Easy As Pie is a research project posing questions of food and food storytelling as mediators for cross-cultural contact and communication. By employing theatrical approaches and methods, three creative workshops were designed and took place in July 2019 at the Museum of English Rural Life in Reading.

The aim of the project was to engage the participants (Reading community members) in devising and sharing stories related to food and migration whilst introducing in the creative process the MERL’s collections and facilities. As a result, participants explored the museum’s exhibition as well as the herbal garden and an original kitchen space of the building and draw inspiration from the spatial setting, sounds and objects of the museum. Some of the stories written by participants were then shared in the studio, herbal garden and some in the shepherds hut – each places carefully chosen by participants in collaboration with facilitators in order to enhance the storytelling.

As part of the workshop, participants were introduced and lead through the psycho-physical warm-up practices of theatre-making such as breathing techniques, mindfulness and movement exercises. With a help from the creative team free-writing tasks were practiced and ideas for storylines generated. Musician Jack Webb provided musical score for the stories as well as the background music for the devising exercises that took place in the Studio.

The outcome of the workshops is presented here, on this website – an online installation, where the audio-recorded stories of participants from Algeria, Romania, Ukraine and England are made available to our audience.

We invite the audience to engage with the artwork documentation of the workshops created by Tom Pearce. Tom has attended one of the Easy as Pie workshops and documented the day in drawings which is displayed along with the audio narratives and in the Documentation Gallery.

Easy As Pie Storytelling is dedicated to a wider audience of those who have experienced migration directly or indirectly. Through the sharing of stories, community members are given the voice and offer an invaluable insight into a complex experience of migration, searching for one’s home and belonging. The Easy As Pie storytelling installation is key to reach out to our audiences and migrant communities in UK and beyond. The website is also offering transparency of the research methodology for the academic audience who is interested in theatre and migration studies.