1. What is community engagement?

It’s reciprocal, as an artist who makes work in the place that I’ve lived all my life, it is a kind of art-life or life-art.

It’s interconnected, it’s dynamic, it’s a collective experience of genuine, sincere interactions; a collaboration, sometimes a celebration or a solution focused endeavour.

It’s a relational and creative unravelling of everyday life.

2. How is community engagement done?

It’s important to start at grassroots level, being open to the place, to the people and to the environment.

Where... is the lay of the land... who... is the talk of town... what... is life doing?

We often bring people together in the same space, encouraging interaction, nudging them face to face, round a table, in a workshop, or even online.

It’s best framed around a sincere ethics of care for the people, place and environment.

3. How do we know when engagement is effective?

We can’t do it by counting the number of participants in a project... or the size of an audience at some glittering spectacular artwork Grand Finale.

But it is anticipated that something should be evident... long after the initial engagement process has faded into Art World documentation.

Some kind of legacy.... a will to power... an urge to act, to change current situations, impacting on the lives of the community... and in my case the artist... a shift in perception perhaps, a hopeful glance towards a positive future.