

# Energised Landscape

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## **Artist Report for Deveron Projects 2017**

It has only been two weeks since the end of my residency with Deveron Projects. This is quiet early to properly assess the outcomes and implications of the project.

From Summer 2016 until April 2017 I conducted a 3-month residency split into visits of 2-4 weeks. The Energised Landscape project was conceived as part of a bigger umbrella project called the Slow Marathon. While researching energy sources in the landscape, the main outcome was to devise a route and artistic theme for the Slow Marathon 2017 weekend.

There was a strong engagement aspect to the project. During the residency I conducted over 30 energy walks with local participants in addition to my solo walks. The workshops ranged from painting wind turbines with the Really Cool Club to classroom based work with pupils from the Gordons School where we examined energy language. The Farmers Market event introduced Energy Food to the town and I led an energy walk as part of the DP birthday celebration. For the Slow Marathon weekend the local support in the form of re-fuelling stations was very good and I was really touched by the enthusiasm and fun of the volunteers. Although it was difficult if not impossible to connect with wind turbine objectors the overall engagement side of the project was absolutely wonderful and affirming. The programming for the Slow Sunday proved difficult which seemed to be mainly due to many potential speakers not being available on Easter weekend. Nonetheless I enjoyed the conversational and relaxed style of the event. I think it is worth looking at the timing of this event as everyone seems too exhausted to really engage with the subject.

During the residency I developed a visual energy language in the form of firstly handwritten labels and signs. The design and ideas then transformed into printed editions of food bag labels, signs, posters, a certificate, woven badges, and a group of sculptural signs. There is also a film with young film maker Sophie Lindsay in the making which I hope to show to a wider audience. I enjoyed this part of the project and had good feedback from participants. Walkers repeatedly commented on the benefits of the warm up, stretching and energy food routines and I am planning to make these a regular feature of my walking events.

Since I got back to Edinburgh there has been some interest and offers to exhibit the energy signs in other contexts and I hope this will be confirmed sometime soon. There has also been interest in the woven labels, which are currently being considered for a project this Summer. Engage Scotland have asked me to lead an art walk this August and I had a chat with a representative from a gallery for a potential future project. Last but not least this August I am invited on a short walking residency in the Zillertal, Austria.

Beside these tangible benefits to my career I have learned a lot about my strengths and weaknesses. The community support for the project has been surprising to me at times, which is probably a reflection on me being too used to working on my own. I will take this as an encouragement for being more ambitious when relying on the goodwill of communities.

Yes, I believe the project was a success both for the organisation and personally. It helped me develop a new well regarded work as well as challenging me to work with new methods that I find uncomfortable.

There were difficulties that were both hilarious and testing. There was a lot of confusion about the project title, with different staff members calling it different names right up to the end of the project. I definitely need to have a more punchy project title next time. I never did get a contract. At times it was difficult to assert it as an independent art project as it was constantly described in the context of the Slow Marathon. And it was difficult to keep up with the email avalanches a project like this generates.

This is a good moment to express my gratitude to all the staff members who supported my project and added sometimes crucial thoughts, ideas and skills. It wouldn't have been such a rich tapestry without you! In the words of Patrick Geddes: Hands, Heart and Head!

