

## Tales from the edge of town 2070



### Our aims

With this project, we wanted to:

- work with schools/families who are poorly served by the rich cultural assets of Cambridge City; this might be because of geographic, economic or cultural barriers as evidenced by Cambridge having the title *the UK's most unequal city*
- create together with young people so they were fully and authentically involved in making high quality art with a particular focus on place and the future, hence the title.
- invite the young people, school and teachers into the wider IWBE project and how they might connect across Europe to other schools and artists.

### How did this project fit into our overall audience development strategy?

- It raised awareness for NIE beyond the arts centre (Cambridge Junction) in the city.
- It involved making work in a non-theatre space on the edge of town rather than in the centre.
- It deepened our engagement with schools by co-creating a project together, not just inviting them to be an audience.
- It developed partners who will be interested in another project with NIE by building a local network of schools to work with in the future.

## **Who was involved?**

30 young people aged 9 – 10 years old from Cherry Hinton School. We chose the school because it has a larger percentage of young people from disadvantaged families.

15 young people aged 11-12 years old from Trumpington Community College. The school is in an area with a diverse population with social cohesion needs.

29 young people and their families took part in public workshops along with 15 young people from the Lego Club held at the arts centre.

## **What did we do?**

- Co-created work with schools and communities with little engagement with theatre
- Generated content through stories and ideas exploring the future through a series of creative workshops using animation, writing and drama.
- Inspired children and enabled their voices and creative work to be heard and shown in a professional platform.
- Several of their stories and many of their ideas and artwork were included in the show.
- Made an entertaining show for a new community with food, drink and time to come together.

This involved:

- 16 creative workshops with two schools led by artists, including one from Theater Mumpitz involving drama, animation, visual arts and sound.
- A day-long animation workshop at the community centre with a drama group
- Three public workshops with families creating collages of the future, building Lego, writing stories and making models of houses focusing what their bedroom would look like in the future.

## **Timescale**

May 2018: Planning with the schools and partner venue.

September 2018 – January 2019: workshops

February 2019: performances at the local community centre, seven for schools and two for the public.

## **Results**

- 50 children co-created the artistic work
- 215 school children and 86 people from local families saw the show
- 87% of people rated the show 5/5
- 86% of young people who did the workshops have never done a workshop like this before.



*I watched the children's faces during all stages of the performance and they were enthralled. Many of them could recognize their ideas in what they saw. It was greatly enjoyed, but more importantly, will have a long lasting effect, and even impact on their future direction, for many of them.*

*Fantastic!*

**Sally Haiselden - Cherry Hinton Primary School**

*“Being involved with Tales from the Edge of town has been a fantastic experience. NIE theatre company has provided students with a fantastic opportunity to work with industry professionals. They are fun and approachable group of individuals who have made the students feel comfortable enough to try new skills and experiences in turn helping to develop their confidence.*

*Students have learnt many new skills which the Drama curriculum itself can not explore. They have thrived on the knowledge of experts and are now reflecting what they have learnt into Drama lessons and passing their knowledge onto other students who did not have this experience.*

*As a teacher NIE have been great to work with. They are organised and come to each session fully prepared with an excellent variety of activities to engage the students. Students have shown a high level of dedication to the project because of the enthusiasm brought by the company and active involvement through the creative process.”*

**Natalie Evans - Trumpington Community College**



*"I thought being part of the show was a new opportunity to be in the shoes of like the producers, directors and actors who work in professional productions"*

**Project Participant**



*"In a climate where children and young people globally are actively showing awareness and consideration for the future en masse, it's timely that Tales from the Edge of Town has landed at Trumpington. This immersive theatrical experience, casting children's minds to ideas about their neighbourhood in 2070, gave young people a pivotal role in its creation. The immersive experience is a fantastic form for carrying the participants through the realisation of their stories. The production is rich with art forms: music, animation, acting, design. Particularly enjoyable is watching the rapport struck with the cast and physically travelling through the world they've created. More than simply having their ideas presented back to them, the young people are given a chance to be players in it. Presenting this in a local community venue (Clay Farm Community Centre), provides access to an extraordinary creative experience in the most usual setting, an act of 'levelling' that illustrates how easily culture can feature in children's lives."*

**Akua Obeng-Frimpong**

**Arts Development Officer, Community Services, Cambridge City Council**

*"I loved how much everyone was included throughout the show. I also loved how we moved to different places and parts of the stage"*

**Audience member**



Hello!

Thank you so much for teaching  
us amazing drama skills  
and now in the future  
I will be more  
confident now doing shows  
Thank you to everyone  
in the group



Dear N.I.E,

Thank you so much for everything  
you have taught me!

I have really enjoyed this  
experience working with you!

Before I came to drama club  
and worked with Mrs Evans and  
N.I.E, my confidence was very low  
but you have taught me how to  
speak confidently in front of people  
and share my ideas with others.  
Thank you so much!

From Taha \*

