Artful Migration

Conference Evaluation & Future Recommendations

"Science is giving us the numbers. Art is giving us the warning call."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders









Prepared on behalf of Moving Souls Dance and Upland by Place Innovation Ltd. With thanks to the guests, partners, artists, keynote speakers, and hosts for sharing their invaluable insights and feedback through interviews and surveys.

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Contents

INTRODUCTION	4
FINDINGS & DISCUSSION	8
CONFERENCE BENEFIT TO INDIVIDUALS	8
BENEFIT OF THE CONFERENCE AS PART OF THE ARTFUL MIGRATION PROGRAMME	12
ATTENDANCE AND ENGAGEMENT	16
CONTINUING ENGAGEMENT THROUGH THE EXISTING OUTPUTS OF ARTFUL MIGRATION	21
SCALING AND DEVELOPING ARTFUL MIGRATION	25
APPENDIX 1	34



John Wallace, Scene: Here, Threave Nature Reserve. Photo by Colin Tennant

Introduction

Background

Artful Migration was set up to honour the legacy of Virginia Wollaston's uncle George Clark and his brother John Clark, a keen artist who lived for many years in Gatehouse of Fleet. Virginia, co-founder of Moving Souls Dance with Nicholas Paton Philip, wanted to enable artists to create work inspired by the unique environment and migratory birds associated with the region and to understand their adaptions to the challenges of climate change. This gift and legacy, co-created with Upland, the leading visual arts agency in Dumfries and Galloway is in memory of both uncles.

Artful Migration adopts an interdisciplinary approach by bringing artists and scientists together with partner organisations who manage the land habitats, which support the migratory birds in Dumfries and Galloway. It centres around an artist residency programme, developed by Moving Souls Dance in partnership with Upland, offering artists a unique insight into the migratory birds of Dumfries & Galloway through partnership working with local nature reserves and land owners.

The work began with a pilot residency in 2017-2018, followed by further residencies during 2022 and 2023. This evaluation focuses on the Artful Migration Conference – a one day event in October 2023 designed to coincide with the end of a series of residencies and associated opening of the Much Ado About Nightjars art exhibition.



Much Ado About Nightjars exhibition flyer, 2023

Evaluator Brief

To prepare and implement an approach to evaluate the Artful Migration Conference and associated evening art exhibition launch on Friday 20th October 2023.

Purpose of evaluation

This evaluation forms part of the commitment of Artful Migration partners to continue this interdisciplinary programme, understanding where the conference sits in those plans and its value going forward. This evaluation report will identify opportunities for future funding and partnership.

Purpose of conference

From the conference marketing material:

REVEAL the achievements and challenges of three innovative artist residency programmes developed by Upland and Moving Souls Dance, hosted in local areas of wildlife importance. We will hear the artists' views about the opportunities to make and exhibit work, and their engagement with local people, on the shared theme of migratory birds and their habitats.

REFLECT on how the artists have responded to the challenges facing these birds, including shifting weather patterns and changing management of habitats.

LISTEN to keynote speakers from conservation and ecological art perspectives illuminating further the contexts and approaches involved in this work, encompassing artistic practice, conservation, citizen engagement, sustainable land management and the manner in which these approaches overlap.

CONSIDER the implications of Artful Migration for global agendas on the conservation of migratory species and the complex mix of values and contexts at stake.

CELEBRATE the partnerships and collaborations stimulated by Artful Migration and discuss where these might lead in future!

Evaluation Approach and Response Rate

The conference was independently evaluated by Gina McCabe of Place Innovation Ltd. The evaluation was carried out through:

1. A guest survey (Appendix 1), co-designed with Moving Souls Dance, and distributed to in-person and online guests at the conference and opening exhibition.

27 completed surveys were received of a possible 40 (12 online and 28 in person guests were invited to complete the survey).

Response rate: 67%

- 2. In-person semi-structured interviews held on the day of the conference with artists, and keynote speakers. These one-to-one conversations were recorded for later review and analysis. The interviews were guided by the following questions and focus areas:
 - a. How beneficial was the conference for individuals?
 - b. How beneficial was the conference as part of the Artful Migration programme?
 - c. Reflections on engagement and participation in the conference.
 - d. How can the Artful Migration outputs continue to engage with the issues of land management / climate change for the local habitat of migratory birds?
 - e. What are the opportunities for further partnerships and funding to enable the wider Artful Migration programme to scale and continue?

Interviews were captured from 3 artists in residence and 2 keynote speakers.

Response rate: 100%

3. Follow up email questions (as in step 2. above) with project partners.

Written responses were received from 7 of a possible 10 partners.

Response rate: 70%

Conference Day Friday 20th October 2023

Artful Migration Conference 9.30-5pm The Crichton, Dumfries

Total Attendees: 59 (inc. 12 online)

Much Ado About Nightjars Exhibition Launch,
5.30-7.30pm
Gracefield Arts Centre, Dumfries

Attendees: circa 50

Findings & Discussion

Findings and discussion are structured around the research questions set out on page 6, and further grouped by themes. Interview and survey responses are interwoven. Raw data for survey responses is include in Appendix 1.

Conference benefit to individuals

The conference was successful in:

- ♦ creating new cross sector connections.
- ◊ raising the profile of the work of the artists.
- ♦ informing the future work of individuals and organisations.
- ♦ creating an enjoyable environment.

Cross sector connections

The space for new connections was valued and acknowledged across all partners, artists and speakers who were interviewed.

"The event helped us to promote the programme in a different way and potentially reach new audiences / partners. The conference acted as a way to highlight the work done and start a dialogue with new potential partners as well as deepen links with existing partners."

Amy Marletta, Event Co-Curator, Upland

"It's really valuable. It's an interesting platform. It was good to bring in some partners from far and wide as well, like the British Trust for Ornithology turning up, who are late partners to our whole residency. I think that's been amazing, and I think those relationships that have been forged there and the fact that they've come up here [to the exhibition], I think may well evolve over time, and I will stay in touch with them."

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

"I've got a project coming up where I'd like to really grow a couple of the artistic elements using audio and stories. I kind of retell people's stories, but actually using their voices, I think could be really powerful and specifically looking at a UK context. So I have heard lots of people this morning that have given me some input into different ways that you could do that, or potential collaborators."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

For some guests the opportunity to be in the same space that bridged multiple disciplines and specialisms was unique and valued.

"The benefit of the conference? Bringing people together for me certainly is very useful because it's not a conversation I have in my day to day life."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

"I think the conference provided an essential bridge to link the research and understanding gained, to the exhibition material. This is key to providing all stakeholders with the context about the species and systems, highlighting the wider importance and interdependence, rather than just focussing on individual elements."

Dr Greg Conway, British Trust for Ornithology, Artful Migration Partner

"Accessible and highly intelligent knowledge and energetic content and delivery – such specialisms in one space!"

Guest survey response

Raising the profile of the artists outputs

These cross sector connections, and the pairing of the conference with an exhibition opening, were also seen as a catalyst for people attending the exhibition.

"The conference has sort of provided that additional focal point for some of those people to gather. And I don't think you would have had the kind of partners here [refers to the exhibition], and at this event if you hadn't had the conference as well."

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

Survey responses showed that at least 8 people who attended the conference went on to the attend the evening exhibition. 10 respondents attended the conference only but it is not clear if they had previously seen any of the exhibition work.

Learnings and opportunities to inform future work came from conversations with others and from personal reflections. The interdisciplinary nature of the conference brought value for guests whose work focuses them in a specific area but also recognition that their contribution and experience hold value to others.

"I feel like I could learn a lot from being able to speak to different people who specifically target the use of art to move people into conservation. To try and improve the way that I do it, but also share some of my experiences because that's one thing I guess that I have got a lot of that I can bring."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

Informing future work

It was also clear that the Artful Migration programme, and the conference specifically, had created important conditions for self-reflection that will inform, strengthen, or in some cases transform, future work. Sacha Dench reflected:

"It's been useful to get response from people [today], to know that I'm not telling the same story. There are lots of people saying "I'd never thought about it in that way". So the fact that we are bringing potentially something new gives you ideas of how you could expand in the future".

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

"Having that kind of impetus and push to think about what has happened in my own practice, what do the events of my residency mean now? Is what I thought then still relevant? How have things changed? To that extent I think a conference at this point in time is really useful for me personally. And I would welcome another opportunity in a few years."

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

And finally, the entire residency programme, and the conference and exhibition, have come together to significantly inform the direction of travel for one artist in residence.

"I'm not sure I'm a photographer or an artist now. I think I'm an environmentalist that uses visual media to express what I'm trying to say. And so I think if the residency delivered something for me, it's actually coming to terms with that. And it's reintroduced me back to my geography and anthropology sort of background. And so that's been a really significant outcome from this that will feed into everything that I do because I now really have honed through this project what I want to be working on."

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

Enjoyment and Inspiration

All those who responded to the survey stated that they had enjoyed the conference day, and this was a general theme across all evaluation feedback. There was a buzz and enthusiasm in the conference and at the evening exhibition and that comes through in a wide range of comments shared.

"Great work, keep it up. Thank you!"

"A vital, inspiring, and positive project."

"Inspiring to have such specialists in one space and with real vision from experience and knowledge and action."

"It represents such an exciting axis for exchanging knowledge, experience and mobilising resources to support the conservation of vulnerable species."

"A wonderful, insightful and accessible event discussing issues that are important to us all."

"Beautiful hope.... We do care."



Much Ado About Nightjars. Work and photo by Leeming + Paterson

Benefit of the conference as part of the Artful Migration programme

The conference has clear value as part of the Artful Migration programme across all those interviewed. It was viewed as:

- ♦ an important stepping stone for the work.
- ♦ a space for sharing approaches and practices for future success.
- ♦ a showcase for the work helping to situate it in the bigger picture of migratory bird pathways, climate change, and conservation.

A stepping stone

"The conference was not about communicating messages to audiences but taking a step back to really focus on purpose and what we are trying to achieve through these residencies. It was a means of sharing learnings from the residency that need to be fed into future work. A good way to get influential people / the right sorts of people in the room to make them aware that this isn't the end and that there is a next step."

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

"I think the conference has been a good thing, to gather it together and go, okay, let's not lose what we've done here. Let's not put all of this on a shelf or in a cupboard. Where are we going from here and who should be involved?"

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

"It's about creating environments and it must be passionate people within that environment and it takes off. Whereas if people think they're coming along for the day and going back to the day job, there's no point. I don't think that was today. I think everybody has taken seeds and it's who then coordinates the next step."

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

"A conference is the mechanisms for this research to be shared and evaluated and valued by scientists, landowners, academics, policy makers etc – to allow all partners to listen, see where changes might need to be made and to implement them."

Virginia Wollaston, Co-Curator, Moving Souls Dance

"It feels to me like it's doing what it should be doing, which is kind of opening something up for debate and for a larger number of people to come around it and kind of go: Where? Now what? What's interesting? And so on.

So it's opening it up in exactly the way that I would. And it doesn't feel like we're being sold something, and it does feel very healthily multivocal."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

Approaches and Practices

Conversations around the value of the conference as part of Artful Migration provided valuable insights into approach and practice in the field of conservation and art. While these insights speak more directly to the project as a whole rather than the conference specifically, the conference and associated evaluation has allowed them to be captured here.

There is a need to recognise the power balances held when considering projects that have in part an aim to change behaviour of people for the benefit of nature. Sacha Dench and John Wallace provided examples of what this means in practice in their work with communities, both acknowledging that this understanding can be game changing in the overall success of the work.

"When you're speaking to people, finding a way where they can become the hero of the story rather than a villain. That's the key thing that I found that unlocked so many things. Realising it really has to not be about me. It really has to be about the stories, developing a shared mission with that other person."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

John Wallace reflected on conversations with local farmers while developing his *Scene*: Here work, noting how his own assumptions and prejudices influenced conversations. His awareness of this marked turning points in his thinking that underpin how he now works.

"I'd asked some question about the bogs and one thing and another, and he says "Well, the sphagnum is really important in the spring of the year, because that's basically all that the sheep have to eat." And I was just like, oh, right, so this guy is actually invested in the health of what's on the top of his bogs, because if it's overgrazed and there's none by the end of the summer, sheep starve to death. So it's just my own prejudice and what you think you know. You go through a process of keeping, not foregrounding, what you know."

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

Sacha Dench concludes with a wish for the future of this kind of interdisciplinary work that "reaches out to more and more people that are communicating about all

these issues and introduces alternative ways other than the shock and the dread narrative, alternative ways and the power of extreme empathy and just kind of listening to people, understanding somebody else's context."

Further conversations around the role of the conference led to discussion around the traditionally separate and disconnected nature of science, conservation and art – particularly in relation to education, and a call for working practices to move to a more united approach.

"In the panel discussion I was thinking there's a fundamental cultural thing that needs to be addressed here as well as what do we do and how do we do it. [...] stop separating everything. Stop saying, science is over here, maths is over here, and arts is something you do. Bring them all in together a little bit, let them exist in the same space so that we don't naturally separate them."

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

It is clear however that this is not a straightforward change, and that there are potentially entrenched and traditional ways of thinking and working that need to be considered before progress in this direction can be made. Sacha Dench, continuing with her reflections on positioning the community as the hero rather than the villain, shares:

"In fact, I never won the battle with the researchers. I wanted to go out there with all the communities saying "we don't know why all the swans are disappearing. We know some of the reasons, but there's lots of things that we are missing." The scientists were uncomfortable with saying there are things we don't know because some of them have been paid for 30 years to work on these issues. Like, we can't admit that we don't know everything."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

The bigger picture

And finally in relation to the value of the conference as part of the Artful Migration work, it is clear that it provided an important showcase for some partners and served to position the work in the bigger picture of conservation and art.

"I feel it was beneficial for the RSPB to be seen to be involved in the programme and to help shape the overall direction, albeit in a small way."

Andrew Bielinski, RSPB Scotland, Artful Migration Partner

"An outcome that was revealed to me was that Artful Migration as a programme could be taken seriously with evidence from what had been done to date, with the ability of the Much Ado About Nightjars exhibition and the quality of speakers who provided the wider context from Conservation, Art and Science into which we could fit."

Virginia Wollaston, Co-Curator, Moving Souls Dance

"It helped highlight its place in the region and also to think about how it sits alongside other projects or initiatives with similar themes."

Amy Marletta, Event Co-Curator, Upland

"Having a tangible milestone event like this, with lots of in-person dialogue, has been crucial to solidifying all the partnership collaborations involved, and making visible the different perspectives of those who have a stake in it. To the wider audience I think it helped to demonstrate the seriousness of the programme's intent and the significance of the work accomplished."

Dave Pritchard, Specialist Artful Migration Consultant, Conference Chair

The keynote speakers and presentations from artists were a universally valued and important part of the day. The high quality presentations served to brilliantly illustrate the coming together of art and conservation to understand how climate change affects migration. Furthermore the national and international importance of the keynote speakers brought to life the place that the Artful Migration work has on the climate change stage, and framed it as an important part of the climate change debate in relation to engaging audiences to make a difference. Guests completing the survey were asked to share one main highlight from the conference with most citing the keynote speakers and/or artists presentations as a highlight.

"Fantastic to hear a variety of options from across a wide range of people and organisations. Sacha was brilliant in particular."

"Morning talks were superb, especially Chris Fremantle's contribution – clear and challenging thinking."

"Keynote presentations were excellent – super interesting and well presented, great diversity of expertise too."

"Sacha's high speed descriptive of an Osprey journey from Scotland to Africa. This should be made into a film!"

"The amazing wise insights from the speaker from Chris Fremantle."



Much Ado About Nightjars. Work and photo by Leeming + Paterson

Attendance and Engagement

Attendees at the conference spanned the art, science, land management, and conservation sectors. While the attendee list was dominated by those with an existing involvement in the Artful Migration work, there were a notable number of new faces – including artists who had previously applied for Artful Migration residencies (but not been selected), and local land management, conservation and higher education bodies interested in learning more about the work and exploring potential partnership opportunities.

The survey allowed people to select one or more options that best defined how they would describe their role at the conference and or the evening exhibition. The responses were:

Category	Number
A member of the public	8
Part of an education/school group	1
A volunteer for an organisation with an interest in this work	5
An interested artist	9
An employee of an organisation with an interest in this work	10
Something else	5

Responses for 'Something Else' included a young conservationist, an interested scientist, a poet/writer with an interest in contributing to the work, a local person with an interest in bird migration and writing, and a landowner managing their land for wildlife.

The surveys showed a gender split of 48% female and 52% male. The age breakdown was under 18's (0%), 18-26 years (7%), 26+ years (40%), and 65+ (20%). The lack of young people was noted in some survey responses.

"We must find a way of bringing younger people to these kinds of events. The current age distribution is worrying."

"I would suggest there is more outreach and advertising towards young people and students e.g. Uni students."

Guest survey responses

Interviews returned mixed responses about the balance of guests in attendance at the conference and drew out some specific suggestions for who was missing. These included Environmental Non-Governmental Organisations (ENGOs), local politicians and business representatives, Scotland's Rural University College (who are educating the current and next generation of people who will be responsible for the land), and more ecologists to balance the arts audience with people who are working on the ground.

However, the overarching feedback was that the conference brought the right balance of people and specialisms together at this point in the life of Artful Migration.

"So this is great because it's thoroughly done, carefully done. The partnerships are clearly really good. The number of conservation professionals here is very good, is a clear indicator that there's been really effective engagement. It's not been superficial."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

Sacha Dench reflected on the successes of her community engagement work, and how important it is for the focus to be 'on the community and their perspectives and experience' rather than being foregrounded with every detail of the science and methodology behind her work. For her a conference environment can have a role to allow essential discussions to take place, that don't necessarily have a place in a community engagement context.

"So I think there is a role for kind of behind the scenes conversations where you can really pull apart how you think people respond to things."

Sacha Dench, Conservation Without Borders, Keynote Speaker

"You would never have got [the same conference outcomes] out of educational engagement, out of community stuff, because that's a whole different thing - communicating messages to audiences. Whereas this was about purpose. What are we trying to achieve? We've gone a long way here, but where are we heading? And asking that question today was the most important thing."

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

While marketing materials suggested aspirations for more guests from the local community, and more young people specifically, this would require a more participatory approach to conference design and an intentional focus on inclusivity and accessibility of the content. The Artists, perhaps because of the community based nature of their residencies, shared reflections on the relationship between a more diverse audience and the conference.

"I think it would be different if you were targeting local people for the conference. But if you're not targeting local people, then we're speaking in the same bubble. And so I think as long as you're aware of that and you say how or when you do that at another time."

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

Being aware of and intentionally creating space for different perspectives to inform the work and avoiding 'speaking in the same bubble' is further illustrated by reflections from John Wallace.

"The role of the arts as a meeting place is something that needs to be pushed a bit more and explored a bit more. It's very easy to end up talking to people who've already switched on environmentally, or think they've switched on and have a specific set of experiences and viewpoints. One of the things that art can do is incorporate the contradictory, the opposed, and bring them into a single piece or an area or even just a room in order that some kind of commonality – in this case the land – can be found."

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

Intentionally designing community engagement into the event requires connecting with people who have roots into, and relationships with, those audiences but again this needs to be balanced with what the purpose and aim of the conference are,

and careful design is needed to support value and engagement for all. Morag reflects on this challenge:

"One way to do [community engagement] would possibly be to look at who's on the panel and if they have roots into some of those audiences. The other thing is you can't bring everyone to a conference that size. You couldn't have fitted many more people in that room and done what we did today, activity wise and space wise. You could have had 100 people, but you'd have just been talking to them rather than having an activity and it being interactive."

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much ado About Nightjars

"We didn't have a huge amount of outreach in the run up to the conference. If we'd have gone and done something with the school, for example, you would maybe have got the school in. But then again, could we have had those same conversations? Would the language have been accessible? So there's the other school of thought that says, you don't go for numbers through the door, you go for the interested, energized people, because they will take it away and go and do something with lots of other people."

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much ado About Nightjars

Other observations about engagement at the conference and exhibition, drawn from survey results:

- ♦ **Timings**: conference was held during the working day so excluded audiences unable to take time away from work.
- ♦ Ticket cost: presenting a financial barrier for some.
- ♦ Venue location: not readily accessible by public transport.
- ♦ **Limited online attendance**: perhaps due to short lead in times and marketing reach.
- ♦ Travel distances: Of the 18 survey responses that provided travel times 7 (39%) travelled 10 miles or less to attend, 5 (28%) travelled between 10 and 40 miles, and 6 (33%) travelled 40 miles plus. Two guests reported being able to walk to the event.
- ♦ **New audiences:** Two guests responded that being at the conference was their first time considering climate change for migratory birds. However just under half of the people who filled out the survey didn't respond to this question.
- ♦ Exhibition link: Just under half of the survey responses completed during the conference day had not yet visited one of the exhibitions. One guest noted that more context about the conference and surrounding work would have help give the exhibition more context and aide interpretation for those new

- to the work. However feedback on visitor engagement activities within the exhibition (see Figure 1 below) suggest a more positive picture.
- ♦ Marketing and communication on the whole reported as 'good' or 'excellent' however 10% noted it as 'poor' or 'average'.
- ♦ Artist led participatory activity received mixed reviews. The majority of mentions praised them as engaging and enjoyable. Two guests left comments that suggested they did not value or enjoy these sessions.

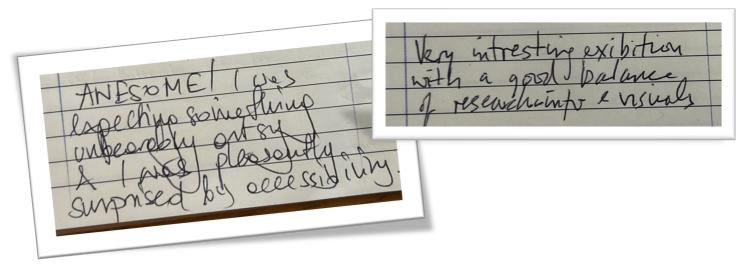


Figure 1. Visitor guest book comments, Much Ado About Nightjars Exhibition

Attendance and engagement clearly require purposeful design and a direct link to intended impact and outcomes from the outset, a factor recognised by the event curators.

"The initial list of 'who the conference is for' was actually quite lengthy and I think it is very hard to make this type of event reach such a wide audience. There seemed to be a lack of people who were enthusiasts or volunteers at the partner reserves for example [and] I think it would have benefited from being more focused on the programme and agenda – who did we **want** in the room?"

Amy Marletta, Event Co-Curator, Upland



Continuing engagement through the existing outputs of Artful Migration

Recommendations from interviews and surveys include:

- recognising and capitalising on the significant bird/conservation expertise that artists have developed during their residency.
- ♦ building on educational links.
- ♦ continuing the exhibition.
- developing local partnerships.

Artists Expertise

Chris Fremantle reflected on the extensive expertise that artist in residence can develop about an environmental subject area noting that "Ted and Morag probably have postdoctoral level understanding of night jars at this point." This positions them to be able to enter discussions with other professionals about that topic outside of the art world they operate in. Chris reflects that with the right capacity (including funding) more artists could and should be supported to engage with the science and environment community to support the development of engagement.

Educational Links

John Wallace shared that the initial Artful Migration residency led to a range of educational work. This includes further filming, the development of work to be used in primary and secondary schools across the country and an ongoing relationship with staff and rangers at Threave Nature Reserve

"I've spent another year, 14 months, filming and working at Threave. I think that was probably the best outcome, not because I got extra work, but because the additional work that went alongside these films is really propelling it ready made into primary and secondary schools across the country. So that's a fantastic outcome which would never have happened if I hadn't spent that initial time doing the Artful Migration residency."

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

Continuing the exhibition

There is a passion and place for continuing the exhibition both in its locality and further afield.

"I would really like for [the exhibition] to go back to where it belongs, which is in the Threave Estate. It was designed as a piece that people could

experience as they came to or from the reserve. It was designed so that it could be there just after the ospreys have left, because there's still a lot of people come thinking, oh, osprey reserve. And it does offer that. It means that they can see the ospreys in the film, but they can learn for a whole summer, they can see the ospreys themselves. "

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

John's desire is clearly echoed by the site staff, offering potential for continuing engagement well beyond the residency period.

"From an NTS point of view, it opens a door to engagement, and learning. It allows people/visitors/volunteers to get an intimate, closer look, into a world, which can often be quite secret, or unseen. This is a great tool, to connect with people, a wider audience, or someone, seeing for the first time, and who knows, it could be a gateway into conservation for some? An artist's work can touch you in many ways and leave a long-lasting impression."

Dave Thompson, NTS Head Ranger, Threave Garden & Nature Reserve

Chris Fremantle, a specialist in art engaging with environment, and with limited previous connection to the Artful Migration work, reflects on how use of art in this way is a 'breach of protocol' from conventional gallery-based art that can be used anywhere where there are migratory bird patterns.

"The stuff that's gone on here could be going on up in Aberdeenshire and probably all around the coast of the UK where there's migratory sites."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

These suggestions to continue the exhibition are given further shape and direction by Dave Pritchard, a specialist strategic consultant for the Artful Migration programme and conference. Dave proposes a cyclical approach, aligned to the seasonal nature of migration, touring the exhibition materials to new contexts. These tours would benefit from publications, talks, and targeted conversations to iteratively draw out learnings and next steps.

"A publication of some sort would be useful for this too, and there could be a programme of talks in schools, young farmer groups or whatever. If the Goose Festival is annual, it could also include a strand that keeps Artful Migration going in that context. Then there should probably be some more targeted conversations to distil lessons and consider what actions they might inform, with specialists in the partner organisations, academic researchers in this field (both from humanities/social sciences and from natural sciences), local authorities, other statutory agencies, private sector operators

(peat/energy/water), and arts institutions, including arts funders and urban centre galleries etc. Some of the best potential would be with cascading within the existing partners – FLS, RSPB, GSAB, WWT, NTS, BTO."

Dave Pritchard, Specialist Artful Migration Consultant, Panel Chair



Figure 2. Visitor engagement activity. Much Ado About Nightjars exhibition.

Scaling and developing Artful Migration

This question asked interviewees to think beyond the current Artful Migration work and consider how it might be replicated and scaled, with a focus on potential partnerships and funding routes to aide this. As well as returning a list of potential partnerships, discussions also provided learnings about:

- ♦ governance and leadership of future practice.
- ♦ the role of artists in developing future work.
- ♦ capacity needs.
- ♦ the process and overall aims of the work.

Governance and leadership

The conference was valued for the sector and expert diversity it brought into one space. And it is apparent that interviewees felt the right people were in the room to make a difference. However, it also prompted thinking around the future decision making capacity of such a large number of people. Echoing previous similar comments in this regard, two of the artists note:

"I think for me, if there was any one thing that I got out of today was actually what you could do with is a small group of people sat in a room. And when I say small, if it's much bigger than six, eight, it's just. Nothing will happen. It's just a talking shop."

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

"One of the partners we worked with, he's a wildlife recording person, and he says, do not bring me an event full of 30 marginally interested people. Bring me ten people who are really interested and they're going to go around, do something."

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

"But what is the aim moving forward? Because I don't think we know what that is right now. And until you've defined what the aim is with the right people in the room - and the people in the room are people like Dave Pritchard, because Dave Pritchard knows the right people that can make the changes. You need to have the specialist, someone like a Greg Conway, you need to have the artists, whoever that is. You need to just handpick. And that would be for Ginnie, whoever it is. It doesn't have to be Ginnie. It could be anyone in that room picking and saying, do you know what? Not for 2 hours,

but for two days. We need to unpick the why first of all, and then the how and then feed that back into the bigger group."

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

The role of artists

Chris Fremantle, drawing on his own experiences as a specialist in art and design for environmental research, suggests that artists need to be involved in the design and development process from the outset for successful public art to be realised.

"You need to get the artist in long before anybody actually breaches anything. You need a creative input into the design and development of that whole process in order to find the way that there's an art dimension to it."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

However there is also recognition that future work needs to consider how to ensure that there are always new artists coming into this kind of work.

"We want more people. And it might be mature practitioners who've been doing something else and are now going, actually, this is the thing that I want to be involved in, or it might be young people."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

"And then of course, it shouldn't always be the same artists doing things either, should it?"

Morag Paterson, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

Chris offers an example model from the USA that might support learning in this area which is included in the later partnerships list.

Capacity

The capacity to curate a piece of work like Artful Migration was recognised as vital for future success. Time, expertise and funding were highlighted.

"But what's interesting is there are lots of artists here, there are not enough curators, because, actually, the challenge is more people like Amy being willing to get into the complexity of doing this work. There's a particular challenge. So there is a real need for more arts organizational capacity in these events, because the artists have the ideas. The problem is the support structures to enable them to be."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

With a curator in place, it is important to not underestimate the human resource it demands and therefore the amount of funding needed. Moving Souls Dance and Upland both placed significant value on the role of the conference but acknowledged that the additional demands would have benefited from an additional, funded, project coordinator role to alleviate challenges. It is clear that future work needs to clearly match the ambitions of the project to the capacity of the curators.

"The management of the residency and the exhibition and time and management salary allocated to it but with the conference on top of that it was very stressful. Having an additional project coordinator to help with the organisation of the conference would have solved that but unfortunately we didn't have the funding."

Amy Marletta, Event Co-Curator, Upland

"Upland have been absolutely brilliant over these past 5 years but the conference was a step further in terms of management than they really can offer and think we need to understand that in the future the conferences require additional management and fundraising."

Virginia Wollaston, Moving Souls Dance

The need for future funding was a common thread in responses around this question. And that extended to being able to fund parts of the process, not only the events like conferences.

"So there's something about [artists] actually getting involved at the strategy level of the conservation, which I think you could do here, because actually, you clearly have decision makers in the room, and it wouldn't be very difficult to persuade them to go, actually. Why not? Just a tiny amount of money to just have enough capacity for somebody to attend meetings periodically and be with that process and then, in due course, make some sort of speculative proposal."

Chris Fremantle, Grays School of Art, Keynote Speaker

Process and purpose

There was discussion around the value of the Artful Migration residency process in its own right, reiterating that the conference in fact is not the end game, but part of the journey. And that there needs to be consideration of the ripple effect of this process to maximise how far the benefits reach, regardless of whether everyone takes part in a conference.

"When you're looking at the whole program of the residency, what we never did was identify who the audience was. We knew what the why was and what are we trying to get out of. It was an exhibition and a conference. But that became an endpoint. And so if I was looking at futures, how do we create a snowball? What things can we do that create environments that take off instead of having an endpoint?"

Ted Leeming, Artist in Residence, Much Ado About Nightjars

John reflects that the nub of the work lies in the behaviour change that it is trying to influence.

"We know there needs to be emotional responses, meaningful connections, to the birds, the nature, the change, whatever, for someone to take a step change in what they might do. That's what these projects are trying to achieve."

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

Chris Fremantle stresses this purpose value further noting that it deserves investment and that "if you don't do that, then effectively you end up going "oh, could you illustrate this for us?" Rather than "can you create a relationship with it yourself and work out what it means and is of value to you and then work out how that can be turned into something that can in some way create an interpersonal space for that subjectivity and value and meaning.""

While the value of the process is clearly recognised through multiple perspectives, maintaining it as a core principle when developing future residencies will require the buy in and understanding of the right partners.

"Finding the right partners will be key and finding partners who will see the value in having artists involved in conservation projects is a must. Building slower and longer relationships would be ideal in order to enable artists to play a key role in highlighting and contributing to these issues through innovative practice and collaboration."

Amy Marletta, Event Co-Curator, Upland

<u>Suggested partners and follow up for future scaling of Artful Migration</u>

Beyond suggested local partnerships and routes to continue to amplify the existing work of Artful Migration, there was strong feeling about strategic growth of the Artful Migration model going forward.

"How do we attract a national level of decision of people from both the arts and the land management and research to this? Can we go upstream to be more strategic, to get involved in strategic initiatives? Can we pull in higher level people, particularly Emma Nicholson, who's now running the climate house at the Royal Botanic Garden Edinburgh?"

John Wallace, Artist in Residence, Scene: Here

Virginia Wollaston cites building a network/partnership of arts organisations and universities to establish mechanisms for applying for funding and a research programme in order to be able to continue. However she notes that Moving Souls Dance is an England based organisation and would be limited in applying for Scotland based funding. Potential models for continuing and scaling include:

- Develop another conference with national partners to bring the Artful
 Migration programme into England, drawing on England based funding.
- Develop a new Scotland based network of partners for Artful Migration, where Moving Souls Dance and Upland are named partners rather than lead funding applicants and/or establish Artful Migration with its own organisational structure to take this aim forward.
- ♦ Consider extending the range of artistic disciplines engaged in Artful Migration to include writing, storytelling, poetry, multi-media and craft. This might allow for a wider audience and artistic engagement if developed in England.

Dave Pritchard goes a step further and highlights potential for partnership scope along the entire migratory pathway of birds looking at the issues that affect the pathway, rather than focusing on the species themselves. This approach would put the "phenomenon of migration as the issue" and in doing so "would define a niche unique selling point that almost no other arts and environment endeavour occupies". Dave makes specific partnership recommendations to achieve this aim, included in the table below.

The table below lists all those who expressed an interest in future partnership work. This includes existing partners who are committed to continuing and potential new partners.

Partner Name	Contact	Existing Partner?
South of Scotland	Jayne Ashley, Head of Natural Capital, Nature &	No
Enterprise: Natural	Entrepreneurship	
<u>Capital Investment</u>		
RSPB Scotland	Andrew Bielinski, Area Manager Scottish Lowlands	Yes
	and Southern Uplands	
<u>Creative Scotland</u>	Via Jan Hogarth, Education and Community	No
<u>Biosphere</u>	Engagement Officer with Dumfries and Galloway	
	Councils Environment Team	
<u>Upland</u>	Amy Marletta, Creative Director	Yes
<u>Urban Field Station</u>	Via Chris Fremantle	No
Collaborative Arts		
<u>Program</u>		
British Trust for	Dr Greg Conway, Senior Research Ecologist	Yes
<u>Ornithology</u>		
Grays School of Art	Dr Chris Fremantle, Research Fellow & Lecturer	Yes
University of	Harriet Fraser / Rob Fraser, Visiting Research	No
<u>Cumbria: Centre for</u>	Fellows	
National Parks and		
<u>Protected Areas</u>		
<u>Conservation</u>	Sacha Dench, Ambassador UN's convention on	No
Without Borders	Migratory Species	
Galloway and	Via Dave Pritchard, Strategic Consultant, Artful	No
Southern Ayrshire	Migration and Conference	
<u>UNESCO</u>		
Ramsar Convention	Via Dave Pritchard, Strategic Consultant, Artful	No
<u>Culture Network</u>	Migration and Conference	
Ramsar Sites	Via Dave Pritchard, Strategic Consultant, Artful	No
	Migration and Conference	

Case studies shared by conference attendees	
<u>Urban Field Station Collaborative Arts Program</u>	
Ecological Citizens: Tools, technologies & means to enable sustainable digital	
<u>citizens</u>	
Harrisons' Collaboration for the Ecosystem	
Furs and Feathers Exhibition	



Nightjar. Photo by Leeming + Paterson

Conclusion & Recommendations

Artful Migration offers an exciting, vibrant and innovative approach to exploring solutions to climate change challenges faced by migratory birds. The conference set out to provide a space to Reveal, Reflect, Listen, Consider and Celebrate the work of Artful Migration and there is no doubt that the aims were achieved. The richness of learning through this evaluation spans the conference and the wider project – it is challenging to isolate and evaluate the conference and exhibition separately given their intrinsic link with the residencies. The evaluation presents a range of feedback from artists, partners, keynote speakers, curators and guests leading to two evidence based recommendations to underpin future work.

- 1. Be explicit about the intended aim of a conference and plan resources, attendance and decision making structures accordingly
- Be explicit about the intended aims.
- ♦ Secure suitable funding and resource to achieve those aims.
- ♦ Explicitly match the aims with the intended audience and event design.
- ♦ Consider how decisions and impact are going to be achieved.

The conference was successful in supporting new cross sector connections, raising the profile of artists outputs (notably so through the exhibition link), informing the future work of those present, and helping to position the work against a regional, national and international backdrop. It has served as an important stepping stone in the project rather than an end point. There was mixed feedback about the intended aim of the conference with some noting that it provided a welcome and important space for artists, partners and specialists to convene and consider next steps, while others observed the lack of wider community representation and particularly young people. There is a need to be clear about the relationship of the conference with the community context of the residencies. More inclusive participatory approaches can work to address power balances between 'specialists' and grassroots communities which can ultimately lead to more equitable and sustainable outcomes for the environment. Working in this way significantly diversifies the lived experience and range of perspectives at the table but requires careful planning to get right so that all involved feel valued and respected.

The overarching focus of the Artful Migration work is rooted in the buy in of citizens, landowners and conservationists – and while there were aspirations for this breadth of audience at the conference, the design was better suited to those who ultimately did attend. Directly matching the aims of the event, the event design and intended audience is vital for future conferences of this kind.

The conference did not appear to create a space for strategic decision making and there is call for this when considering scaling and development. An experienced curator (appropriately funded and resourced) is an essential feature of that. The addition of a smaller stakeholder group who can make decisions and has suitable spheres of influence, who can then feed into the next round of influential people who in turn can affect change at a community level can offer a valuable addition.

2. Value and harness the opportunities presented by the residency process

- ♦ Position the residency process as a goal in its own right.
- ♦ Design ways of working that have a ripple effect in communities.
- ♦ Acknowledge and capitalise on the community engagement and subject expertise developed by artists during their residency.
- ♦ Create access routes for new artists.
- ♦ Involve artists from the outset.

The residency process has a significant value and impact in its own right. Future design should consider how residencies can influence change, and continue to have impact, at a community level. Local partnerships and relationship building, which takes time and funding, are key to the success of this as are the equitable and inclusive working practices of artists. There is no fast track to artistic outputs that rely on developing meaningful relationships and connections with communities, land and birds. And a significant benefit of longer duration residencies is the subject expertise that artists develop which, when convened in spaces like the conference, can help to break down the separation that can exist between art, conservation, science and landownership. Diversity of artist is important, and artists need to be embedded from the outset in the strategy, design, and delivery of any future work. Approaches are needed to ensure new artists have opportunity to access residencies in the future.



Appendix 1

Survey Questions and Responses

27 questionnaires returned from a potential 40 guests (combined online/in person figure)

1	How would you describe your role here today? Tick all that apply.								
	A member of the public	8	A volunteer for an organisation with an interest in this work						
	Part of an education/school group	1	An interested artist						
	An employee of an organisation with an interest in this work	10	Something else? Please describe. An interested scientist Young conservationist Independent Advisor Interested in how poets / writers can contribute A local person with an interest in bird migration and writing Local landowner managing for wildlife	5					

- 2 Briefly explain your reason/interest for attending the conference today.
 - ♦ Involved in developing event
 - Work with upland, science background (geology), young artist, recently moved to Dumfries, looking for connections between art & science
 - ♦ I work in art and environmental communication
 - ♦ Solway Firth Partnership is interested in art/science collaboration to explore environmental issues
 - I'm involved in regional cultural strategy, interested in impact arts and culture can have on net zero activity
 - Very interested in understanding more about the role of artists in transdisciplinary environmental research / change
 - ♦ Sustainability practitioner and artist with day job of promoting natural capital
 - ♦ I have a strong interest in conservation and climate change
 - ♦ Longstanding interest in intersect between art and environment. Professional affiliation with similar project.
 - ♦ To engage with the ideas
 - ♦ Involved in planning it and artful migration programme
 - ♦ It was part of the Goose Fest / it addresses the issues closes to me / I'm chair of Nith Life and was keen to take part

- Seeking to understand more about artistic contributions in this context / how scientific and artistic minds can meet
- ♦ To engage with others ideas / practice and stimulate my own thinking /writing/research
- Previously GGLP/GCAT funded coordinator of 'Ken Words Writing' project – now a voluntary run project with much diminished reac (https://gcat.scot/project/ken-words/)
- ♦ As an environmentalist (science) I need the artists to help communicate
- ♦ I have a background based in science and I now realise the importance of the arts in interpreting the natural world. This conference has broadened my thinking as I hoped it would!
- ♦ Retired countryside ranger and wildlife photographer.
- ♦ Linking arts to my own professional area of work.
- ♦ To expand my knowledge of local organisations as a local land manager.
- ♦ To learn more about the work done and engage in discussion.
- ♦ Wholehearted support / curiosity.
- ♦ Linking science to art to change land use more sustainable
- ♦ As a site manager of a nature reserve I am very interested in how art can enhance visitor experience.
- ♦ To support hosts.
- ♦ I was intrigued by art / conservation idea.

3	Where did you hear about the Artful Migration Conference?									
	Artful Migration artist(s)			8	Artful I RSPB,	e.g.,	11			
	Word of mouth			2	My employer/group/education establishment			2		
	Social media			6	Other					
4	Please grade th	ne conference	mark	etino	g and co	ommunication. Tick o	ne box o	nly.		
	Very Poor Poor A			Avera	age	Good Exc		ellent		
		1		4		13				
5	Which parts of	the programm	ne dic	d you	ı attend	l today? Tick all that a	pply.			
	Keynote prese Q&A (morning)			26	Artist-led creative interactions (afternoon)					
	What the Arts Can Offer (morning)			23	Enabling positive conversations to find sustainable solutions (afternoon)			19		
	Plenary session: drawing conclusions from the day (afternoon)			21	Exhibition launch and drinks at Gracefield Arts Centre (evening)			10		

- 8 x attended all parts of programme
- 10 x all conference events but not evening exhibition
- 1 x exhibition only
- 3 x keynote speaker only
- 6 Thinking about the parts of the day you participated in, are there any highlights for you? This could include how the sessions were delivered, the information shared, or anything you learned/will take away from the experience.
 - ♦ Sense of awe
 - ♦ The 'shit show' performative arty presentation was pure dead brilliant. Fund it!
 - ♦ Great to hear global and local perspectives. Sasha was inspiring, other contributors too. Lots to digest and consider really fruitful.
 - ♦ The multidisciplinary sessions around the table provided a great opportunity to diversify thinking.
 - High quality presentations and good engagement by participants.
 - ♦ Chris presentation was thought provoking.
 - ♦ The keynote speakers interspersed with input from the artists.
 - ♦ Great group activity giving an opportunity to exchange experiences and think 'on our feet'.
 - ♦ Excellent presentations and debate.
 - ♦ Fantastic to hear a variety of options from across a wide range of people and organisations. Sasha was brilliant in particular.
 - ♦ Sasha's high speed descriptive of an Osprey journey from Scotland to Africa. This should be made into a film!
 - ♦ The breadth of speakers was useful
 - ♦ Chris Fremantles talk I shall take this away with me from the day and return to the questions he shared.
 - Morning talks were superb, especially Chris Fremantle's contribution clear and challenging thinking.
 - ♦ The group sessions were poorly organised inaudible mic interactions.
 - Must find a way of bringing younger people to these kinds of events. The current age distribution is worrying.
 - ♦ The amazing (philosophical) wise insights from the speaker from Ayrshire [Chris Fremantle]
 - ♦ In the end, hope that we can all make a difference in how the wider world engages with 'our' problems and possible solutions.
 - ♦ Keynote presentations were very intellectually stimulating. Interactive group session was lively if not somewhat clumsily implemented.
 - ♦ The keynote presentations were especially interesting, and I found the interactive session useful to make connections and network.
 - Always a highlight is the making of new connections, hearing about other brilliant and inspiring work going on in the field. Being part of a shared community of caring, passionate and skilled people.

- ♦ Sasha and Chris keynote speakers inspirational and thought provoking.
- ♦ All excellent last panel was good but not enough time for audience participation.
- ♦ Accessible and highly intelligent knowledge and energetic content and delivery such specialisms in one space!
- ♦ Keynote presentations were excellent super interesting and well presented, great diversity of expertise too.
- \diamond Whole day was excellent.
- ♦ Keynote presentations were very good.
- ♦ Artist led interactions fun, interesting, educational and I think productive.

7	Overall, what has your experience been like at the conference today? Tick all that apply.								
	It's been enjoy	able		27	ľve	I've met interesting people			
	I've been intro	duced to a ne	w area	11	ľve	shared my		10	
	of interest			11		rspective/expertise		10	
	l've learned so	mething new		20		e listened/learned from		23	
						spective/expertise of			
8			tent of	the co	onfer	ence today. Tick one			
	Very Poor	Poor	Ave	erage		Good	Excelle	nt	
						4	23		
9				ition(s	s) of t	the Artful Migration a	rtists?		
		question 10	8			lo – go to question 1	3	19	
10	Which exhibition	on(s) did you v	visit and	wher	1? N	O RESPONSES			
11	Was this your f	irst time visiti	ng an ar	t exhi	bitio	n? - see below plus	14 did not		
	respond.								
	Ye	es	0			No		13	
12	Was this your f	irst time cons	idering (climat	te ch	allenges for migrating	g birds in t	:his	
	location? – see	e below plus 1	7 did no	ot res	ponc	J			
	Ye		2			No		11	
13	What was your	experience c	of Much	Ado A	Abou	ıt Nightjars? Tick all t	that apply.		
		not respond. I	Plus see						
	It was enjoyab	le		11	_	et interesting people		3	
	I was introduce	ed to a new ar	rea of	5		ared my			
	interest					spective/expertise wi	th the	2	
						st(s)			
						tened/learned from t			
	I learned something new about art			5	perspective/expertise of the artist(s)			8	
	I learned some challenges for	_		10	I was inspired to attend the conference			4	

How would you grade your overall experience of going to see the art exhibition(s)? - 13 did not respond. Plus see below...

Very Poor	Poor	Average	Good	Excellent
		2	3	9

- Please share a final quotable comment to support celebrating the Artful Migration project.
 - ♦ This case study / conference should be shared with college & university students (at least) if not earlier in schools.
 - ♦ This experience has opened up more perspectives and made me hopeful about what can be done in the small scale to make things better worldwide.
 - ♦ I would like the on-line conference to cover the whole days conference.
 - ♦ Great work, keep it up. Thank you!
 - ♦ A vital, inspiring, and positive project.
 - ♦ Inspiring to have such specialists in one space and with real vision from experience and knowledge and action.
 - It represents such an exciting [axis/locus?] for exchanging knowledge, experience and mobilising resources to support the conservation of vulnerable species.
 - A wonderful, insightful and accessible event discussing issues that are important to us all.
 - ♦ Beautiful hope..... We do care.
 - ♦ Great theme for foregrounding connectivity and shared responsibilities.
 - ♦ Interdisciplinary work is essential to deliver the Natural Capital Innovation Zone.
 - ♦ Inspiring projects brilliant insights into different species more please.
 - ♦ I felt I got my £15 worth after just an hour!
 - ♦ I was very pleasantly surprised by the compelling presentations and how they melded to create a whole.

Other note: I would suggest there is more outreach and advertising towards young people and students e.g. Uni students.

Optional Questions Your response to these questions will help us understand how successful the event has been in reaching diverse audiences, as well as helping to understand environmental impact.

Age		Gender			Employment Status	
Under 18	0	Male 14 I			ired	5
18-25	3	Female 13			dent	0
26+	16	Prefer not to say 0			ployed	14
65+	8	Prefer to self-describe as: -	Soi els	mething e	8	
How would you	How would you describe your ethnic group? Leave blank if you					
prefer not to say	No response – 1					
	Mixed Arab					

How did you travel here today? Tick all that apply.								
Car 13 Motorbike - Bicycle - Other								
(shared)								
Car (solo)	9	Public	-	Walked	2	I attended	3	
		Transport				online		

How far have you travelled in miles and time to attend this conference?

- ♦ 2 hours (Scotland Gorebridge)
- ♦ 27 Miles / 45 mins
- ♦ 35 miles each way, 1 hour each way
- ♦ 26 miles / 50 mins
- ♦ 24 miles / 45 mins
- ♦ 3 miles
- ♦ 60 miles / 1.5 hours each way
- ♦ 24 miles
- ♦ 10 minutes
- ♦ 60 miles each way (Kendal)
- \diamond 8 miles / 30 mins each way
- ♦ 40 miles / approx. 1.5 hours
- ♦ 1.15 hours / approx. 40 miles
- ♦ 4 miles / 10 minutes
- ♦ 10 miles each way
- ♦ 5 miles each way
- ♦ 1.5 miles / 35 minutes (walking) x 2 people