



# THE GLITCH IN THE GARDEN

**A LANDSCAPE FOR HOPE**

**BY NIKITA YASMIN SHAH  
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Hyphen Poetry

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## Pride in Place context

*Pride in Place is an opportunity to create transformative change and to strengthen the social fabric of neighbourhoods by investing in local assets, infrastructure, and deepening social connections that enable people to feel proud of their local space and community.*

In April 2026, Local Trust and This Day Foundation worked in partnership with the Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government (MHCLG) to host a regional event in Glasgow, convening around 80 key stakeholders of the Pride in Place programme. This engagement follows a series of five regional events conducted across England (Liverpool, Newcastle, Leeds, Birmingham and London) in February and March 2026. “*The Glitch in the Garden: A Manifesto for Collective Hope*” report provides a detailed overview of the creative exercise, methodology and analytical framework underpinning this work.

Hyphen Poetry was commissioned to run a drop-in creative activity to inspire participants to look beyond immediate hurdles and envision their desired futures for their communities in their local neighbourhood. We asked one key driving question:

***“What are your deepest hopes for the change Pride in Place could create for your local neighbourhood?”***

## Report roadmap

This summary note synthesises the formal responses of 18 attendees comprising poetry, drawings and writing, alongside informal discussions responding to the prompt. Our analysis follows the established methodology, using emergent coding to derive key themes while mapping responses against the pillars of hope and impact modifiers. The summary note is structured in two sections:

- **Six pillars of community hope:** We present the updated pillars.
- **What we heard:** Presenting the six key hopes based on what we heard from participants.
- **Comparative analysis & closing:** We highlight the key similarities and differences across findings in England and Scotland.

### Acknowledgments

Hyphen Poetry extends its deepest gratitude to everyone who contributed their time, energy, and insight to this process.

Thank you for reading *The Glitch in the Garden* and for every postcard filled. For speaking to us about your visions for change and your hopes for your neighbourhoods. We appreciate the trust you placed in us to hold your stories and experiences. As promised, all voices remain anonymous within this report to honour that trust.

We also thank the community organisers and venues who hosted the session in Glasgow. A special thank you to Farah Elahi for commissioning Hyphen Poetry to facilitate this creative inquiry, and to the Local Trust for their funding and continued support.

# 2. COMMUNITY HOPES

We have formulated six key pillars of community hope derived from participants responses. Below is a detailed outline of the updated pillars that now include 'Landscape & Stewardship', which emerged from the Scotland cohort. In addition, there is an overview of the icons used on the status bar on the following pages.

## THE SIX PILLARS OF COMMUNITY HOPE

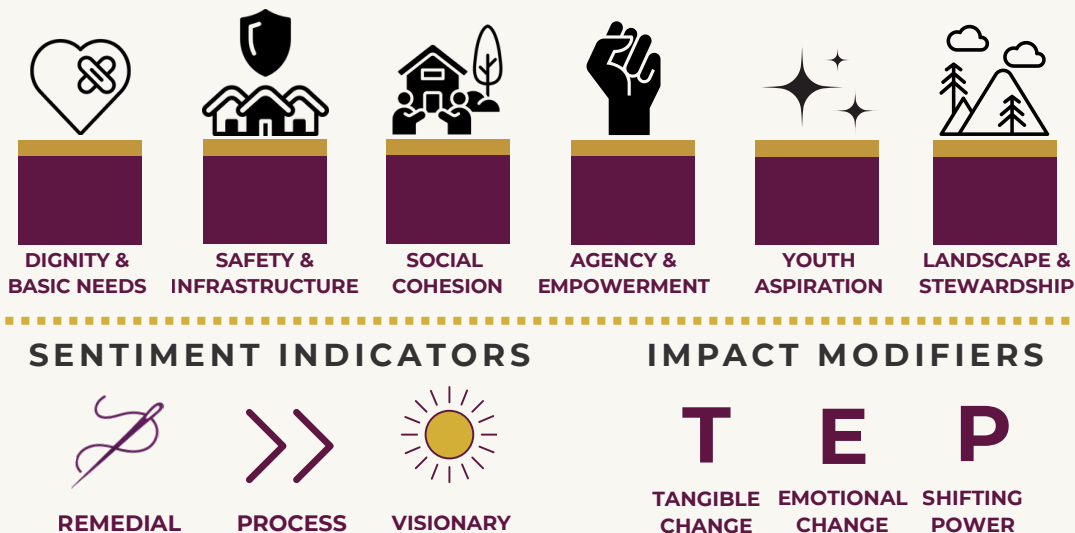


Figure 1. The six pillars of community hope and status bar key

### Pillar 1: Dignity & basic needs

Ensuring residents can live a dignified life by ensuring needs are met.

### Pillar 2: Safety & Infrastructure:

The physical realm, "third spaces," reduces environmental fear and ensures infrastructure is fit for purpose.

### Pillar 3: Social Cohesion:

Relational health, neighbourliness, the "it takes a village" mindset and vibrancy within communities. Understanding of cultural identity and heritage.

### Pillar 4: Agency & Empowerment:

Community-led design, engagement, decision-making and leadership. Trust in governance and demonstrable transformative change.

### Pillar 5: Youth & Aspiration:

Mentorship, educational opportunities, and the "next generation" safety net.

### Pillar 6: Landscapes & Stewardship

Community members are stewards of the land and have a community right to protect landscapes and nature.



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# THE HOPE FOR A VIBRANT SOCIAL CONNECTION

The most prominent hope focuses on bringing communities together with a sense of vibrancy. This vision seeks intentional and relational convenings that move toward a lived atmosphere of unity to foster a togetherness that brings positivity and joy, the emotional precursors to longer-term pride in place.



***“It will bring the communities together, help everyone understand the strength of what is already happening and build on this. That this approach will continue after PiP ends”***

***- Participant hope***

***“That it puts smiles on people's faces and brings positivity to the town”***

***- Participant hope***



Figure 2: Participant drawings of their visions and hopes

# THE HOPE FOR GENERATIVE INFRASTRUCTURE

This hope builds on the community’s need for infrastructure and provides a way to foster social cohesion through three specific prongs:

1. Economic and social infrastructure to reduce living costs and poverty, increase funding and create new jobs.
2. Geographic connectivity ensuring transport infrastructure (i.e., ferries) and digital infrastructure (i.e., broadband) are “fit for purpose”, treating connectivity as a basic need for rural and island equity and dignity.
3. Nurturing third spaces by repurposing physical assets such as old buildings or vacant community areas into clean, open, intergenerational and multi-faceted spaces where people can connect with nature, work, live, create and play for free. Third spaces should centre community-led engagement and activities.



***“In the city/town community space to meet (for free), chill out, grow plants and enjoy green spaces, work, live, play, create”***

Figure 3. Participants’ drawings of their vision of third spaces and repurposing infrastructure.



# THE HOPE FOR COLLECTIVE AUTHORSHIP

Participants expressed a hope for transformative community-led holistic change, shifting power to communities and ensuring they become confident community leaders. This vision moves communities from consultation toward local authorship, where they are heard and can see their ideas to improve their local spaces actualised. By challenging external public perceptions of what a ‘good town looks like’ local communities can reclaim and redefine their narrative of place. This process of leading change strengthens the collective bond, fostering a deep sense of local pride and a renewed appreciation for the Gaelic language and culture. Ultimately, the hope is that pride becomes a tangible result of shifting power and the community’s agency in shaping the neighbourhoods they bide.



Figure 4: Participant drawings of their visions and hopes of creating a neighbourhood residents are proud of.

**What's Pride?**  
*It's that feeling inside  
Too strong to hide  
So we share far and wide  
For this place that we bide  
That's pride!"*

- Poem by participant



# THE HOPE FOR LANDSCAPE STEWARDSHIP

There was a core focus on landscapes, green spaces and ensuring these are preserved and well-looked after. Participants' hopes indicated stewardship as a community right to protect their environment. One participant shared that renewable energy should be community-owned. Whilst another drew a picture explicitly crossing out wind turbines to keep the “beautiful countryside” free from turbines, suggesting they should be “put out at sea”. There is a tension between the development of green energy and the preservation of landscapes linked to beauty, awe, connection and access to nature, which community members want to protect and see as a route to improving community wellbeing and pride in place.

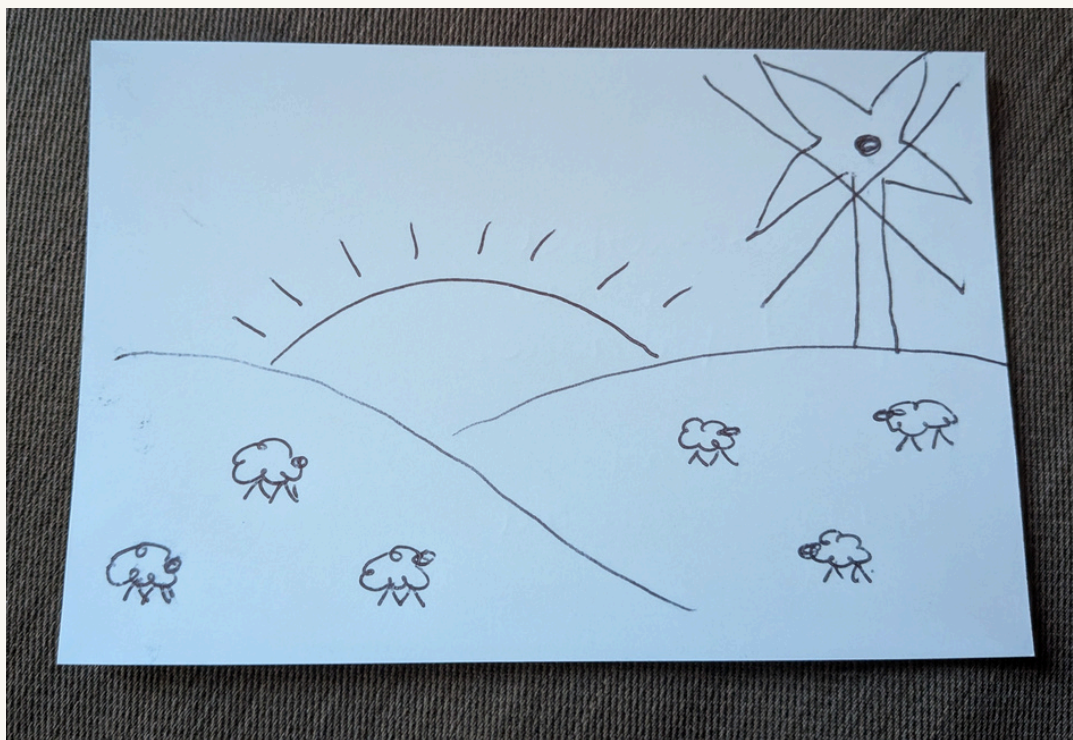


Figure 5: Participant drawings of their visions and hope to protect landscapes.

# 3. CLOSING

## **Contextualising voice**

While the England report reflects the breadth of 175 participants across 5 regions, voices from 18 participants in Glasgow offer a ‘regional signal’. The hopes in Scotland reflect the specific challenges of regional and island life.

## **From social cohesion to vibrant connection**

In both datasets, there is a clear desire for “The Village”. However, in England, the data is focused on safety and healing social wounds, whereas in Scotland, the findings emphasise vibrancy, indicating the hope is not just for communities to function safely but to thrive joyfully, moving from restoration to healing.

## **From dignity as a driver to generative infrastructure.**

In England, dignity was an internal primary driver that underpinned a key hope. Whereas, in Scotland, dignity felt more implicit in the hopes and connectivity felt more prevalent. The focus on infrastructure demonstrated a clear path to facilitating vibrant connections within the community.

## **From agency to collective authorship**

There is a shared vision for power to be shifted to local communities. Across England, agency was a prominent theme, whereas in Scotland, they sought authorship, providing a holistic merging of power and identity. By leading change themselves, there is a desire to redefine narratives and perceptions of their neighbourhood. Whilst also appreciating and preserving Gaelic culture and heritage.

## **From green spaces to landscape stewardship**

In England, there was a focus on green spaces as an urban amenity for health. In Scotland, protecting landscapes is seen as a community right, introducing the concept and role of stewardship. There is also a nuanced tension around wanting to have community ownership of renewable energy, protecting the beauty of countryside landscapes and moving turbines to the coast. Making the connection between landscapes, beauty, sustainability and wellbeing.

## **Youth aspirations**

In England, Youth aspirations were explicitly discussed, whereas in Scotland, this was implied in drawings and broad definitions of community and visions for the change they wanted to see, but not explicitly named.

## **Closing**

Our analysis has demonstrated that while regions can share core pillars of hope, they are fundamentally shaped by local context and terrain. Across all the regions, the core hopes and visions for the future remain consistent: a strong desire for social cohesion, community-led power and the reclamation of third spaces which lead to dignified lives and vibrant communities.

There are six key pillars of hope:

1. Dignity & Basic Needs
2. Agency & Empowerment
3. Youth Aspiration
4. Social Cohesion
5. Safety & Infrastructure
6. Landscape & Stewardship.

# Meet the team

## About Hyphen Poetry

Hyphen Poetry seeks to decolonise the mind and body through creative practices, including spoken word. Operating at the intersection of research, evaluation, and creative practice, we work across issues of social justice and equity. Our work is underpinned by principles of anti-oppression, liberation, and the centring of joy, somatics, and healing. We specialise in making complex conversations simple and meaningful, bridging the gap between artistic practice and technical rigour. We prove that imagination, play, and lived experience are core tools for transformational systemic change and a culture of possibility.

### Our core services

- Creative research & evaluation: Utilising poetic inquiry and qualitative methods to translate lived experience into rigorous strategic reports. Evaluating programmes seeking to create systemic change and working on youth engagement.
- Consulting & strategy: Supporting clients with EDI and decolonial audits, long-term strategies, and frameworks that shift power.
- Facilitation & workshops: Designing programmes and courses to promote rest and wellbeing, identity, youth and community engagement and visioning.
- Creative practice & performance: Using creative practices to disseminate learning to a wide array of audiences. Performing a collection of poetry at events, workshops and conferences.

## Nikita Yasmin Shah



Nikita is a decolonial practitioner, poet, researcher, and the Founder of Hyphen Poetry. She operates at the hyphen –the vital space where technical rigour meets the artistic soul. With over 13 years of experience across the social justice, climate, migration, and international development sectors, she has cultivated a creative decolonial feminist lens to tackle complex systemic challenges. Her work is rooted in the belief that imagination is a prerequisite for liberation and that rest is a radical act of resistance.

As the lead for this project, Nikita authored the methodology and designed the creative concept and activities for this inquiry. She also designed the final report, utilising Poetic Inquiry to translate lived experience into strategic insights.

## Natalia Uribe



Natalia is a Chicana Migrant based in Glasgow, Scotland. She is the Co-Founder of the Melanin Speaking Podcast. She Co-Produces Our Right Stories and Lawmanity Podcast. Her expertise is in facilitation, audio engineering, podcast co-production, and operational support. Her work is primarily centred around supporting human rights organisations and grassroots groups across Scotland.

Natalia facilitated the creative drop-in activity in Glasgow and supported analysis for this inquiry.

**Thank you for reading.**

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