

THE BRIDGE STREET  
PROJECT

## THE STORY

The story of a place that is locally driving its own future and regeneration through a collective reflection on how to build more sustainable routes to a shared prosperity.

The Bridge Project is a series of projects aimed at being a catalyst for change and a test bed for ideas for the future, enabling an inclusive DIY culture of action.

Callan is a relatively small town that punches above its weight creatively and culturally due to the huge amount of local passion, talent and drive of its residents. Collectively the town has invested a huge amount of personal time and energy into the project to ensure the small amount of seed funding for the project travelled a long way and has a legacy of a continued conversation and process of to develop the process of steadily evolving and re-imaging their town.

### **We sought to ask questions like:**

- How do we open up fertile ground for small entrepreneurial ventures in our rural town centres?
- How do we develop productive conversations and relations between active citizens and civic entrepreneurs, private owners and the public sector.
- How do we create an open ended invite to participate and co-produce?
- How do we collectively re-imagine our towns and develop peoples perception of place to a positive one?
- How do we help others recognise the potential of a space or local asset and imagine alternatives to the existing?
- How do we pilot projects and ideas, to test them and build in a two way learning experience between pilot projects and local policy?

- How do we gradually build trust within the community and create a culture that encourages people to come forward with ideas and energy to make them happen?
- How do we develop a sustainable community and resilient community assets?
- How do we enabling diverse forms of entrepreneurship through activating social networks and developing a clear sense of direction and a shared re-imagination of the possible.
- How do we develop a social media and press approach to ensure the project is wide reaching and inclusive?

# PROJECT TIMELINE

2014 - onward, from strength to strength!



The Bridge street project is part of a long programme of projects in Co. Kilkenny looking at engaging local communities in participative planning. The temporary road closure and pedestrianisation of Bridge Street in 2014 as part of the Forecast project provided a prototype for the project, highlighting the street as an important civic space within the town. Workshops were run with the local schools to look at the civic spaces within Callan and children were encouraged to develop their own street games and in-habit this forgotten street, filling it for a day with chalk games and play.

## EXPLORING SPACE THROUGH PLAY

# 2014

# TESTING AND PILOTING





STREET FEAST - SHARING FOOD AND IDEAS



2015

# INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE

EXCHANGE  
1 x STORY:MEMORY

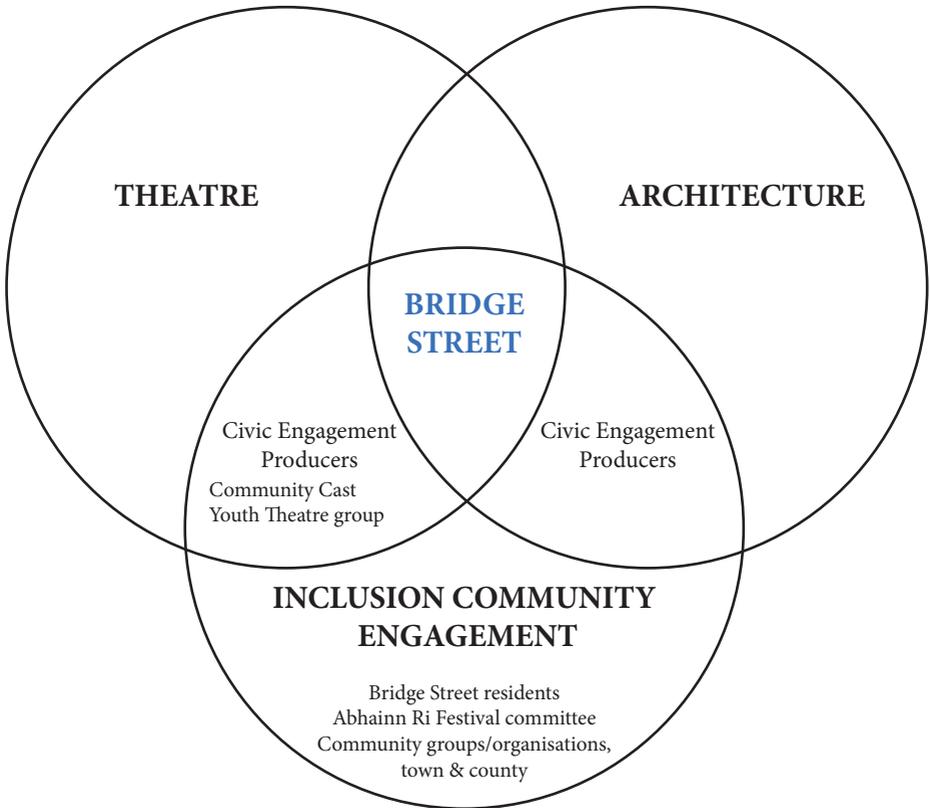
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1 x FREE TEA

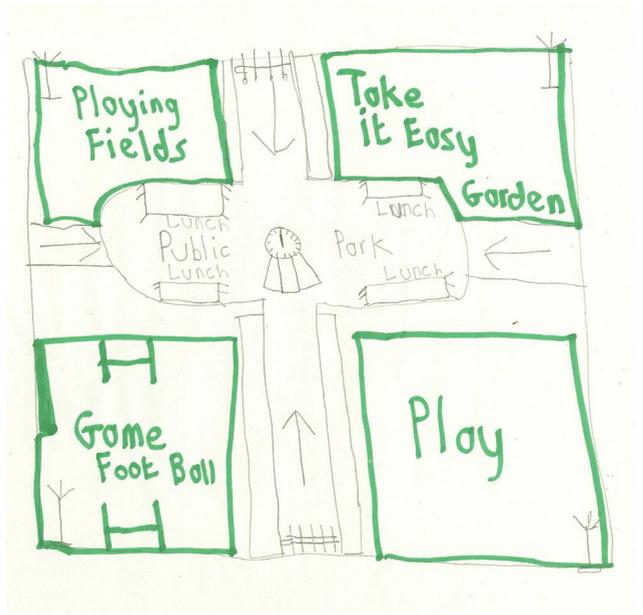
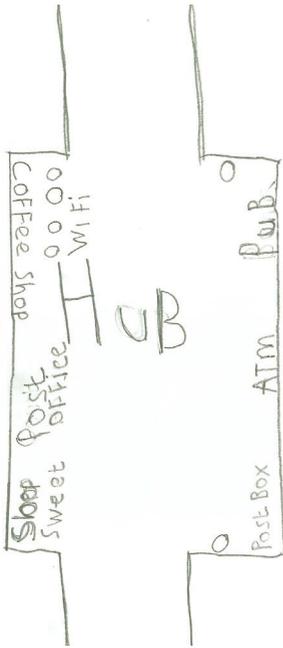
A story that celebrates the collective memory of  
the town with a nod to the past and an ambitious  
aspirational leap to the future.

*From the moment the painting started in June, and the street was closed for several hours a day it became a place to bump into neighbours and to stop and pause to admire it's beauty. Photos began to appear online of 'our beautiful town', and people have taken pride in the street once again."*



## RECLAIMING AND ACTIVATING THE STREET





Where does the town public realm end? could the courtyards complement the street and offer additional activity and places to meet and dwell?

# 2016

# CO-PRODUCING COMMUNITY ASSETS





# ACTIVATING THE COURTYARDS

## community screenings





# IDEATION WORKSHOPS-PLATFORM FOR CO-PRODUCTION







## Callan:

- Walk along the river towards kells. Beautiful.
- Open the flood gates on the river, put bridge for children to cross for school
- More Access to the river
- More open and accessible recreation spaces
- New town bridge through field at the back of the Abbey meadow linking to Mill Street to take the pressure of traffic of Bridge Street and pedestrianise upper bridge street.
- Youth Facilities
- Music Festivals
- Nursing Home
- Affordable housing programme
- Riverside path in both directions - promote river walks
- Open air gigs at the old fort
- Work to keep the river clean and healthy
- Develop 'cultural trail'
- Get a callan theatre company and callan choir going
- More intergenerational events and collaborations between the school and other institutions in the town like KCAT.
- More places to play - tree swing and slides
- Electric Car for Callan
- Communal picking garden in Abbey Meadow or on the river walls/loop.
- Help look after the lovely animals on the River - Stoats and otters.

## Fennelys:

- Cover back yard
- Fennelys cafe with sun room
- Accessible courtyards

## **Bridge Street:**

### **Activation of space:**

- Weekend Market
- New coffee shop
- Interior of vacant shops for public/social use, mixed with local businesses.
- Sweet shop
- Arts Crafts for children - Opportunities for painting
- Meeting places and continual 'get together' workshops, open spaces, craft nights.
- More life (fun, games, drama) on the street.
- An Inclusive Art Gallery with a year-round programme offering local, national and international artists an Opportunity to exhibit their work.
- More flower beds and more colours.
- More light, open up yards or more plants/green walls?
- Mosaic on bridge
- More culture and cultural activities
- Colourful houses
- Open barber shop
- Greening around, more flowers and window boxes.
- Shop store where people can take objects and exchange them for others.  
A few meeting space for the town focused on people talking about what is needed and testing it and seeing if it serves its purpose.

### **Improved Public Realm:**

- Places for wheel chairs to pull over (so when you meet your mates for a chat your not blocking the path)
- See behind the walls, open courtyards, get more bees and flowers for them, other insects welcome too.
- Flower boxes on windows
- Vintage street lamps with LED
- More Bins
- Either make Bridge Street only accessible for pedestrians or in closer future put in speed bumps.
- No cars parked on the street - Relocate resident parking
- Repair old houses and use them/fill them.
- Keep and restore street façades
- One way system
- Car Park behind Bridge street so no parking necessary on Bridge Street

## PLACES:

**Bridge Street** - Holds the potential to be a vibrant, colourful and car free space that people can inhabit and socialise on. People returning to live on the street, lights on above the shops once more. Dressed windows animating the street.

**The Bridge on Bridge Street.** Connecting role - joins lower and upper Bridge Street and frames views to the river, Abbey Meadow and the Motte.

### **The Rooftops of Bridge Street:**

**The Courtyards behind Bridge Street** - network of public spaces - interconnected offering different atmospheres and environments

**The Kings River;** natural heart of the town, animated with wildlife, swelling and retracting with weather fluctuations,

**The Abbey Meadow;** Playground for the town, providing a space for recreation, a green route through the town. and a companion for the river.

**The Motte** A green plinth that ceremoniously watches over the town.

Callan Motte was built c. 1217. In 1307 it was described as ‘a castle, in which there is a hall constructed of wood covered with wooden shingles, a stone chamber, a kitchen and other wooden chambers’

## SPECIAL OBJECTS:

### **The Bridge Street Pound:**

A currency that can only be spent on Bridge Street and traded for other objects made on Bridge Street.

### **Fountain:**

Fountain in the street which uses flood water

### **The Invite:**

Magic Invitation sent to tourists from other towns to come to Callan.

### **Shape Shifter:**

Magic shape shifter that can change street furniture into something better.

### **Compulsory Activation Note:**

A note served to building owners who own empty buildings on the street who have to activate their empty space and organise activities within it for the community to enjoy.

### **Magic Sweets:**

Sweets from the shops on Bridge street that allow you to change or transform anything about yourself.

## CHARACTERS:

### **The Parking Giant:**

Picks up cars parked that are blocking the pavement and moves them to a proper car parking space.

### **Thomas The Crack Filler:**

Fills cracks on the street and makes the pavement smooth so it has easy wheel chair access.

### **The Window Dressing Fairy:**

Makes beautiful displays in empty shop windows

### **The friendly Troll:**

Sits under the footbridge by the Abbey Meadow and helps people cross safely on their way to school.

### **The Matchmaker:**

Pairs empty buildings with people who need space to live/work.

### **The Safety Glow Worm:**

Lights the way for people walking home in the dark and makes sure the streets are well lit and safe. But also knows when to turn it's light out, when people want to gaze at the night stars.

### **The Captain**

The 'Old Sea Dog' who looks after the River and its wildlife with his family  
(Also look after the strays)

### **The Boy of all seasons**

When he cried it rained, When he smiled everything grew, When he was angry everything broke and, when he laughed everything got fixed.

### **Super Human Eyes**

Magical googles that help you to see the past of Bridge Street as well as help you imagine the future.

## **The Time Tester**

The androgynous magical creature controls time slowing it down and speeding it up at will, often for a joke but always for the good of all!

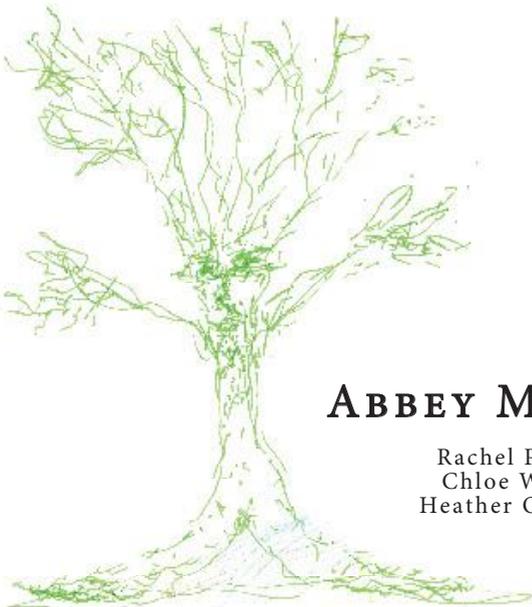
## **Vegetation Man**

The power to make anything of organic matter break into flower or leaf.



SHORT STORIES on BRIDGE STREET looking at the development  
of CHARACTERS their SPECIAL OBJECTS and the PLACES they  
dwell:





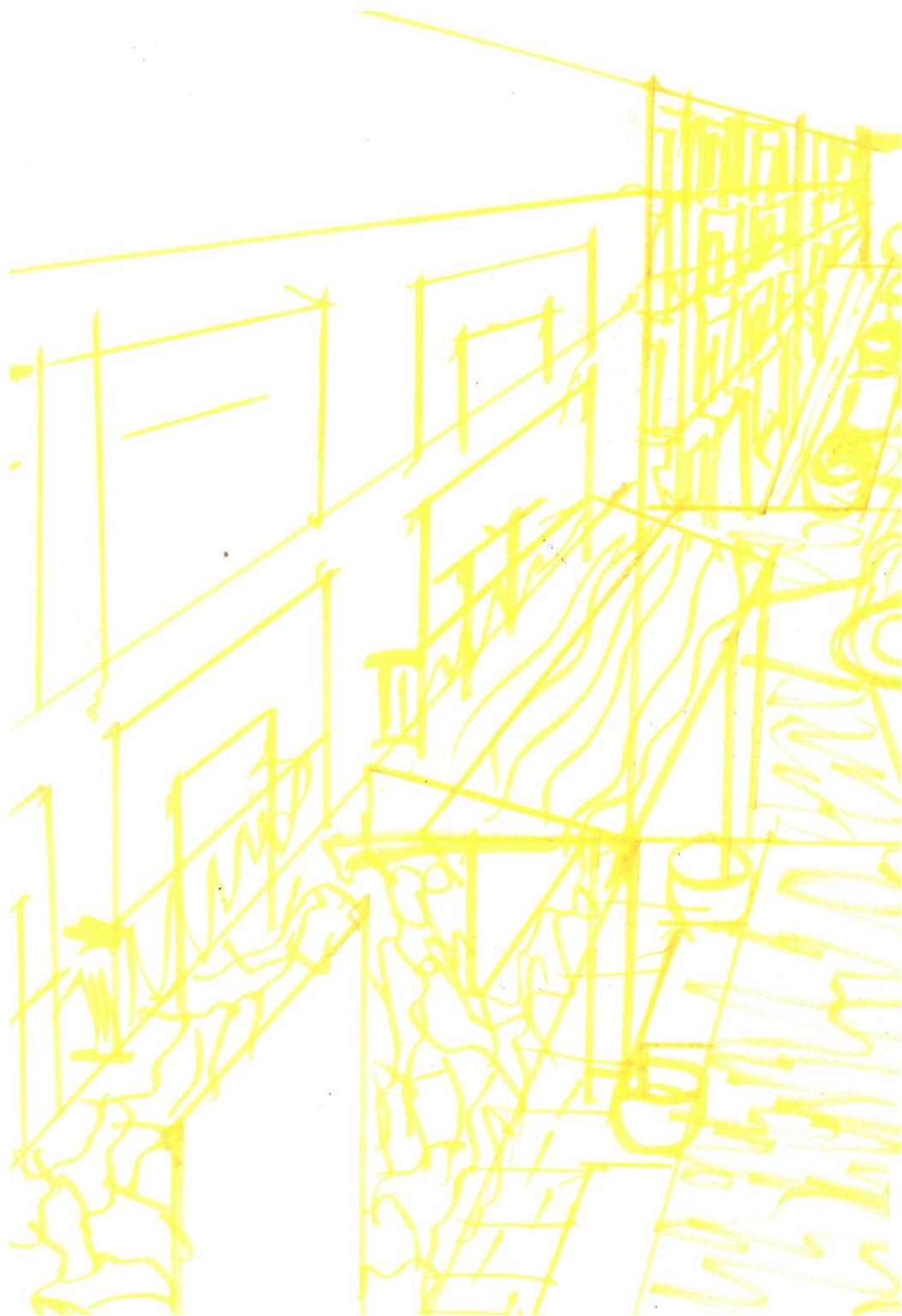
## ABBEY MEADOW

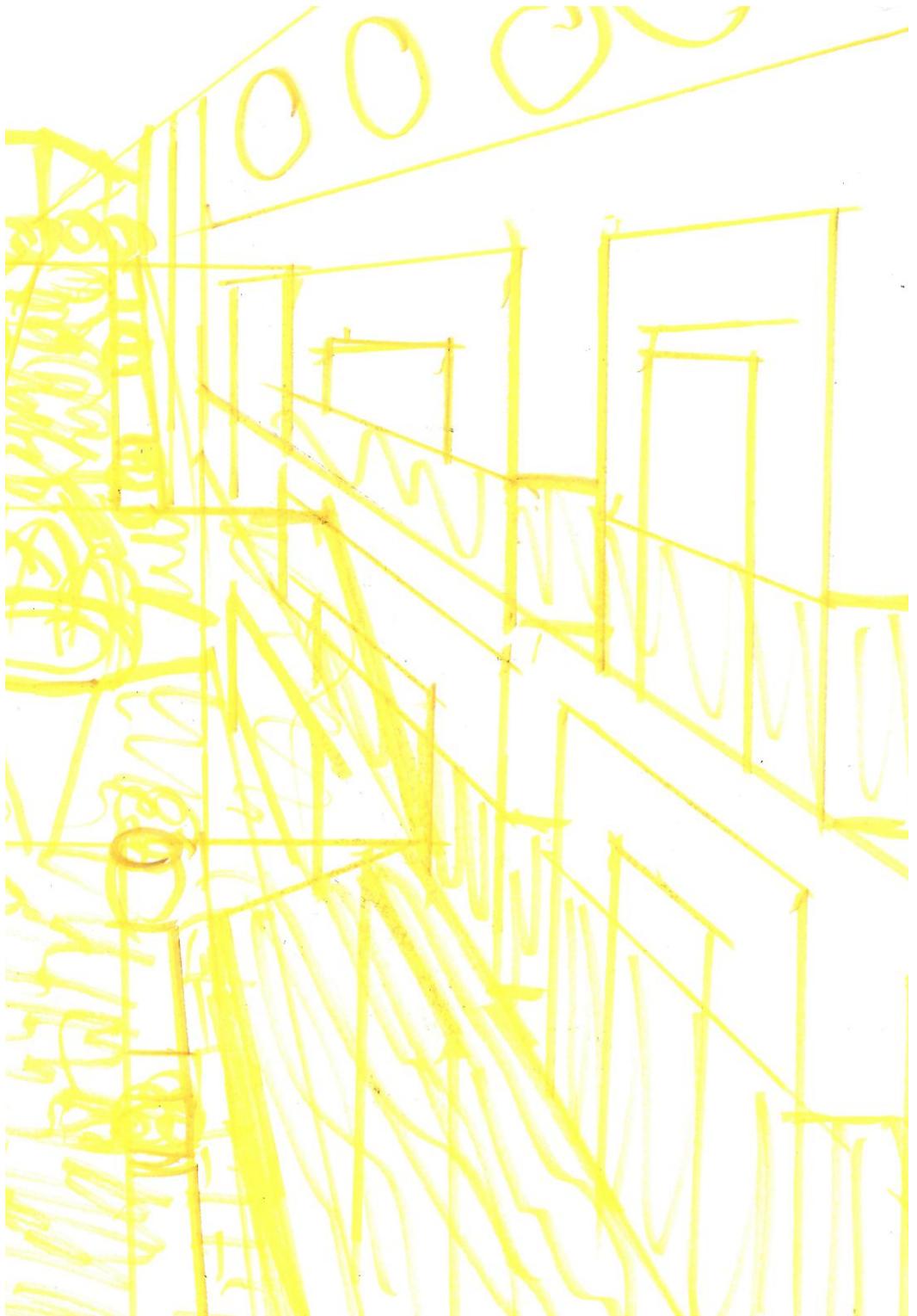
Rachel Power  
Chloe Walsh  
Heather O'Brien

**W**alking from Bridge Street to Abbey Meadow. The window dressing fairy has decorated all the windows with flowers, diamonds and colourful art pieces. Park in the meadow that is made completely of wood. Picnic areas in the meadow, and colourful benches. Benches of colour. Make the flood

gates colourful. Decorate the meadow  
windows in the Abbey so they look  
pretty. Decorate the windows of the  
keat and the white and black building.  
Let animals in the wildlife/birds swans,  
ducks, and geese.





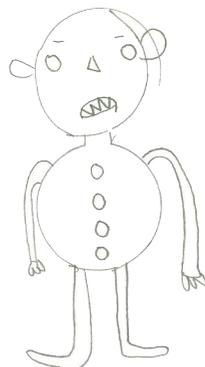


# TROLLS

Abby Keane  
Nicola Morris  
Amanda Morris

**O**ne day the lonely friendly troll was helping the final child cross the bridge over the motte he called Home when a small bag dropped on the watery muck below him, he looked for the owner but he couldn't find him. He picked up the bag and looked inside, there were 23 small circle sugar coated balls, he

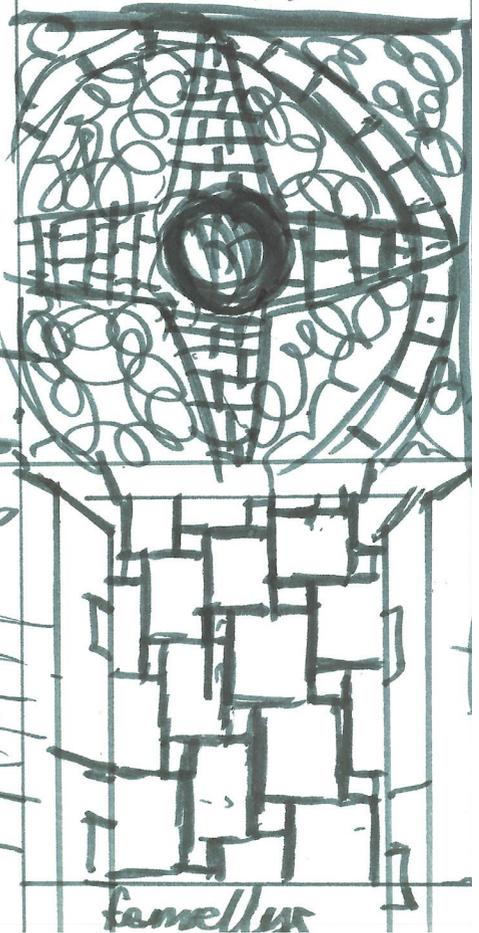
put one in his mouth and did what he always did all day when there were no kids. He dreamt about being a human, he dreamt about going to school in a human body and meeting friends. He slowly came back to reality and had a weird feeling in his toes. He looked down and there were two weird feet attached to two human legs that were attached to him. He looked at himself in the murky water, he had a human face he was so excited he ran all the way to school.



**O**ne day there was a friendly troll who helped kids across the motte on their way to school, but there were so many children and the cows grew more savage but he was lonely during the day. One day while he was walking down Bridge Street he met a lady troll. She was lonely too. The friendly troll gave the lady troll his magic sweets telling her only that “all your dreams come true when you eat these sweets.” They both wanted a friend their wishes came true they helped the children

on their way to school and back. They helped paint Bridge Street beautiful bright colours and helped people across roads. Everything was perfect.







# TROLL STUCK IN THE MOTTE

Shauna Kealy  
Katie Gander  
Gabriele Cecenkovaite

**I**t was in the Abbey Meadow when people, mostly teens, noticed the friendly troll. The troll's name was Griddle, he helped people cross the bridge safely. One day, a troubled teen named James was crossing the bridge but Griddle knew that James was uneasy about crossing the bridge so Griddle helped him. Griddle

and James were talking and James mentioned he needed to go to the motte and he asked Griddle to go with him because he was afraid to go on his own. Griddle agreed. They made their way to the motte and it was a huge struggle. A cow with wings flew out of the bush and scared James away. Griddle was left alone and he realised he was stuck in the motte. There was a flood around the motte. People started to realise Griddle wasn't around so the mayor of Callan called Bob called a town meeting and set up a search for Griddle. The search party takes

up the flood water and put a fountain  
I the street to collect the flood water.  
Griddle and the town were happy  
again and there were no more floods.  
This brought the town together.



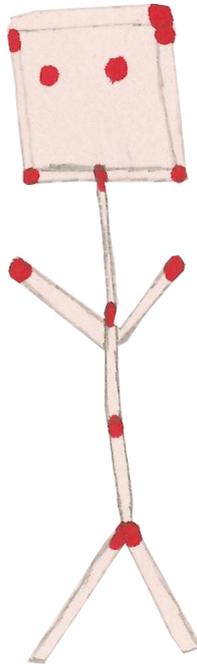


# THE FAMOUS MATCHMAKER'S IDEAS

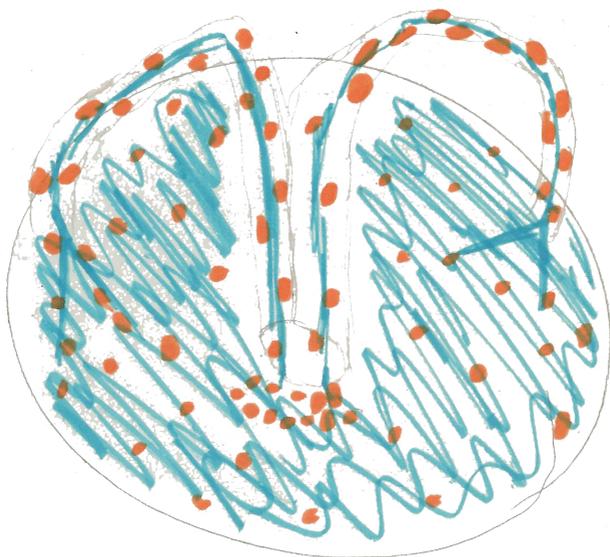
Kornelija Lukoseviciate  
Clodagh Lynch  
Ciara Wall

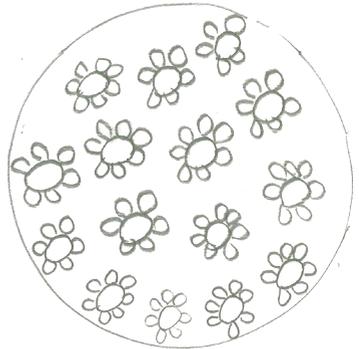
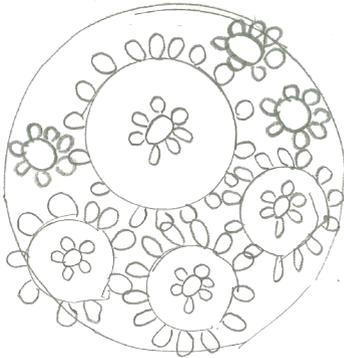
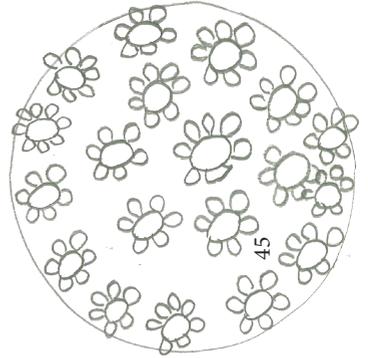
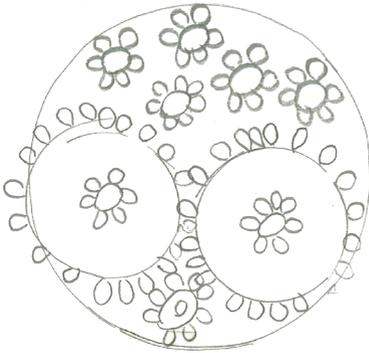
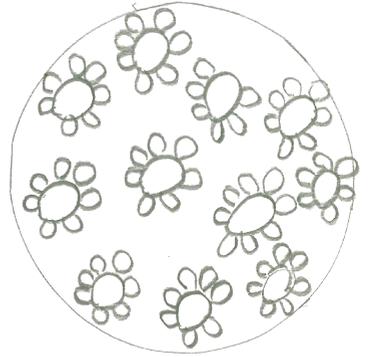
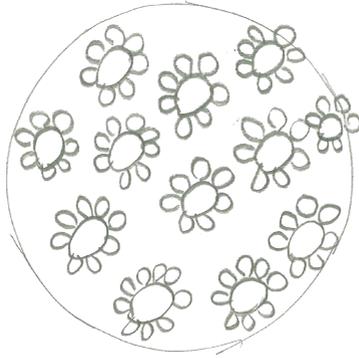
**O**nce upon a time there was  
a matchmaker made up  
of matches who lived on  
Callan's rooftops and built tree houses  
for people and animals who needed  
shelter from bad weather. The tree  
houses would help homeless people.  
Rooftops of Bridge Street were where

the matchmaker got his inspiration.  
The matchmaker's ideas brought  
people together. The fountain is a  
round-about in the middle of Bridge  
Street with water in it. The fountain  
brings people from other countries for  
holiday.



**I**n Spring, the fountain of flood  
water is a healer for all sickness.  
**I**n Summer, it is a pool for all  
the people of the town and heated. In  
Autumn, the fountain and the leaves  
go up with the water. In Winter, it is  
an ice-ring with an ice slide and ice  
swings.







*The Window Dressing Fairy:  
Makes beautiful displays in empty shop windows*



# NEVER TRUST AN OLD AGE PENSIONER

Shauna Kealy  
Katie Gander  
Gabriele Cecenkovaite

**O**ld age pensioners breaking  
into a teenagers' house  
so the teenager called the  
magic fairies by throwing cauliflower  
into the river. The fairy came and  
decorated the windows. The dog was  
the fairy's pet and pooped magic  
money, his name was Gizmo. The  
teenagers then used the magic money

to pay the fairy but the fairy would not go back so they threw broccoli at her. The dog did not go with her and opened up a rehab for troublesome old age pensioners, he entertained them with his magic money trick.





## THE PROTECTOR OF CALLAN

Samantha Morris  
Emer Donphy  
Lucy White  
Leah Murray

**C**allan is protected in a way that most people would not understand. A bird lights the way to make sure residents and locals are safe. The bird lights the streets in the dark. Quiet, the bird is called The Glow Worm, a safety glow worm Protector of Callan. It turns its light out from people to the Stargaze.

People of Callan need 'daonine tham lean' to understand the meaning of our safety and we need to share our story and invite others to Callan. Our magical, fantastic, amazing glow worm travels for miles... He reaches foreign countries to invite people to Bridge Street. They arrive behind the buildings of Bridge Street. They gather in Callan's courtyard to experience the breath-taking work of the unique bird named The Glow Worm. When the humans from abroad got home, they were mesmerised by Callan's Glow

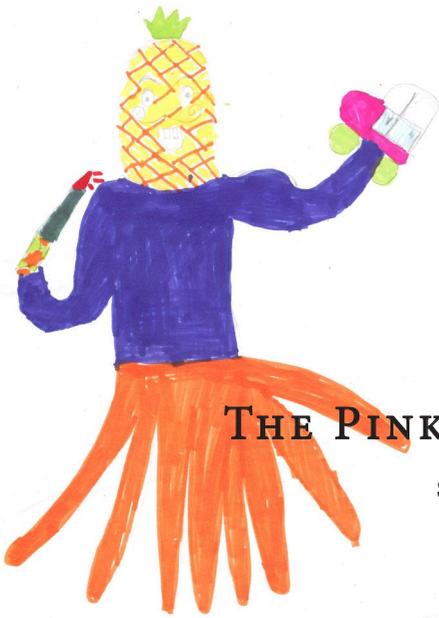
Worm and sent their thanks. Not only were the people happy and safe but so was The Glow Worm. Bridge Street would be safe forever.











## THE PINK WISHING WELL

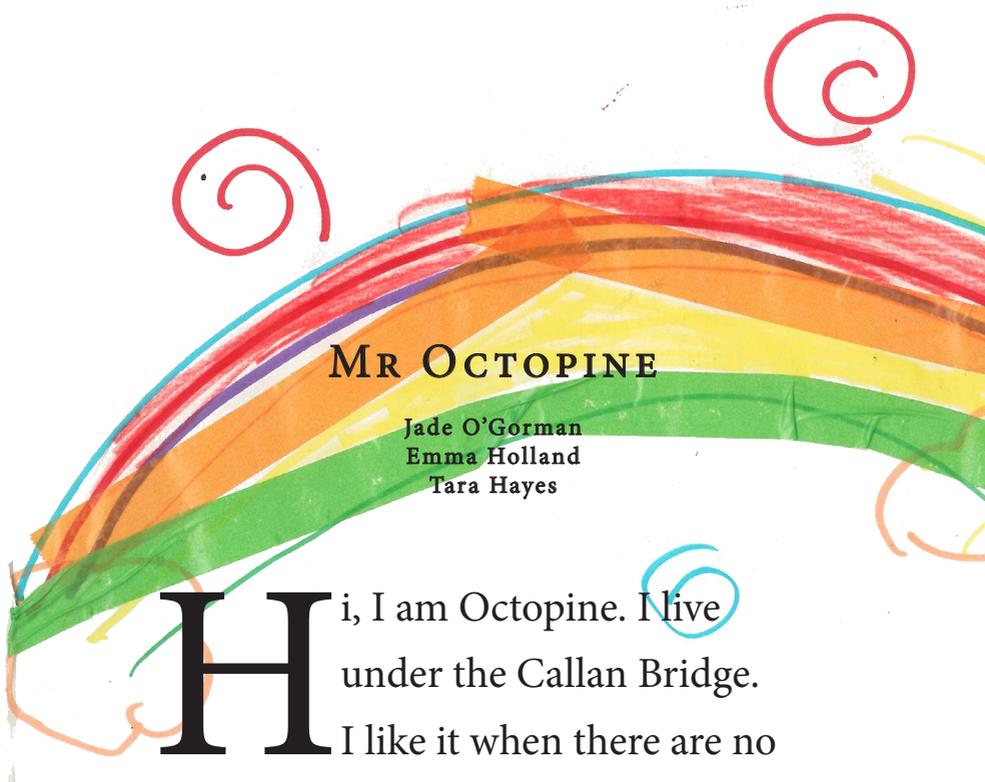
Shannon Bush  
Fern Kealy  
Amy Doyle

**H**i, my name is Jacob Connor.  
I am half man half donkey.  
My hair is neon blue and  
I live in the greatest most beautiful  
and greatest place in the world, also  
known as Bridge Street or the rooftops  
of Bridge Street. I have the greatest,  
most beautiful and greatest pet, my  
pig Wilma, who can talk and send

invitations to tourists from other towns to come to Callan to see our greatest, most beautiful, greatest buildings in Callan. I have painted the buildings rainbow colours and given the roofs glass skylights and Wilma helps me to fill the empty buildings with people who need space to live/work. I included built in sound-systems, free wifi and disco lights. Each rooftop has a unique garden and pink wishing well. Since Wilma and I match people with the buildings best suited to them, we get to show them the houses from the greatest,

most beautiful and greatest rooftops. I modernised all of the houses, of course, so you will feel like you are living in 2020. If you have a low budget I can rent the houses out. If I have succeeded in being the greatest, most beautiful, greatest Jacob Connor Matchmaker, then you will want to buy the house and spend the rest of your days there.





## MR OCTOPINE

Jade O’Gorman  
Emma Holland  
Tara Hayes

**H**i, I am Octopine. I live  
under the Callan Bridge.  
I like it when there are no  
cars parked on my bridge. At 4 o’clock,  
my disco starts and we make chocolate  
and chips out of bollards. When I get  
happy, I make a rainbow. One day a  
girl parked on my bridge. Friend Jade  
tried to kill her but on the way home

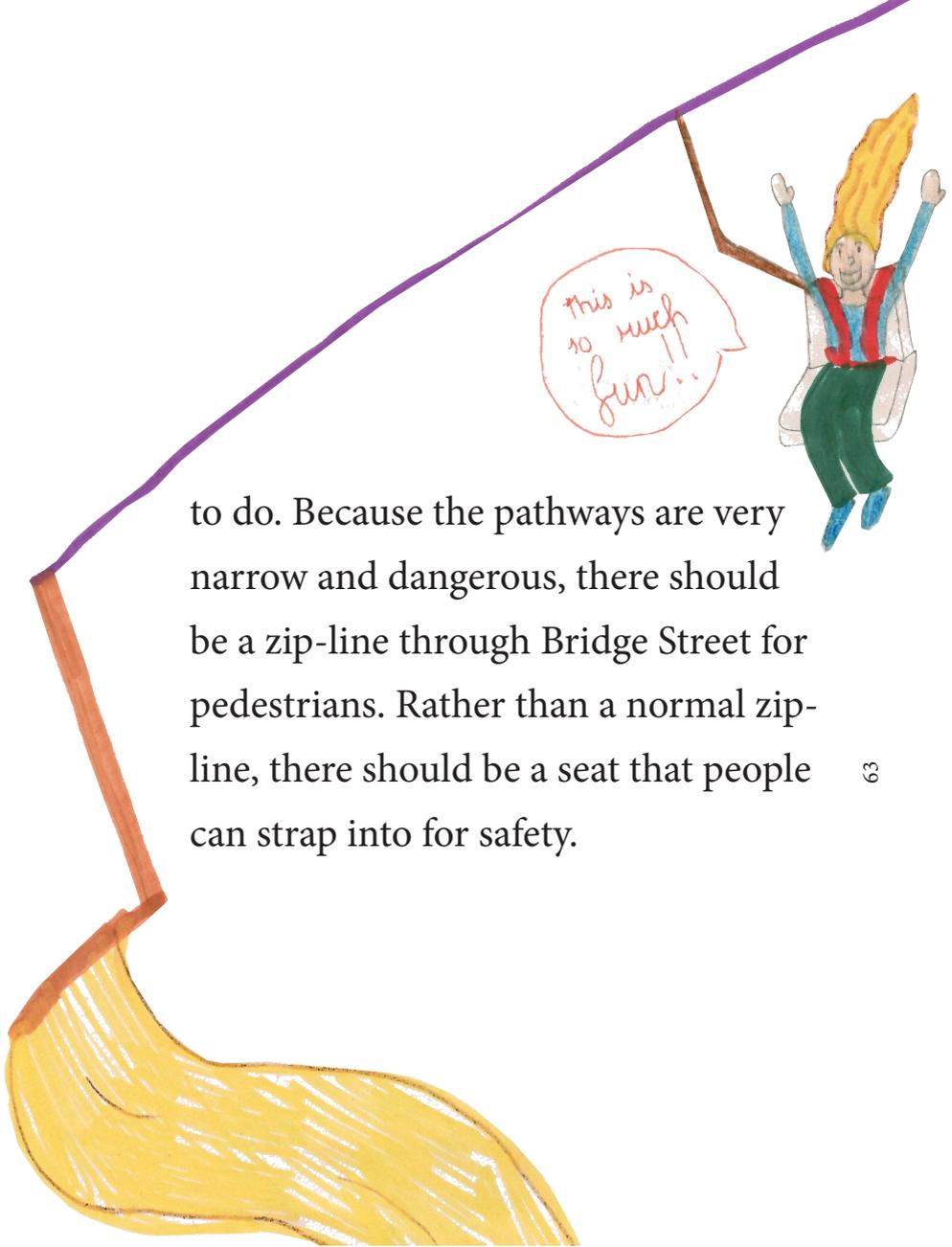


I saw her and saved her. Ever since, many people have kept my bridge clean and in return my wand turns bollards into chips. The bridge looks amazing. After a lonely life, he met a lovely lady called Emma and they lived happily ever after.

# THOMAS THE CRACK FILLER

Erin Birch-Marsh  
Jessica Ryan  
Ciara Murphy

**T**homas waves his hand at long grass and it is instantly mowed. He can do the same to make the pavement smooth. Bridge Street need more bins by the Keat. Thomas can post a Compulsory Activation Note to any building and turn it into a Leisure Centre or Gym. There should be more things

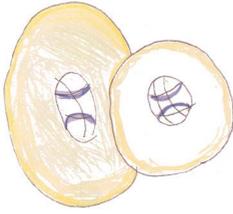


to do. Because the pathways are very narrow and dangerous, there should be a zip-line through Bridge Street for pedestrians. Rather than a normal zip-line, there should be a seat that people can strap into for safety. 3



Filling the pot holes with chocolate, making the pavement smooth for all

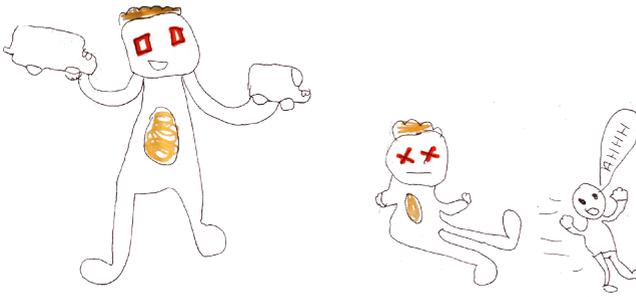




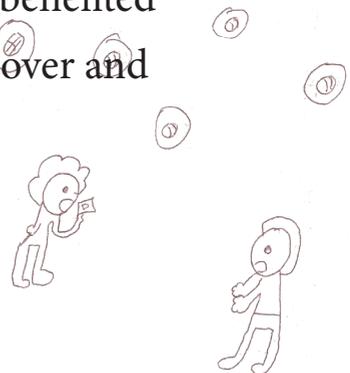
## BRIDGE STREET MARKET CRASH

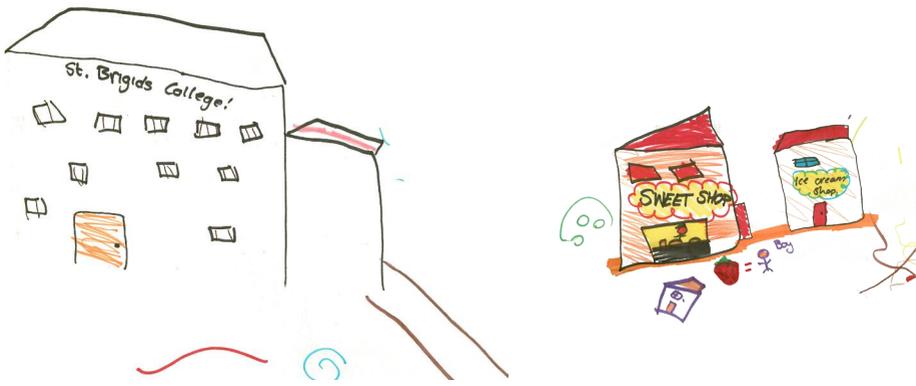
Emily Keane  
Ciara Smith  
Michelle Mahony

**T**he crash was terrible, this is what happened... The new currency for Bridge Street just came in. The locals were made to spend the new money in Bridge Street market. There was a problem with all the cars on Bridge Street. They informed the Callan scientist electro of the problem and asked him to invent



a machine to help. He made a massive giant called Crash. He picked up cars and moved them to proper spaces, he only took the Bridge Street pound. One day, a man gave Crash the wrong money so Crash broke down. The man was afraid and ran telling no one. The cars began to build up, causing a crash on the bridge. This crash got a lot of publicity and the Bridge Street pound became most popular amongst the people of Callan. The crash benefited Bridge Street, it got a make-over and was as good as new.



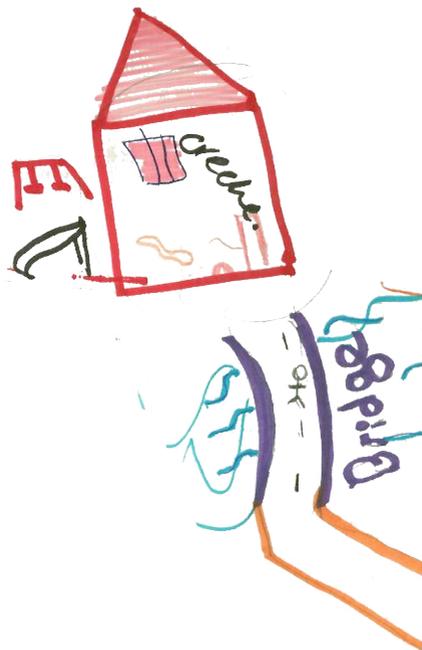


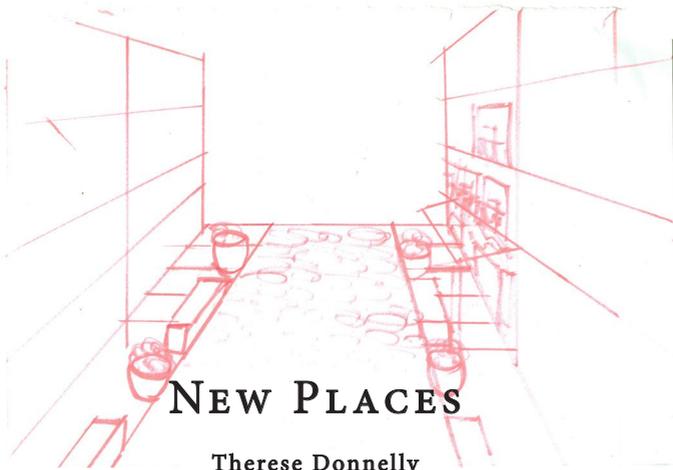
## THE WORM BOY

Chloe Bergin  
Niamh Hogan  
Dariya Hristova  
Emily Hughes

**T**he worm lives in a mansion  
(he belongs to a rich-man)  
and goes off to sweet shop  
to buy strawberry and cream sweets  
which turn him into a boy. He then  
attempts to steal the sun to power  
up his light and is sent to jail for this  
crime. The jail is St Brigid's College.  
The Worm Boy escapes from prison,

he rushes to the pool and gets ice cream before returning to the pool. When he is finished, he goes to the Disco and lights up the Disco Ball with his bulb. He then goes to the crèche to pick up his daughter and over the bridge into the carpark and back into jail.





## NEW PLACES

Therese Donnelly  
Niamh Bambrick  
Ava Brennan

**T**homas makes the roads smooth and introduces new places and activities to Callan: the swimming pool, garden centre, smoothie bar, music centre, youth club, and new houses. He lights up the bridge, builds a chocolate shop and an art studio. Callan now holds a massive drum that passers-by can play on

outside the music shop. In the centre of Callan sits the 'big dome' it is a social area where people can stop and have a chat.

