



PAPER BAGENALSTOWN

A Collective Paper Architecture Pilot

Lorenzo Papace
Bagenalstown, County Carlow. 2026



Our town in paper

Paper Bagenalstown was conceived by visual artist and scenographer Lorenzo Papace as an artist-led, place-based architecture project, collectively developed with participants from Óige Neurodivergent Hangout, Parents and Children.

Across six two-hour sessions and a special Cruinniu na nÓg workshop, approximately ten children aged 9-14 contributed to a shared town inspired by the visual language of Irish small-town architecture.

Developed as a pilot within Creative Places Bagenalstown, the project combined a clear artistic framework with flexible and participant-responsive ways of taking part.

ARTIST

Lorenzo Papace

PARTICIPANTS

Óige Neurodivergent Hangout,
Parents and Children

LOCATION

Bagenalstown Family Resource
Centre

DATES

27 April-6 July 2026

FORMAT

Six two-hour sessions and one
special Cruinniu na nÓg workshop

PARTICIPANTS

Approximately ten children, aged
9-14

MEDIUM

Coloured paper, cutting, folding,
collage and collective installation



A shared vocabulary

The project began with an artistic question: **How can familiar architectural forms become a shared vocabulary for collective making?**

Rather than reproduce Bagenalstown literally, the group worked with familiar architectural cues (coloured façades, terraced houses, roads, gardens, railway lines and public spaces) to build an imagined Irish town.

The paper models were designed to remain visually coherent while allowing each participant to make personal choices.

Small differences in colour, proportion, doors, windows, roofs and surrounding spaces gradually gave the town its collective identity.

Architecture gave the group a shared language, while paper made it easy to cut, fold, rearrange and invent.

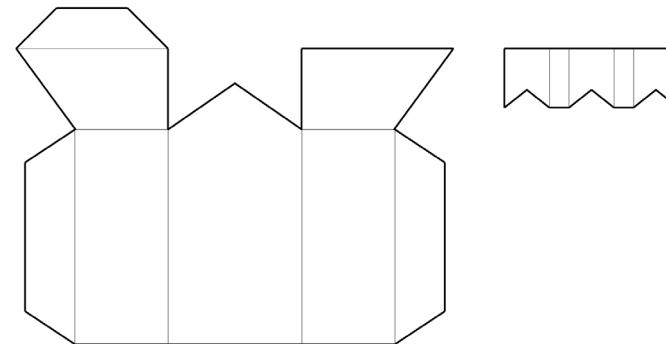
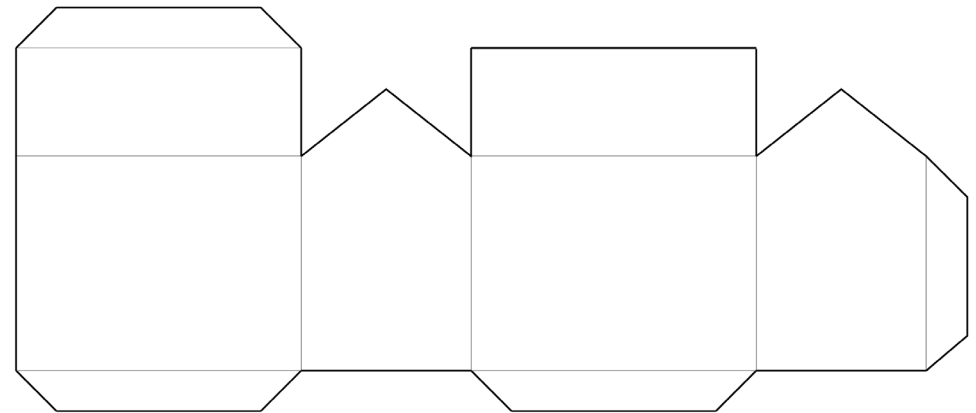
A town built step by step

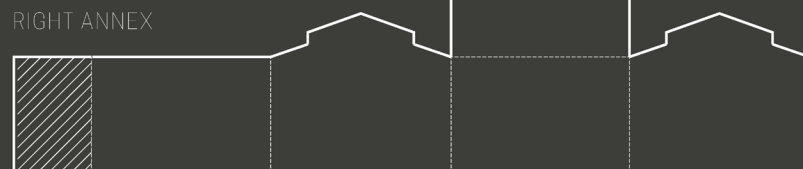
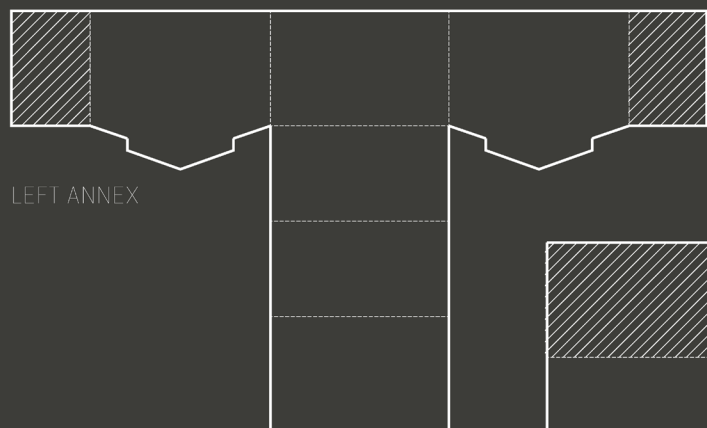
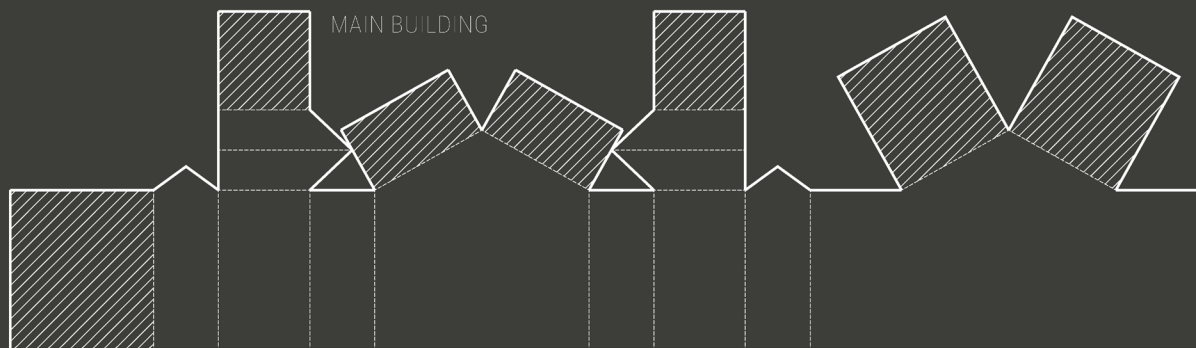
Explore The first sessions introduced coloured paper, simple folding techniques and the first architectural models. Participants could observe, test a technique or begin with a small element.

Build Houses and other structures were made using simplified templates, colour choices and modular details. Some participants followed the models closely, while others developed their own variations.

Connect Individual constructions were placed on a shared site. Roads, gardens, hedges, a river, railway lines, vehicles and public spaces gradually connected the separate elements.

Name Houses and places received names, stories and personal associations. The town became not only something made, but somewhere imagined, occupied and claimed.





BACK



FRONT



Cutting and Folding Template

1/2

BAGENALSTOWN RAILWAY STATION

LORENZO PAPACE
WORKSHOPS
2026

PAPER BAGENALSTOWN
No.5

MATERIALS

Light grey paper: main walls
Dark grey paper: roofs and canopy

Participation

Participation remained open and fluid throughout the project. Some children worked for extended periods, while others joined briefly, placed an element, offered a name, watched the process or returned later.



Adapting the process

Continuous learning and adaptation formed part of the artistic process.

Simple structures

House templates were refined to create convincing architectural volumes with as little cutting and gluing as possible.

Multiple entry points

Participants could build, customise, choose, place, name, observe, or return to the table when they felt ready.

Modular details

Pre-cut elements supported quick participation while leaving room for decisions.

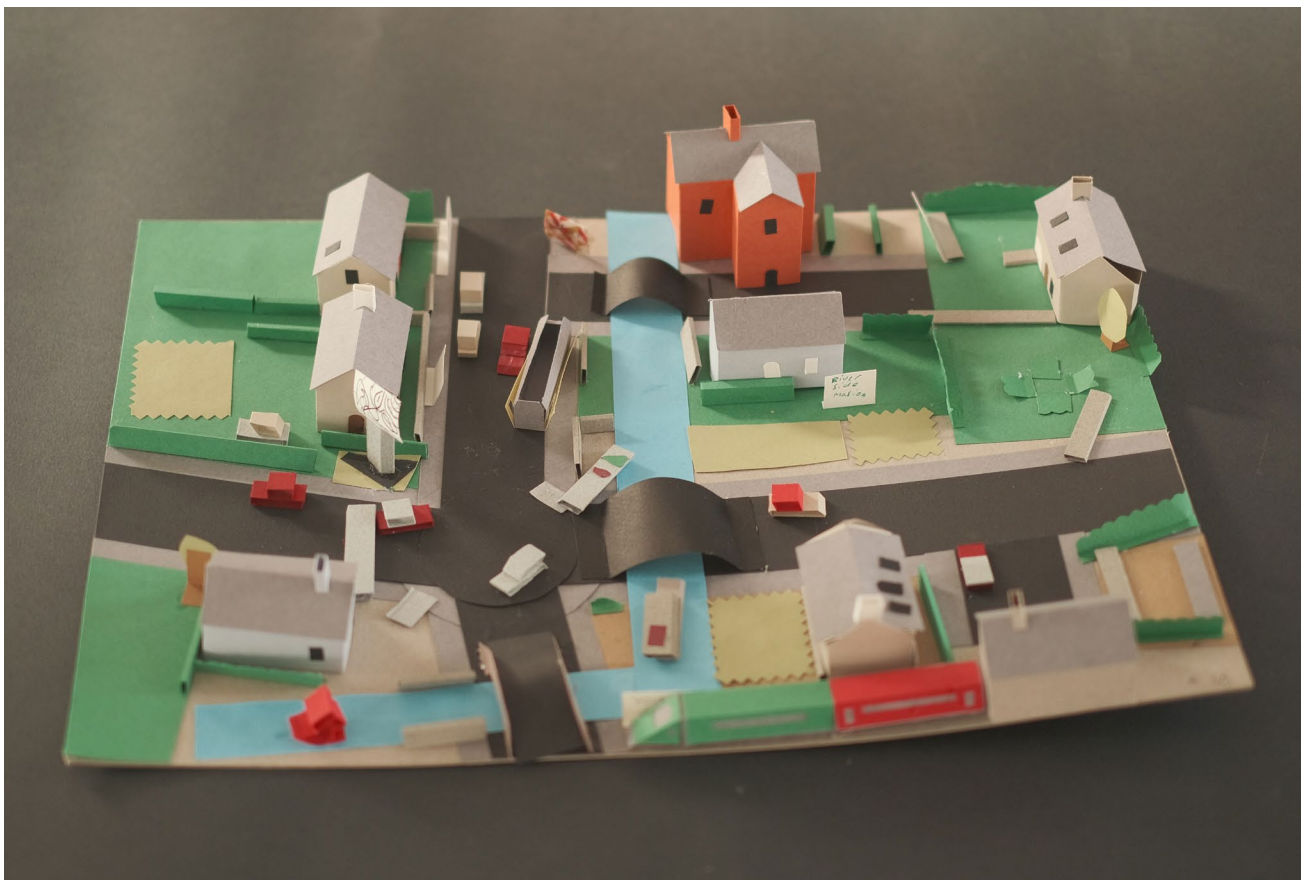




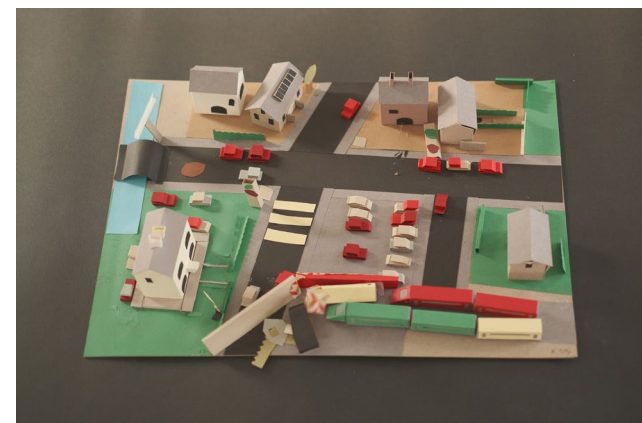
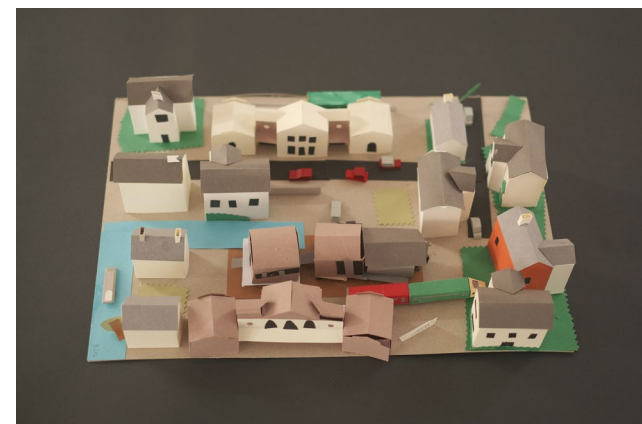


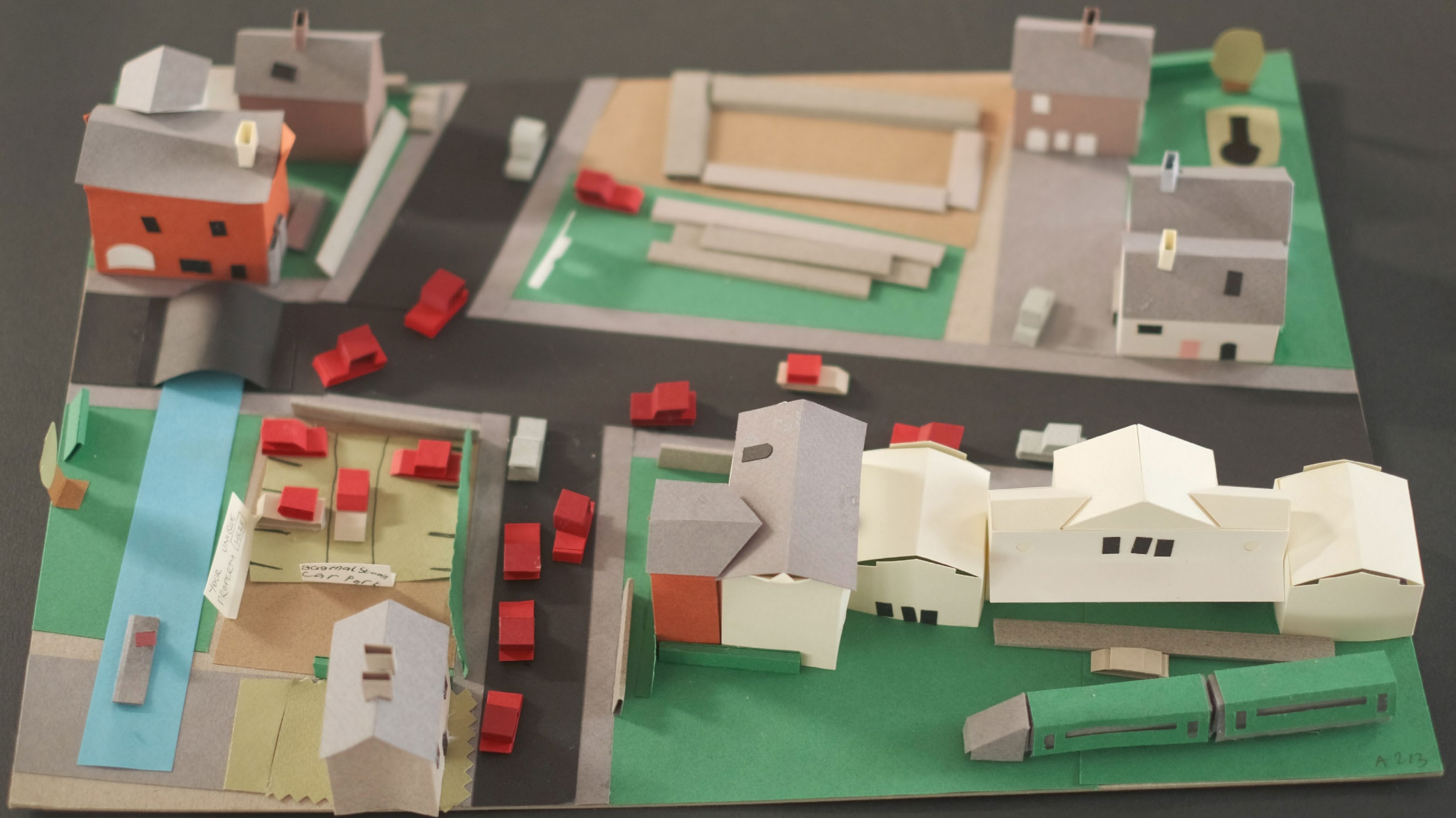
Roads, bridges, gardens and railway lines organising the collective site





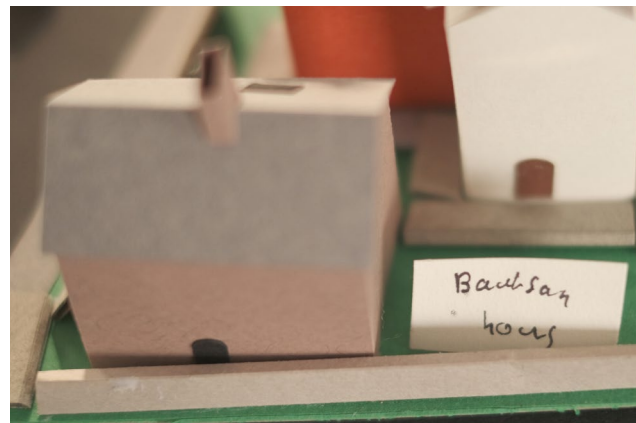
Individual houses connected through a shared landscape







Simplified paper architecture inspired
by Irish small-town forms



Named buildings and places introduced by participants

My favourite place in the village is:

henderson trainstation

Why do you like it?

I make it,

My favourite place in the village is:

the Dance School

Why do you like it?

I go to Dance SC

Why do you like it?

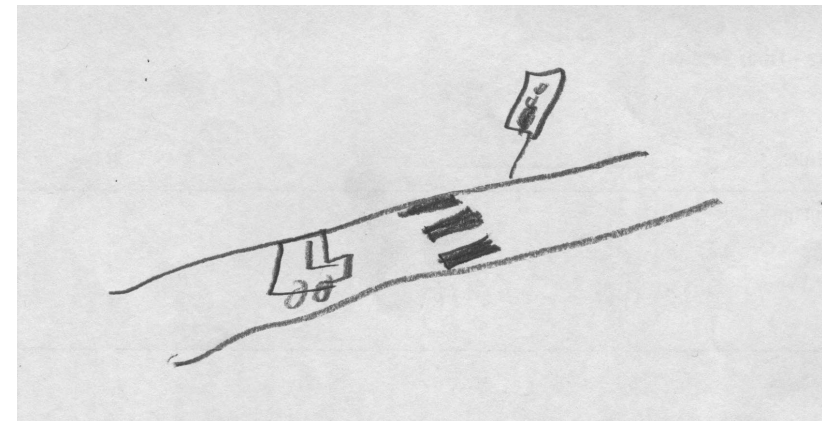
cause I made it

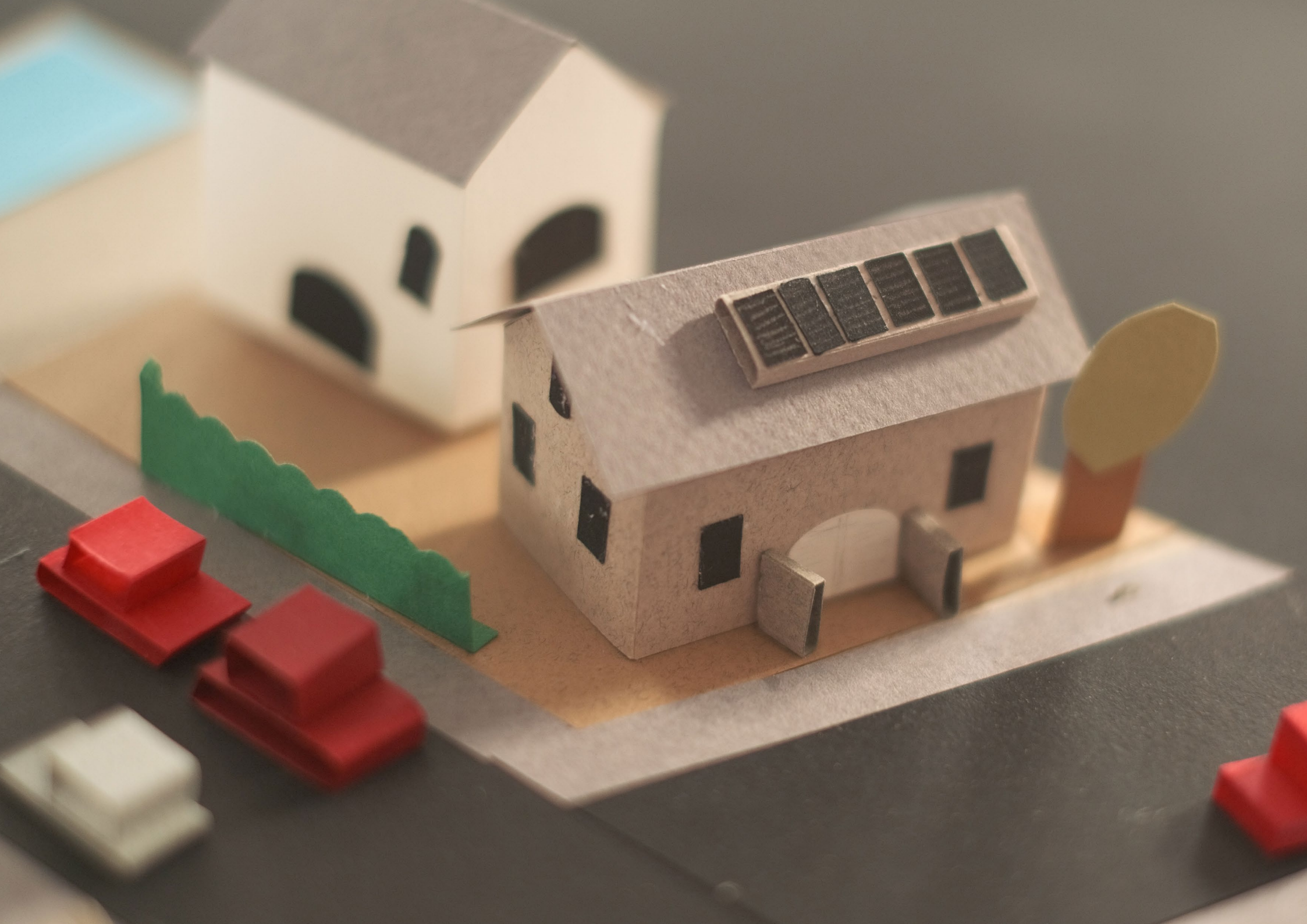
Participant responses, final session.
Reproduced anonymously.

Places of their own

Responses gathered during the final session revealed a recurring sense of ownership and attachment.

Favourite places were often the ones participants had built, named or imagined themselves. Paper Bagenalstown became meaningful through personal connections: a home, a familiar activity, a hoped-for place or something they were proud to have made.





What the pilot revealed

A shared spatial framework helps individual contributions connect and become part of a larger whole.

Simple architectural models and modular details can support different levels of confidence, attention and technical ability.

Placing, choosing and naming can be as meaningful as constructing.

A strong artist-led visual language can remain coherent while allowing the final work to be collectively shaped.

Introducing the full shared site from the beginning would help participants imagine, map and occupy the town across the entire process.

The pilot suggests a concentrated two- or three-session version of the project. The method can respond to a new group and place without reproducing the same town.

Developed within Creative Places Bagenalstown, the project reflects principles of participation, collaboration, local knowledge and continuous adaptation while retaining a clear artistic identity.





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A Collective Paper Architecture Pilot

Developed within the Creative Places Bagenalstown programme, led by Carlow County Council Arts Service and supported by the Arts Council / An Chomhairle Ealaíon.

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CONCEPT, ARTISTIC DIRECTION, FACILITATION AND DOCUMENTATION

Lorenzo Papace

DEVELOPED WITH

Óige Neurodivergent Hangout, Parents and Children

LOCATION

Bagenalstown Family Resource Centre

WORKSHOP DATES

27 April-6 July 2026

SPECIAL PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Cruinniú na nÓg, 6 June 2026



Creative Places Bagenalstown
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Places programme developed
and funded by the Arts Council.