

Community Wellbeing

At The Rockfield Centre we take wellbeing to mean our physical and mental health, but we also look at things like happiness and confidence which can combat loneliness and isolation.

Despite working in a very restricted space, we offer many avenues for people to socialise, learn and express themselves, either directly through our own activities or through those of our partner organisations.

Each month various support groups make use of the Community Hut, run by North Argyll Carers' Centre, Carr Gomm and SIMBA among others.

Volunteering offers vital help to the development of the site and many of our activities in this first year of operation. However it also helps the individual involved to connect with others, learn new skills and bring fun and fulfilment in witnessing the impact they are having.

Social Impact

6 support groups

An anchor for community participation

A hub for new social networks



"Our group members identified The Rockfield Centre as the place to meet, as it is at the heart of their community and they have a sense of ownership and belonging at the Centre."
- Becs Barker, SDS Project Manager



Ionad Achadh na Creige
The Rockfield Centre

the heart of a creative community

Social Impact Report | May 2015 - Aug 2016

The Rockfield Centre aims to be a creative hub full of character. It is a place to come and work, share ideas, learn, chat, socialise, eat, drink, perform, think, exhibit and be inspired amongst other things! It is an inclusive place attractive to the whole community as well as to visitors through its historic character and charm, deep-rooted within the history of the town, and through the energy and buzz of the people who now use the Centre.

As a charity and social enterprise, creating a positive social impact is very important to us. Throughout the year we have gathered detail which demonstrates, in our short existence, the impact we are already having.

By talking to our users, gathering feedback at events and evaluating data we are able to demonstrate the difference The Rockfield Centre is bringing about in people's lives and the impact across our 4 themes:

- History & Heritage
- Arts & Culture
- Education & Enterprise
- Community Wellbeing

History & Heritage

This theme was explored through a small project funded by Heritage Lottery Fund, "Memories Matter", which took place shortly after the Trust took ownership of the site in 2015. The project offered new volunteer learning opportunities, social interaction and reminiscence events, as well as oral recording work. It culminated in an exhibition, A Postwar Childhood, which opened in November 2015.

This early engagement led to the establishment of an active research and archiving group run by volunteers. They have also embraced our entrepreneurial ethos by creating a built heritage map and guided walk for Oban. Sponsorship was secured to print the map and it is now being sold locally to raise further income.

Social Impact

- 16 new volunteers
- 12 public heritage events
- 2 new groups formed

The heritage group gives me the chance to give back something to the town I love and preserve its history and stories for the next generation. It also gives a focus for me to use all the material I've gathered over the years and turn it into something worthwhile and lasting.
- Mhairi Ross, heritage volunteer



Our Volunteers



Over **4500** volunteer hours have been clocked up as of August 2016.



Arts & Culture

Activity related to this theme was started by volunteers who ran arts workshops and enabled the Centre to host acclaimed Edinburgh theatre company Grid Iron and their production of *The Devil's Larder*. Working with the Argyll Youth Arts hub introduced us to young volunteers and interns who also supported this activity.

The success of these early events led us to apply for and secure funding from Crerar Hotels Trust to run an expanded pilot programme of arts activity. Since March 2015 The Rockfield Centre has run sell-out workshops and classes including fabric printing, life drawing, songwriting, pottery and creative writing. We have also hosted an art exhibition and several live music events, featuring both local artists and those from further afield.

In August 2016 The Rockfield Centre ran the Oban Festival of Architecture, hosting the Prospect North exhibition (Scotland's submission to the Venice Architecture Biennale) as well as two further exhibitions and a varied programme of fringe events.

Social Impact

- 23 new volunteers
- 17 public arts events
- 7 creative workshops

"It's been wonderful to have my work exhibited here alongside my grand-daughters'. I never thought I'd see one of my boats in an art exhibition. I've met such lovely people here; it's been a great experience."
- Donnie Currie, boat builder, 93



Education & Enterprise

The Centre has offered a range of opportunities to enable partnerships, networking and collaboration, to support the growing ambitions for the use of the site. With a great deal of voluntary support we were able to open the Community Hut in January 2016. This has allowed many new activities and events to take place, enabling voluntary organisations to expand their reach and private enterprises to expand their business.

There has also been a strong learning and training focus in much of the activity that has taken place in the Community Hut. As well as participatory arts workshops, we have also hosted training sessions on sound recording, genealogical research, devised theatre practice and many other topics.

Social Impact

- 13 collaborations with national organisations
- 41 new user groups in total
- 16 new training events

"Working with the Trust has been an absolute pleasure. I would like to acknowledge the hard work of the volunteers and staff in getting space ready and helping to create such an interesting series of events."
- Architecture & Design Scotland



Case Study | Oban Craft Collective

In March 2016 we hosted a gathering of 35 local creatives and those interested in the arts, called *Let's Make a Scene*. Among many other topics, participants discussed setting up a craft collective, enabling local makers to work together to market and sell their work, access support and grow their businesses.

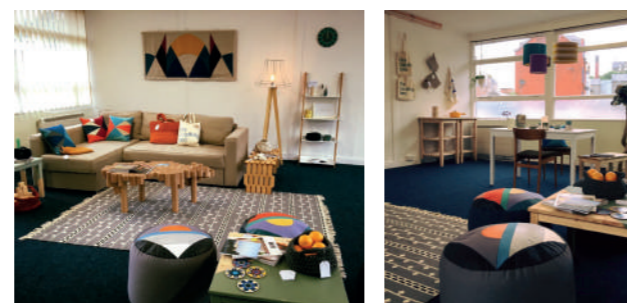
We enabled makers to make contact with a similar collective in Cowal and supported them to establish their own group. In August, the Oban Craft Collective launched its website and held its first exhibition and sale of work at The Rockfield Centre, featuring seven local artists and welcoming over 300 visitors over 3 days.

The group have since been part of Fasanta Festival of Tiles and are now working on a Christmas exhibition and plans to expand their membership in the new year with a call for new applicants to the group.

What the members say:

"It's been fantastic to work with like minded people to get support and develop my practice."

"Just the focus I needed to push me on to the next level."



Our Reach

Number of Trust members **360**

Number of people on our mailing list **383**

Number of Facebook likes on our main page **1425**

Number of people attending events that we've run **2700**

Number of people attending events run by our partners **4000**