

# Cosmic Colliery

Glofa'r Gofod

LOCATION

**Ystrad Mynach, Wales - United Kingdom**

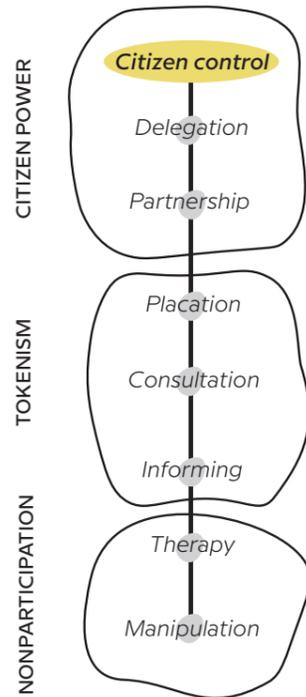


TIME PERIOD

**In 2015**

## THE PROJECT

The Cosmic Colliery project is located in the Penallta Colliery which closed in 1992 becoming abandoned like many coal mines across Wales. The aim of the creative work was to use the mine once more to bring the community together, by imagining it as an astronaut training camp. To alter the perception that young people held for both themselves and their own futures, encouraging them to "think big" by imagining different possibilities for the area and how they are perceived.



in short term interventions. This project was supported by public funding from Arts Council England.

## RESULT

If the project as a whole succeeded in becoming led by the community into something self organised, yet long term opportunities for young people were not measured. Thus, the target was partly achieved. More broadly, the project gave residents the opportunity to connect with others in the village and to be creative. The main beneficiary of the creative work was the young people who partook in the project, namely members of Girls and Boys club. If some people were skeptical about the nature of the work, the final exhibition at the Design Museum was well received by the professional pair audience.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SPACE

Ystrad Mynach could be defined as a remote place first by its low population density but also by its location. Moreover, the settlement suffers from an economy at half-mast and an ageing population. However, the residents may deem it as much less remote because of its access to the Wales capital. There are some public spaces in the town like the park but the majority of indoor public spaces are pubs. This kind of place is not ideal for young people, who lack free public space to meet.

## INITIATION AND ACTORS

This project was produced by the designer Hefin Jones in the frame of the London Design Museum's Designer in Residence program. He succeeded in gathering Rhymney Valley communities to work on this

project.

## ROLE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY & METHODS USED

Cosmic Colliery involved working with communities in the Rhymney Valley to explore the possibilities of what the old coal mine could become. In this project, the local community played a decisive role. Instead of following a predefined path, the project changed in response to people who contributed to it. One example of this involvement is the final project meeting being led by the members of the community and not by its conceceptor. In the frame of the residency program, each resident received a budget of £6,000 which goes directly towards producing the work over a span of a few months, demonstrating the how effective a co-design approach can be in engaging the community



Film still, Cosmic Colliery documentary film. Filmmaker - Liboni Munnings ©Hefin Jones



Penallta Colliery Acid House Festival poster ©Hefin Jones



Film still, Cosmic Colliery documentary film. Filmmaker - Liboni Munnings. ©Hefin Jones



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Ystrad Mynach, Borough of Caerphilly, United Kingdom - Wales

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Link to the publication:  
<http://www1.uirs.si/en-us/book/id/119>