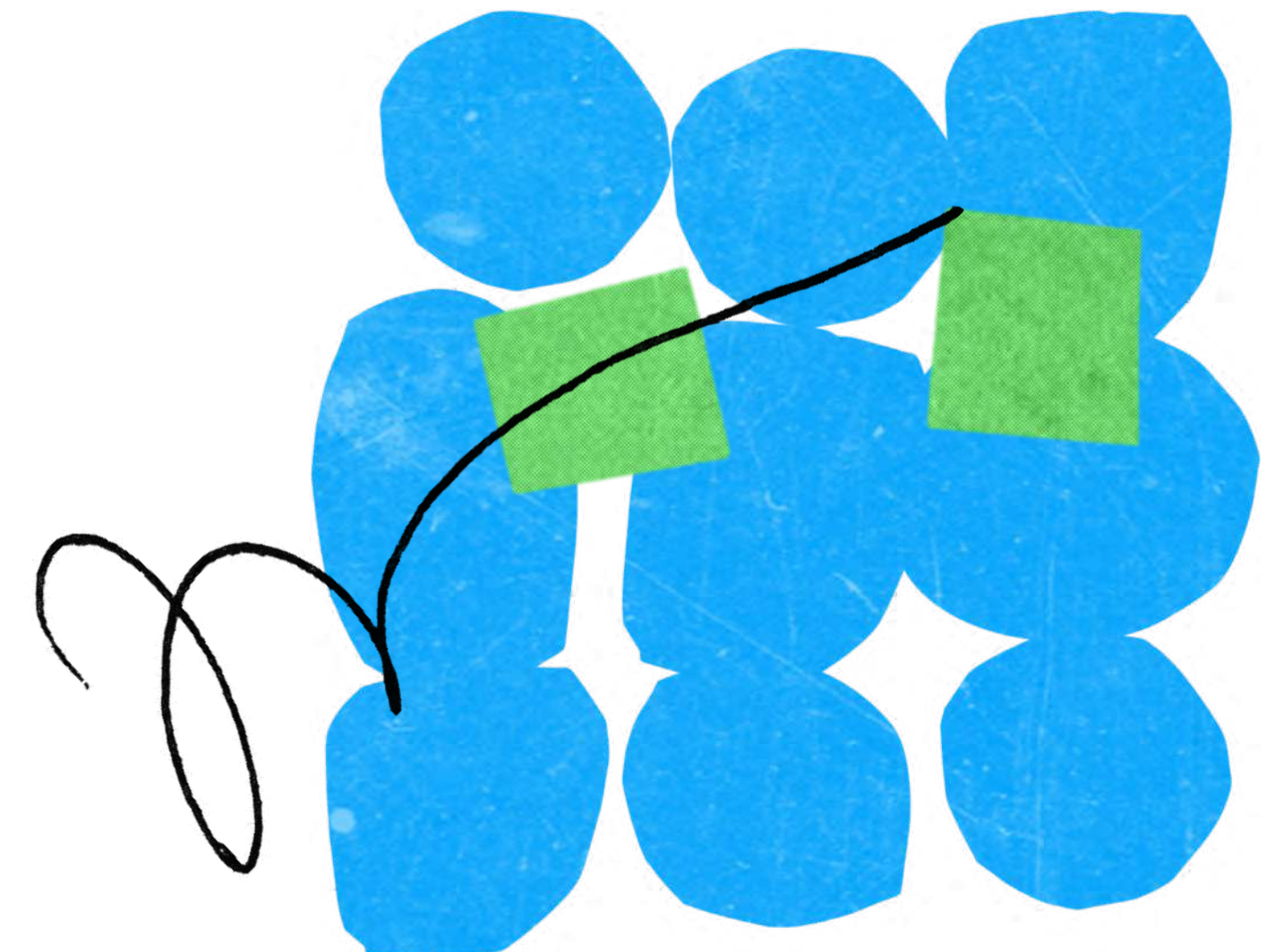
We have been reviewing how we work with Co-investigators to ensure that there is time and support for in-depth conversations, collaboration and future planning alongside them. This year we will embed this unique and exciting way of working across two projects; through the For Solidarity trips to community gardens and through an artist commission alongside residents of Clarence House and Stoddart House.



Image credit: Colin Davison

Impact of NewBridge and our work in Shieldfield

We moved to the Shieldfield Centre in June 2021 and opened to the public in October 2021. In the short amount of time we have been here, we have built strong relationships and programme within our locality, for and with residents and artists. We know that our work has made an impact, and in 23-24 we will prioritise research which supports us to better understand its broad and long-term effects. This will help us to develop future work and to make the case for a long-term future in Shieldfield.



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

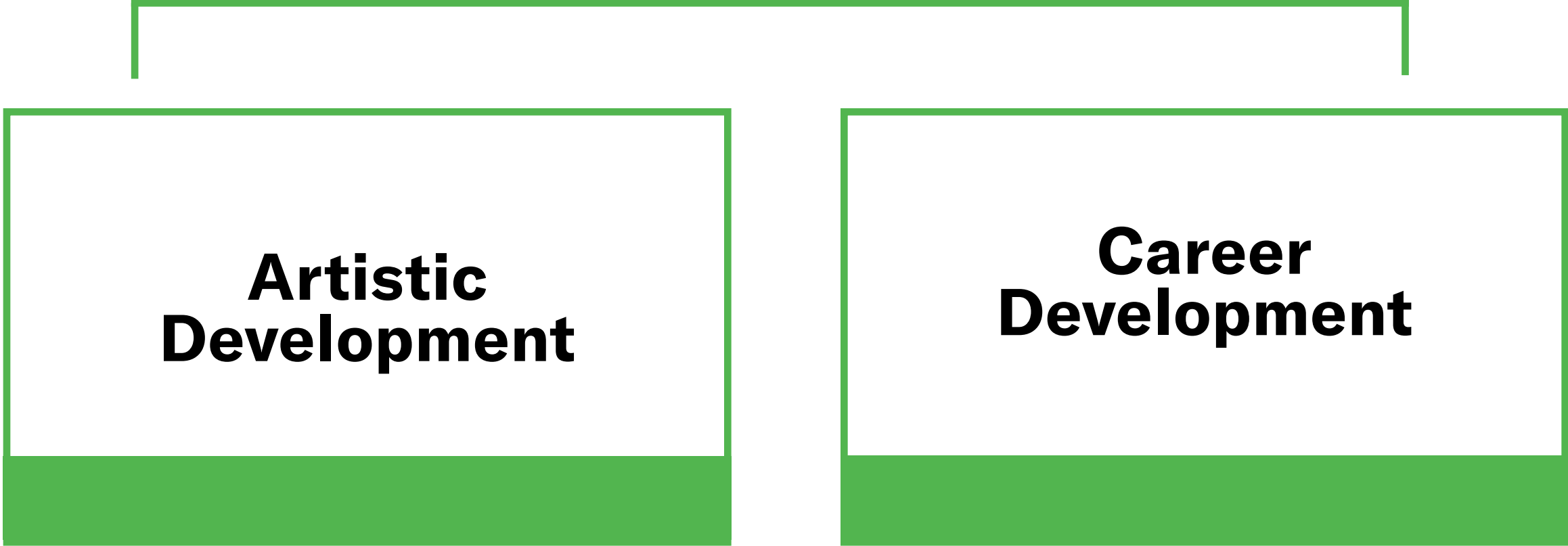
Developing Artists

We support artists to develop their artistic practice and build sustainable careers through a number of artist development programmes. These provide opportunities for practical and peer-led support, shared learning and community building through a regular programme of events, workshops.

This year we will do this through our four, ongoing artist development programmes

| | |
|------------------------------------|------------------------------------|
| Practice Makes Practice | The Collective Studio |
| Create/Disrupt | The Programme Committee |
| | |

In addition to these ongoing programmes, we have a further four partnerships that are taking place or starting this year



| | |
|---------------------------------|--|
| Co-Act | MOTHEROTHER x Practice Makes Practice |
| Kaleidoscope Network | The Exchange |
| | |

Artistic Development

Our development programmes create space for artists to come together to work alongside, learn from and connect with each other through a programme of events, commissions, workshops, residencies, talks, exhibitions, and unique opportunities. We cultivate an environment of experimentation, ambition, and collaboration through peer-led learning alongside activity led by regional, national and international artists, cultural professionals and organisations.

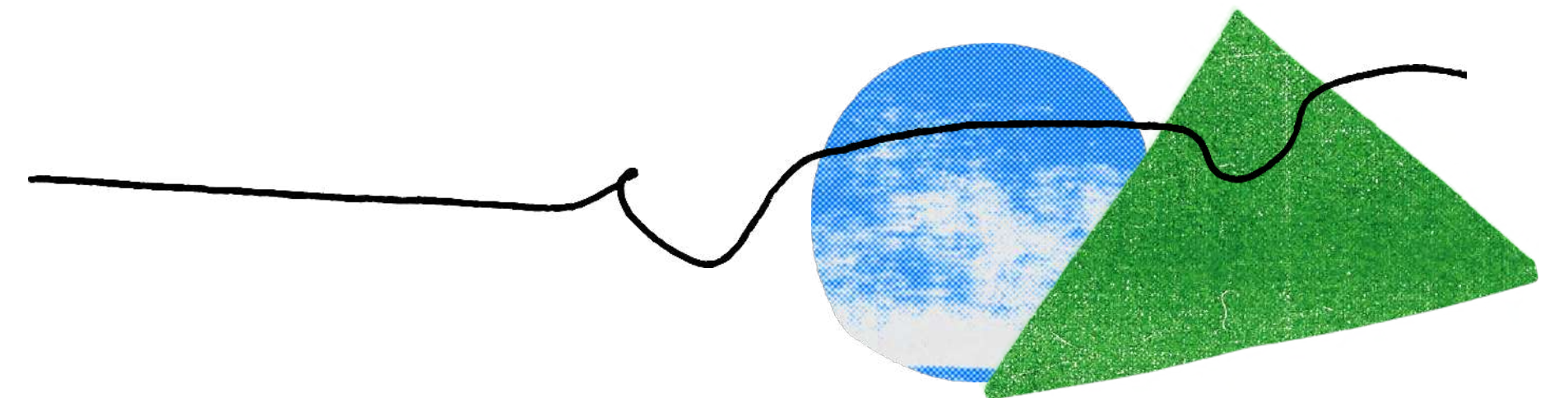
Through this we offer space for artists to determine their own creative goals and ambitions, then build programmes that support them to create new work on their own terms.



*Shieldfield Home Part 2 -
image credit: Matt Denham*

Career Development

Career development is an important strand in many artists' journeys and we provide a variety of opportunities that enable artists to build skills, recognising that this can never be a 'one size fits all' approach. We provide further opportunities and work experience to support people to gain experience and build CVs – this includes volunteering and placement programmes, as well opportunities that provide individuals with their first, paid hands-on work in the arts. We also provide regular access to information, workshops and bespoke support for applying for opportunities such as commissions, jobs and funding, supporting artists to develop income



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Developing Artists

Practice Makes Practice

Our ongoing programme of events and opportunities for early to mid-career artists, encourages life-long learning and focuses on developing artistic talent and equips artists with the necessary skills to manage their practice. It is developed in response to the needs and interests of members and the local creative community.

The Collective Studio

Our annual 12-month creative development programme for recent graduates and/or early-career creatives in partnership with Newcastle University provides affordable studios and workspace alongside a programme of training, events, mentoring, socials and opportunities.

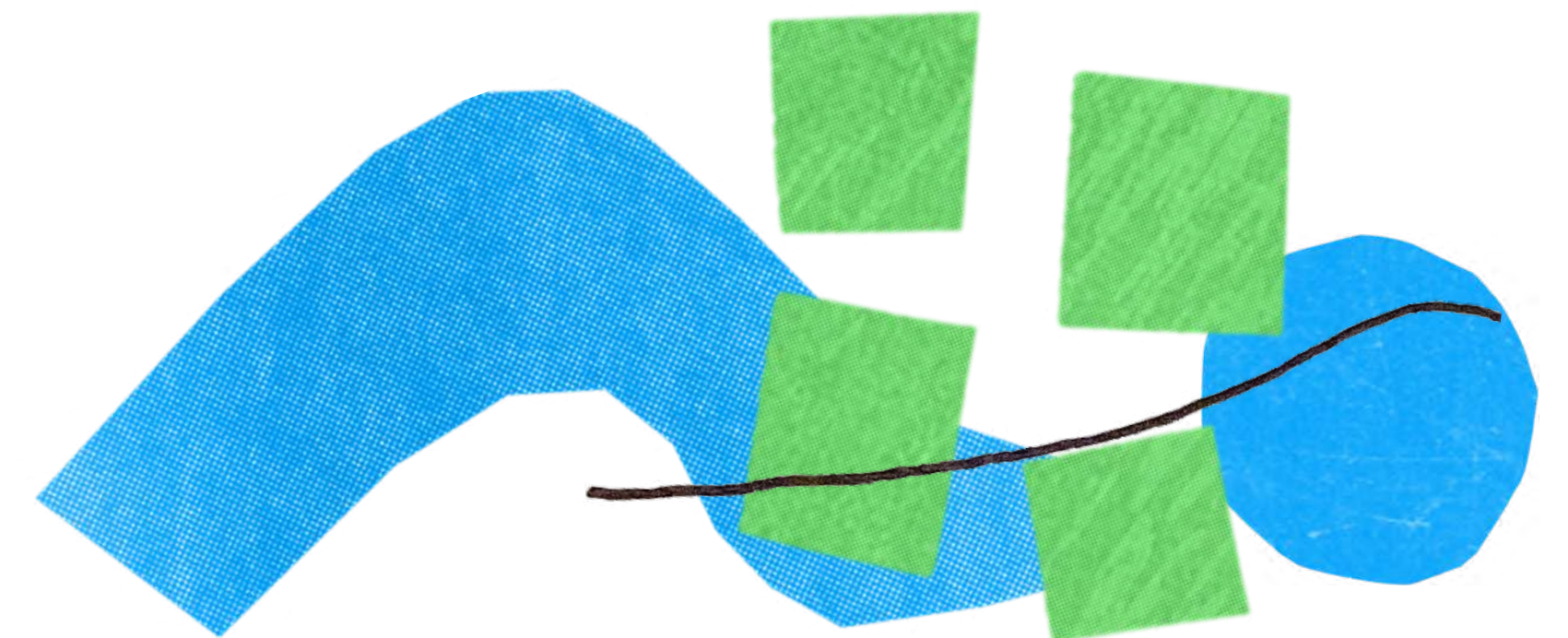
It aims to address skills gaps, build networks and increase confidence for those at the start the start of their career.

Create/Disrupt

A development programme for aspiring art workers and artists based in the North East who have not been to university. It aims to break down socio-economic barriers to pursuing a creative career to promote diversity and inclusion within the visual arts sector through providing accessible and long-term support. It has 3 strands: a 12-month core cohort programme, a young people's programme and an outreach programme of workshops and talks in schools, colleges and community groups.

The Programme Committee

Acts as a hands-on professional development programme for those wanting to gain greater experience in different aspects of commissioning, curating and programme development. Each year we recruit a group of 3-8 committee members who are paid to work together and with us to create a programme that is based on collaboration, is responsive to our social, political, civic and environmental context.



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

Co-Act

An 18-month programme of development and support for 4 early-career, socially engaged artists. This project will begin in Summer 2023 and run until March 2025, and is supported by Jerwood Developing Artists Fund.

MOTHEROTHER x Practice Makes Practice

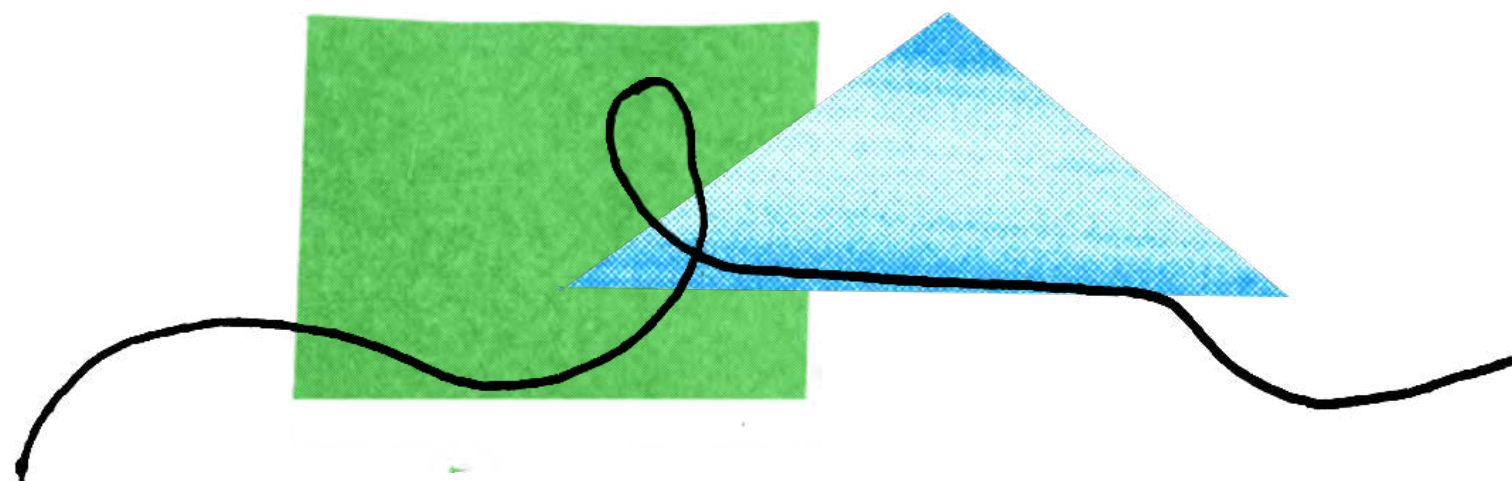
We are collaborating with MOTHEROTHER, a collective for artists who are also caregivers, to host workshops, events, socials and a special edition of our annual Practice makes Practice Residency that will create space to listen and learn from the experiences of those who are carers working in the arts. This will support us to embed change within our own organisation,

What we will do this year

as well as advocating for wider change and accessibility across the sector.

Kaleidoscope Network

A collaboration between Eastside Projects (Birmingham), Primary (Nottingham), Spike Island (Bristol) and The NewBridge Project, has monthly online/hybrid events, hosted by the partners and open to either organisations members to attend. This is created as a way to share resources, increase and diversify our respective artist development offer, and create new connections between communities of artists.



Developing Artists



Habit Ability - image credit: Matt Denham

The Exchange

A partnership with CAMP (Plymouth), G39 (Cardiff), Eastside Projects (Birmingham), Spike Island (Bristol), and Turf Projects (London) to pair up our member artists through a buddy system.

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Providing Space

We recognise affordable and accessible work and exhibition space is of key importance for artists and creatives to start/continue their practice, develop their careers and realise new work. Our studios have been at the heart of NewBridge since our establishment in 2010.

Our studios and workspaces aim to nurture an inclusive, collaborative environment in which artist can discuss and develop new ideas and projects within an engaged community of artists.

NewBridge’s studios continues to develop in response to the needs and interests of its members providing valuable resources and support to encourage an experimental and supportive approach to visual art practice.

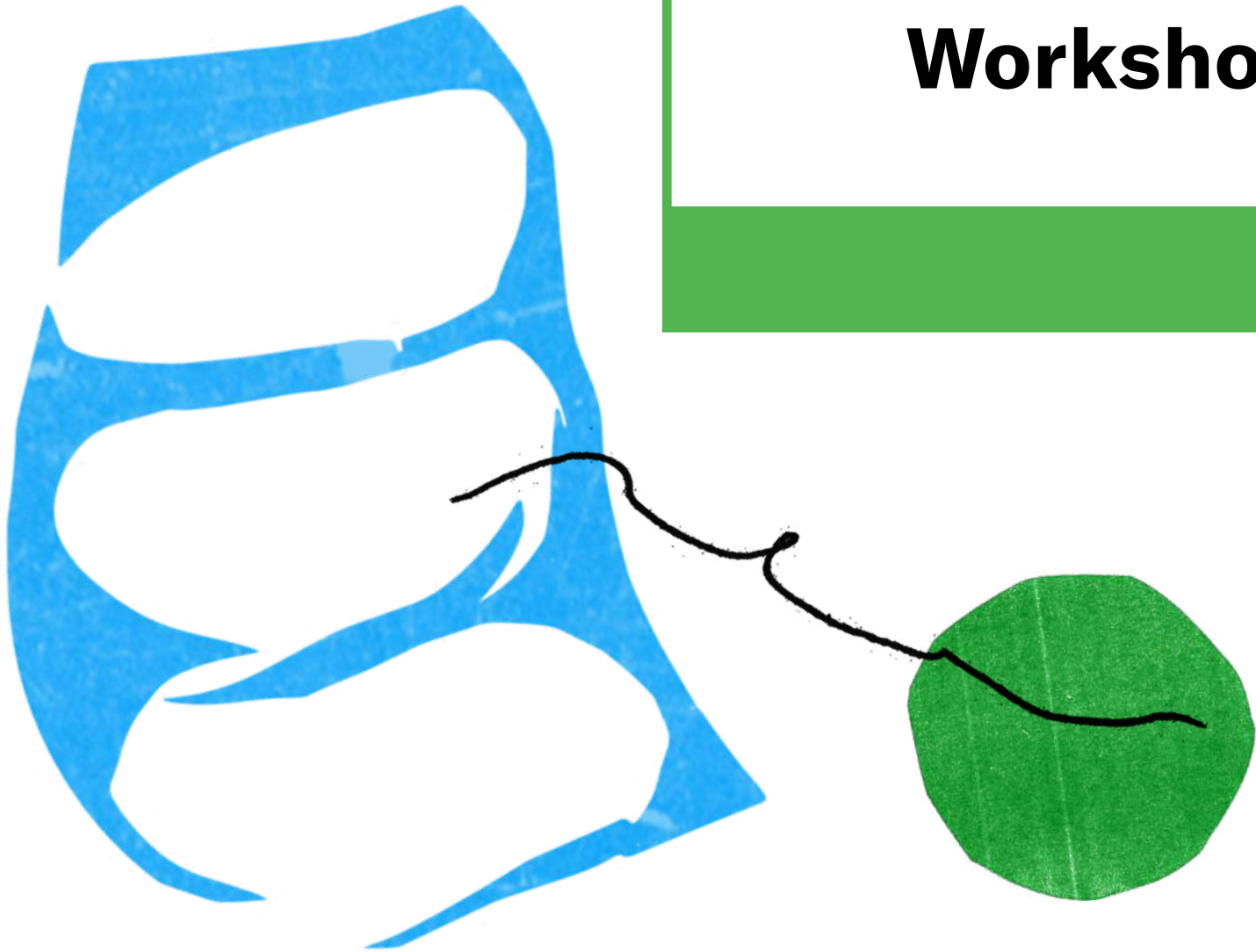
**Studios & hot
desk space**

Project Space

Workshops

**Socials &
events**

**Bookshop &
Reading Room**



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Providing Space

Studios and hot desk space

Our affordable space for artists at any stage of their career, working primarily within the field of visual art, with a desire to be part of a diverse and critically engaged community of creative practitioners. We are committed to ensuring that our studios are inclusive and accessible and offer bursaries and free studios as part of The Collective Studio and Create/Disrupt programme.

Project Space

Adaptable spaces for a variety of activities – e.g. for making, exhibitions or workshops – are bookable by our studio and community members alongside creative professionals, charities and community groups who are not members.

Workshops

A wood workshop, dark room, print studio and ceramics studio are available for use by members, creatives and local community. These spaces are led independently by NewBridge members who receive discounted space in exchange for opening their spaces and resources to others.

Socials and events

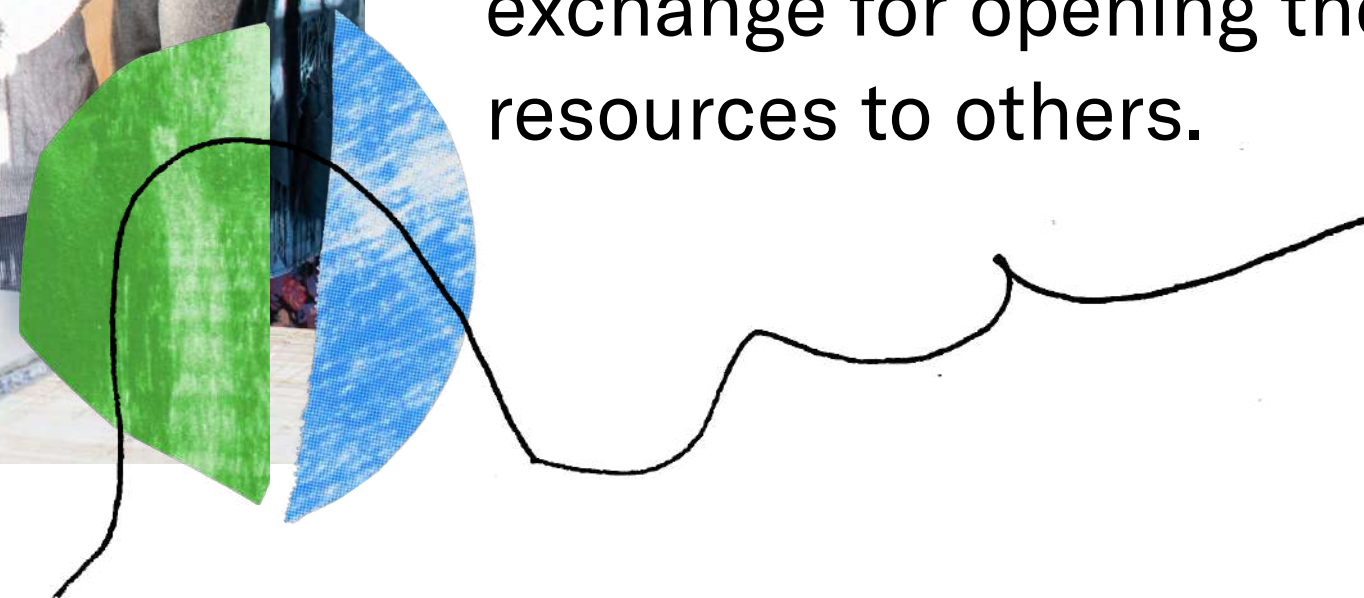
We host regular socials and events for our members, creating opportunities for people to come together, meet and get to know one another.

Bookshop and Reading Room

Our space holds two amazing resources to support learning, research and selling artworks. NewBridge Books provides a platform and resource for artist members to sell their own work and buy books, zines and objects. The Reading Room is an active and exciting library and learning space where members and the public can borrow books on a variety of thought-provoking subjects.



Wood workshop -
image credit: Colin Davison



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

We support the production and presentation of new artwork through an artist-led and varied programme of exhibitions, commissions, off-site projects and events. We encourage artists to make work on their own terms, and we develop our programme based around collaboration; responsive to our social, political, civic and environmental context; reflective of the diversity of contemporary artistic practice.

We prioritise commissioning new work by innovative and ambitious emerging and early-career artists at key points in their development, supporting them to test out new ideas and create new work that responds to the location, situation, and time from which it emerges.



*Habit Ability -
image credit: Matt Denham*

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

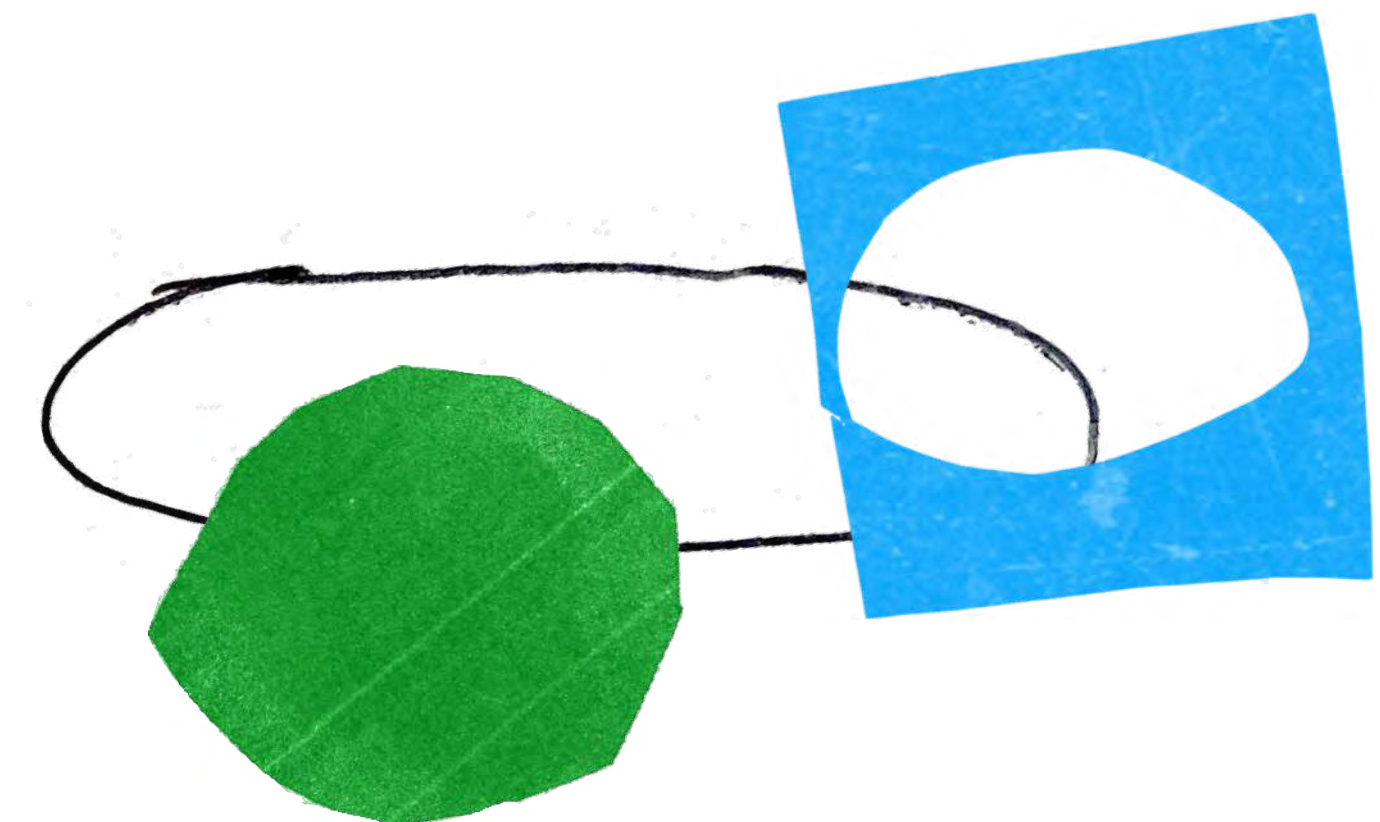
Supporting and presenting new art work

Alongside this, we also work with regional, national and international mid-career artists to enhance our support for emerging practices or explore critical themes and organisational development.

Our programme includes stand-alone projects and exhibitions, as well as exploring broader themes over long periods which inform both each other and the way we develop our public programme and organisation. At present two ongoing themes/projects are For Solidarity (2019 – ongoing) which has mapped and established a network of organisations, communities and individuals who are working toward social and climate justice, and The Home (2022 – ongoing) which responds to our recent move to the residential area of Shieldfield in Newcastle.



Eid al-fitr - image credit: Matt Denham



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

Exhibitions this year

Home-Rearing by Lady Kitt, Finn and Ada

Kitt and their two children will be working in our gallery and inviting NewBridge communities to join them in “Home-rearing” (an 18th century English phrase for a community building a barn or dwelling together). Together, we will collaboratively rear a giant household shrine to Kith (our friends, communities and collaborators), and a series of policies and (gentle) disruptions to support NewBridge’s ongoing development, embodying our values of care, community, inclusivity, accountability and solidarity.



*Home Rearing -
image credit: Matt Denham*

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

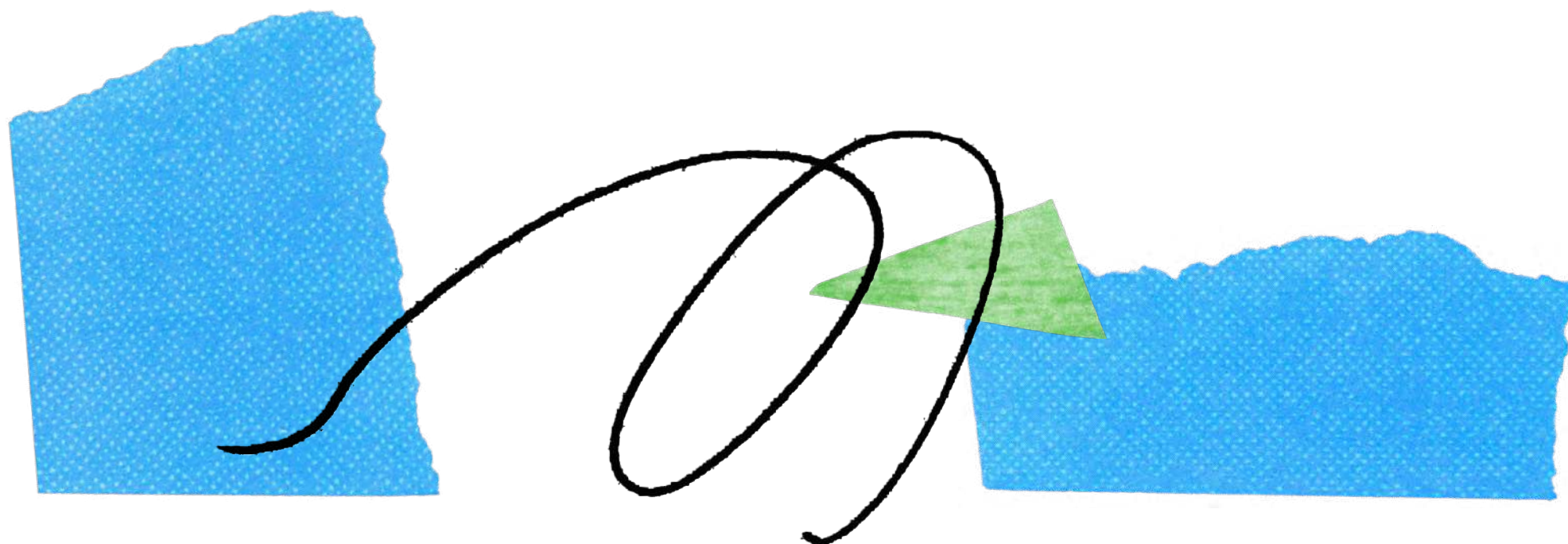
What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

Exhibitions this year

Home School

Home School is a new long-term project developed with NewBridge's Programme Committee giving a radical re-reading of the home. It considers our move to the neighbourhood of Shieldfield and the relationships we are building here as an arts and community space. This will include workshops and exhibitions developed for and in response to The NewBridge Project's new home.

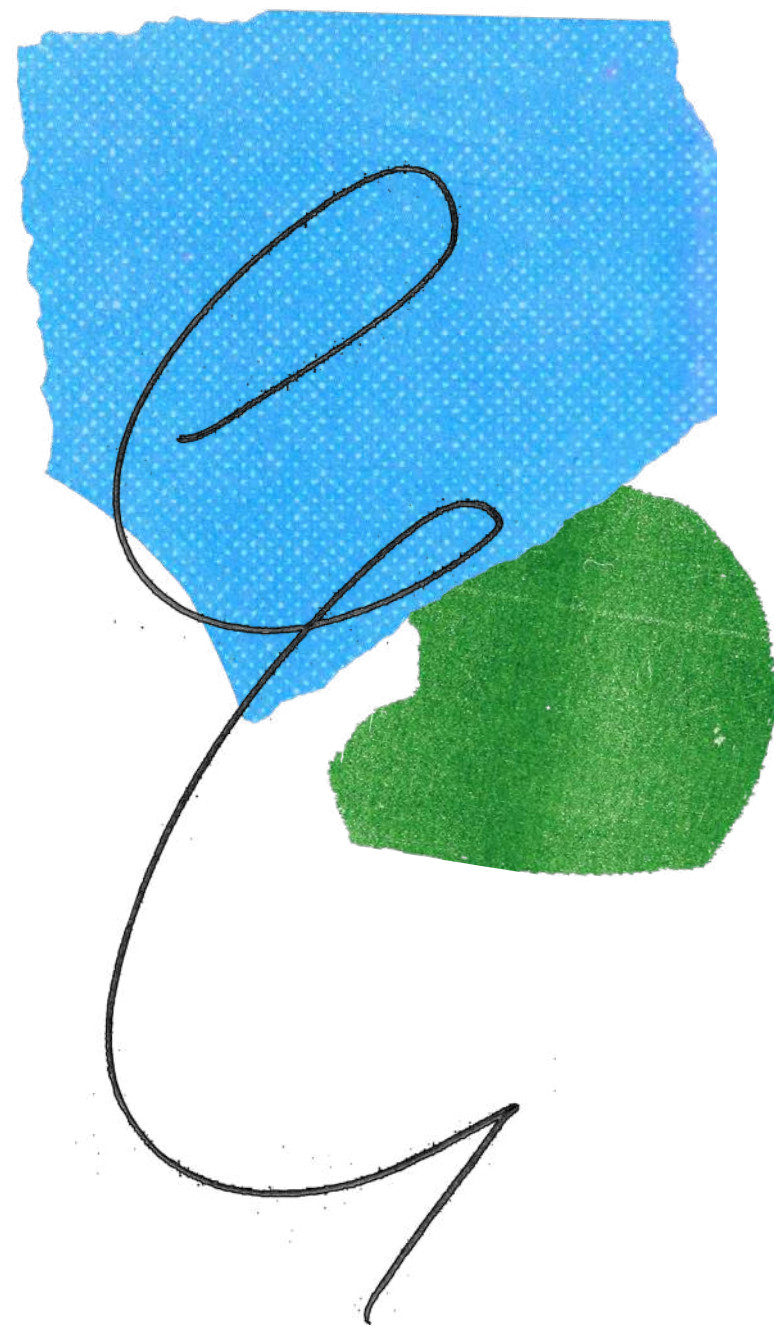


Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

Exhibitions this year



Rubber exploitation - Industrial Revolution and Indigenous Massacres: Violent Memories, Art and Activism

A collaboration with Newcastle University's Centre for Latin American and Caribbean Studies, this exhibition seeks to bring together films and art production that tackle the rubber exploitation in the Amazon.

Simon Says/Dadda: Beverley Bennett

An exhibition by Birmingham and London based artist Beverley Bennett comprising of a newly commissioned 3-channel installation. Simon Says/Dadda is a collaborative project exploring father/daughter relationships among Black and Asian women and non-binary individuals, highlighting the deep impact that structural inequalities have within wider

society. In partnership with Grand Union (Birmingham), Metal (Liverpool) and LUX (London).

Art, Ecology and Ukraine (Re) Grounding: Alexandra Krolikowska, Karolina Uskakovych, Mykhailo Glubokyi, Liudmyla Nychai

Developed in partnership with D6 Culture in Transit, this exhibition will present works developed by artists during a residency in partnership with IZOLYATSIA. It explores how the climate crisis spans social, political and environmental injustices that must be addressed to achieve a sustainable future.

Our Business Plan
2023-2024

What we will
do this year

Supporting and presenting
new art work

Shieldfield Projects

We embed co-production through our exhibitions and commissions programme, supporting artists to work in new ways with local residents and community groups, and to present and make work in public settings.



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

Shieldfield Projects

Shieldfield Nursery Mural Jenny Mc Namara

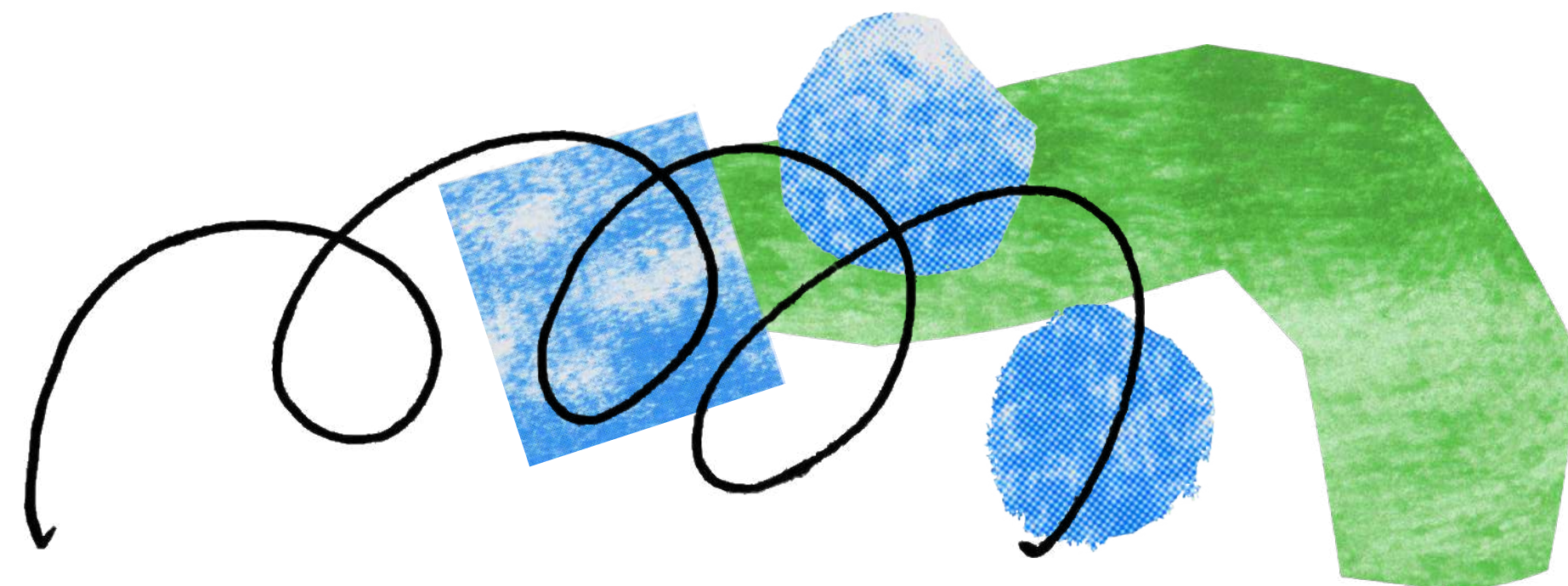
We are continuing our work with Shieldfield Castle Nursery in co-developing a mural for their garden. The staff and children are working with artist Jenny Mc Namara in a series of exploratory workshops which will look at shape finding, mindfulness and our local environment.

Community Cooks Residency: Kaltouma Hassaballah

We will build on our community meals programme through a series of rolling, 6-month long residencies where we will work with a different local cook or chef on a creative project or event, alongside a series of community meals, recipe sharing sessions and workshops.

A project with Shieldfield residents

We will work with Shieldfield residents living in Clarence House and Stoddart House on a year-long project, which explores the places and people who live in the flats and will grow the sense of community within the buildings and between NewBridge and residents. We will work with co-investigators on the development of the project and to select an artist.



Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

For Solidarity Projects

Since 2019 For Solidarity has mapped and established a network of organisations, communities and individuals who are working toward social and climate justice. The programme includes events and projects which provide space for meeting, for working and learning together, for sharing resources, and advocating for the amazing work being done in the North East.

In the next year it will include:



TOPSOIL

**Growing/
Gardening**

For Solidarity Map

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Supporting and presenting new art work

For Solidarity Projects

TOPSOIL

A new initiative to build a queer, collective resource through bringing together a diverse group of people to grow a garden and community. It will create space for people to learn about sustainability, queer ecology, natural dyes and how growing and gardening is a radical act of resistance.

Growing/Gardening

Bringing together the NewBridge Dye Garden and TOPSOIL, alongside Shieldfield Grows led by SAW and Dwellbeing, we will visit community gardening projects across the region, share new ways of working, and create an archive of learning from the project.

For Solidarity Map

We will continue to develop our digital map and directory that connects the dots between great organisations working toward social justice, and celebrates the work happening in the North East.



Home Rearing - image credit: Matt Denham

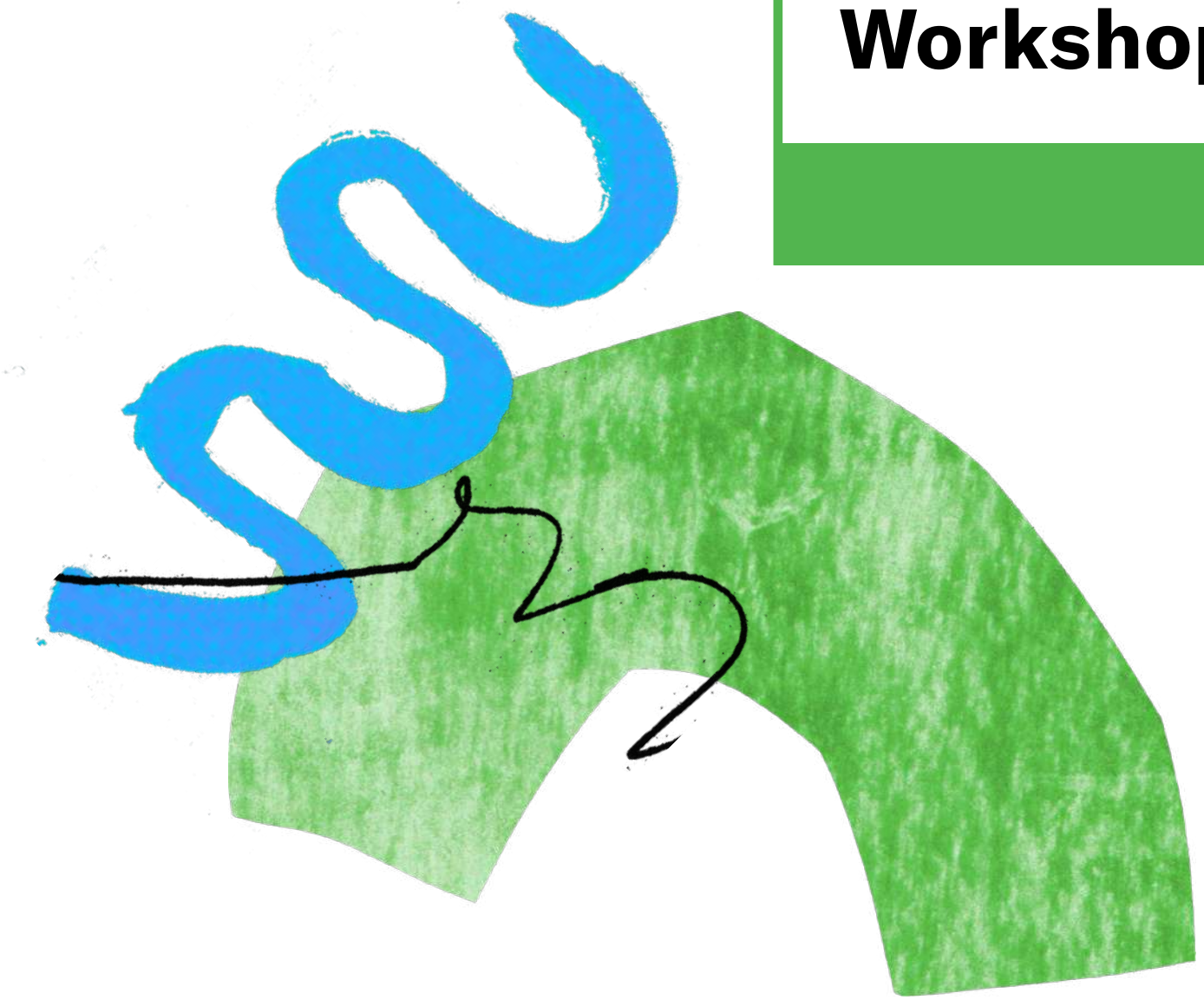
Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Creating a welcoming space

NewBridge seeks to be a welcoming space where artists, residents and local communities can come together to work, learn, socialise and support each other.

Following our recent move to the Shieldfield Centre, we have built a responsive programme from the ground up that ensures the building and its programme provide an important and exciting resource for the artistic and local community alike. A regular events programme includes workshops with artists, communal meals, socials and longer-term projects.



Key areas of our programme in 2023-24:

**Shieldfield
Youth
Programme**

**Reading
Room**

**Community
Workshops**

**Memory
Cafe**

**NewBridge
Books**

Socials

Meals

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Creating a welcoming space

Shieldfield Youth Programme

is an ongoing programme of activity developed by Dwellbeing and NewBridge in collaboration with young people living in Shieldfield. It creates space for young people to come together in the place where they live, build new friendships, and offers opportunities for them to develop their skills and talents and to explore new ways of thinking and doing things together.

This year we will also launch a new project – **Shieldfield Youth Voice** – a 10-month programme for young people ages 10+ to explore issues and themes that are important to them, so they can lead action and activity in their area.

The Reading Room is a space where people can read, learn, listen, and share ideas. It is a library stocked with thought provoking books, where reading groups and opportunities to meet authors are being established, providing resources and activities that hope to catalyse creativity, collaboration and conversation.

Memory Café is an ongoing project run in collaboration with The Forum Café for Shieldfield residents who are living with dementia and the people who support them.



Socials are regular opportunities which invite people to come together in our space and socialise. At present we host a weekly coffee morning on a Monday, and a weekly Saturday Social that is part of Newcastle City Council's Winter Wellbeing Hub scheme.

Community workshops are our member led facilities (darkroom, print, ceramics and woodwork) offering facilitated creative workshops as well as drop-ins.

We host regular **meals** in our space for studio members, residents and audiences. Our Shieldfield Cooks residency programme developed from this.

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Creating a welcoming space

NewBridge Books is the physical entry point to NewBridge's space and studios, providing space for welcome, conversation, and a place to meet. It hosts a programme of book launches, talks, poetry readings and reading circles centred around print and publishing, creating space for shared learning and exchange.

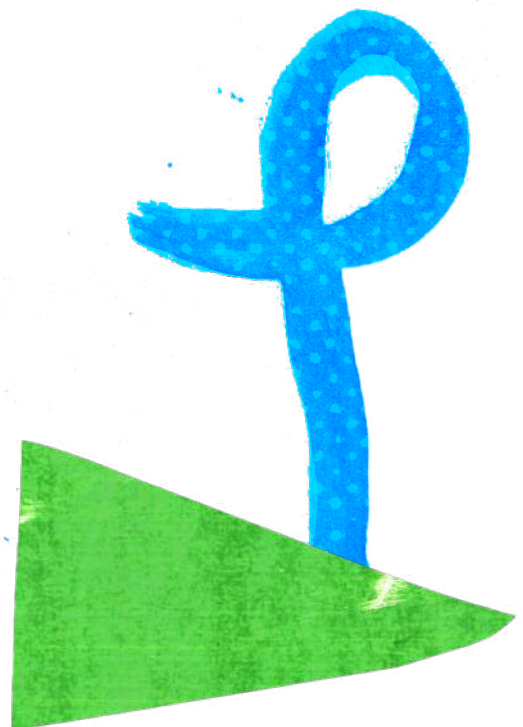
NewBridge Books offers diverse, original and hard-to-find books, magazines, zines and art writing from independent and radical publishers and artists who self-publish, alongside artworks made by local artists and communities.



NewBridge Project Launch Weekend - Photo Credit Matt-Denham

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

We seek to create a positive working and organisational culture across our organisation and for those that we work with. We strive to be a learning organisation that regularly reflects upon the way we work, and how we can develop this responsively, meaningfully and with integrity, and can make urgent and considered change when required. We want NewBridge to be a good place to work for our staff and volunteers, and for that positivity to be reflected in our building and the work that we programme.



What we will do this year

As well as a workplace culture that embeds this, one of our key aims for this year is to ensure we do a good job of communicating these to the public and ensuring that they are well understood by staff and trustees, and robust organisational procedures that support people pastorally and professionally so they can do their jobs well.

Our Board of Trustees steer the governance of NewBridge, ensuring it operates within its agreed aims, objectives and values. To ensure NewBridge remains artist-led, a minimum of two Trustees are always NewBridge members.

Creating a good organisational & working culture

We currently have a live, rolling open call and are keen to welcome applicants who bring greater diversity to our governance to better reflect the place and people we work with and for. Whilst we always offer expenses such as travel/childcare, we also recognise that it is impossible to remove financial/capacity barriers that some face to being an unpaid Trustee. To ensure the voices of those we collaborate with day-to-day are heard at governance level, in 2023-24 we will connect Trustees with groups, individuals and committees we work with, either through invitations to Board meetings, or Trustees attending their activities.



Staff team

We have a strong staff team who all bring their own skills, creativity, experiences and perspectives to the organisation. We create space for open and honest conversation, so that the whole team are able to support each other's work and are able to think critically and collectively about our organisation, programme and what we want to do better in the future.

To support our recent staff team growth, we have recently employed Limelite HR & Learning who will provide support with policies and guidance documents, as well as providing bespoke advice, guidance and support when needed.



Eid al-fitr - image credit: Matt Denham

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

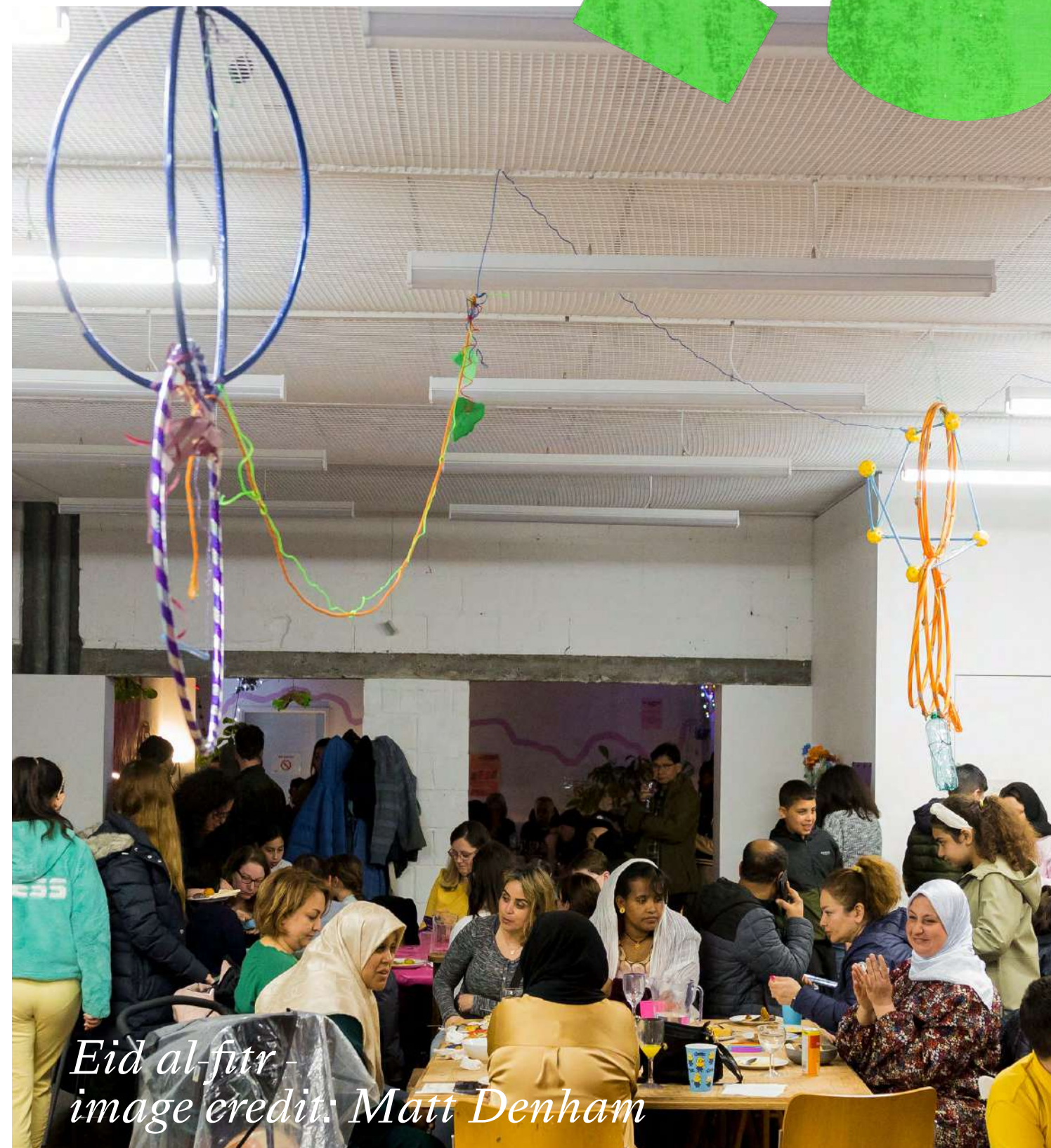
What we will do this year

Creating a good organisational & working culture

Projects

We aim to produce work that builds solidarity with the people around us, and is community-centred, experimental, collaborative and socially conscious at its heart. It is important to us that these values and explorations resonate through the whole organisation, and that we share our internal thinking publicly too. Therefore, through our public programme we have a commitment to centring discussion, bringing in and listening to different voices and learning together to inform our operations, governance, and culture as an artist-led space.

This year, the following projects feed into this:



GROUNDWORK

Lady Kitt: Home-Rearing

MOTHEROTHER x Practice Makes Practice

Our Business Plan 2023-2024

What we will do this year

Creating a good organisational & working culture

Lady Kitt, Fin and Ada: Home-Rearing

As part of this project, through a series of drop-in activities, bookable workshops (online and in person), informal conversations and (gentle) parties, NewBridge and Kitt invite staff, trustees, artists, studio holders, members, volunteers and people who live locally, to join them to collaboratively create a series of systems, processes and policies to support NewBridge's ongoing development as an organisation, which embody our values of care, community, inclusivity, accountability and solidarity.

This will include developing

- an Access Policy/Manifesto
- a refreshed Environmental Policy
- a Care and Solidarity Policy/'How we work with people' policy

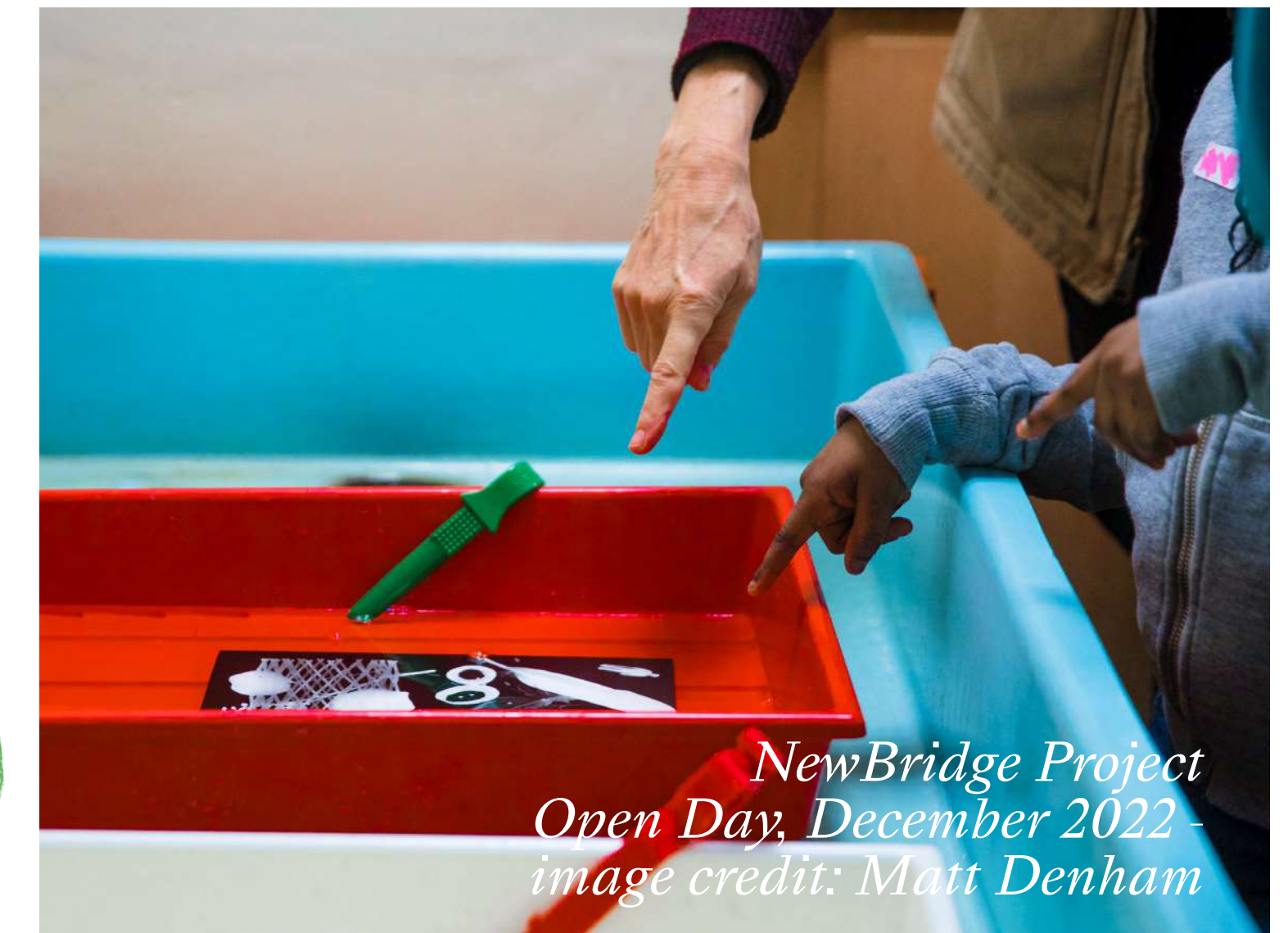
GROUNDWORK

Is a new, long-term co-learning project with Arts Catalyst (Sheffield), Primary (Nottingham) and The Showroom (London) which aims to explore how arts and cultural organisations can better resource and strengthen the communities and places that they work within.



MOTHEROTHER x Practice Makes Practice:

Through this project we will learn and this will support us to embed change for working with artists who are also caregivers within our own organisation, as well as advocating for wider change and accessibility across the sector.





The NewBridge Project

2023 - 2024

www.thenewbridgeproject.com



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



**Community
Foundation**
Newcastle Culture Investment Fund

Supported by

Newcastle
City Council

**NORTH
OF TYNE**
~~~~~  
**COMBINED  
AUTHORITY**