



# IMPACTFUL INSIGHTS

APRIL 2022- MARCH 2023

## STAY IN TOUCH

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Search Creative Scene

**MAKING ART A PART  
OF EVERYDAY LIFE**



# ABOUT CREATIVE SCENE

Creative Scene is a programme of arts, creative activities and events made with and for the people of Kirklees, West Yorkshire. It seeks to encourage more people to experience and be inspired by the arts. It is one of the projects funded by Arts Council England, the national funding body for the arts, a fund to focus their investment where people are less involved in arts and cultural activities than elsewhere in England.

Groups of local stakeholders - a consortium of groups and organisations were invited to put together proposals as to how they could deliver on this ambition, through an 'Action Research' approach exploring and trying out ways to bring together communities, artists and arts organisations that could lead to more people taking part in and engaging in the arts.

Creative People and Places brings together these local partners to create a programme of arts activity that is dramatically different from what exists already, is of very high quality, and which reaches the parts the arts don't usually meet!

What makes Creative People and Places unique, is that the arts activity driven by local communities, designed by, for and with people, so that it is relevant, inspiring and accessible.

## OUR AIM

**TO ENCOURAGE, INVEST IN, AND SUPPORT A THRIVING ARTS SCENE IN KIRKLEES THAT IS ACCESSIBLE AND RELEVANT TO THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE HERE.**

## OUR VISION

**TO MAKE A LASTING CHANGE IN THE WAY PEOPLE TAKE PART IN, MAKE, AND EXPERIENCE THE ARTS, AND IN LEVELS OF ACCESS TO CREATIVITY AND CULTURE.**

We believe that:

- Everyone can develop and express creativity throughout their life.
- Creativity and culture have a key role in making our towns, neighbourhoods and villages come to life and thrive.
- People have the right to choose, take part in, experience and be inspired by the arts.

This report sets out how we achieved this during the year April 2022 - March 2023.





# HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WE'VE ALL BEEN UP TO

OVER

2,500



people TOOK PART in creative activities, from felt making, film making, print making and pottery, painting to poetry, performances, and zine making, creative writing and textile art.

MORE THAN

35,000



people JOINED IN by attending events, shows, exhibitions, online screenings and in the environment.

OVER

750



children have been able to enjoy family shows in their local community centre.

MORE THAN

1,200



school students have taken part in creative activities and workshops to create exhibitions and murals.

OVER

10,000



people have experienced our extra special festive fun with performances, walkabout acts and live music as part of free community events in town centres in Dewsbury, Cleckheaton and Birstall.

WORKED WITH OVER

40 COMMUNITY GROUPS



and projects, maintained and strengthened the partnerships we'd made during lockdown, listening to them about what they needed from us to make art a part of everyday life in Kirklees.

PROVIDED STUDIO SPACE TO

28



artists, part of Redbrick Studios, in our space at Brigantia Studio, building a thriving artistic community in the heart of Dewsbury.

SUPPORTED

16

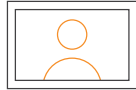


artists and producers to get back out into our communities with our Make It Happen training scheme and 20 young people to find out more about how to succeed in a creative career as part of the PACE project.

# HERE'S A SNAPSHOT OF WHAT WE'VE ALL BEEN UP TO

## WE COMMISSIONED

**32 DIFFERENT ARTISTS**



or companies to create work with local communities- from film and theatre makers to digital artists, dancers, potters, printmakers and puppet-makers!

## WE DEVELOPED

**MAKE IT HAPPEN**



a knowledge exchange for artists in partnership with Leeds Arts University, which saw 12 artists from the West Yorkshire region working together over 6 days to develop their practice in developing and producing socially engaged arts.

**LEAST-ENGAGED COMMUNITIES**



Our participants and audiences came from across the least-engaged communities and neighbourhoods in Kirklees, and included those with experience of homelessness and isolation, older people, refugee communities, parents and young people.

**ACCESSIBLE LOCATIONS**



Found new ways of making arts and events accessible in locations and non-traditional venues - creating a Gallery in a pair of dis-used phone boxes, making murals on the walls of the train station and on the gable end of a shopping centre, putting on performances in pubs, community, and social spaces.

**INNOVATIVE ARTS**



Experimented with forms of innovative arts including developing a new Augmented Reality Art Trail around Batley which will engage local groups in telling their stories and stories of the town.

**OUR CREATIVE SPACES**



Our Creative Spaces in Union Street and Brigantia Studios have provided workshop and exhibition space for 20+ local artists, and meeting and event space for 12 local community groups.



# HOW WE WORK

## Hidden Gems:

### Listening to what communities want, finding hidden voices and assets

What had changed for our communities during Covid? We wanted to find out and make new opportunities for people who don't usually get heard and find out what they would like to take part in.

We worked with 3 local artists to do a deep dive into the North Kirklees area through a month-long residency with a difference. They visited the forgotten places and spaces of our area – the estates, the church halls, the disused community centres to see where people were hanging out, where there is need and desire for new activity. They met people for a cuppa in cafes and uncovered rich stories, fascinating people, and many community activities and assets that had previously been 'off the radar'. These were the unheard voices and hidden gems that inspired the development of our **'People Powered'** projects. Local groups and residents developed creative briefs, selected the artists they wanted to work with, and got going on new creative activities and events they have not had the chance to try before.

## People Powered:

### Putting Down Roots

Natasha - a ceramics artist from Gomersal, and Sara, a writer from Dewsbury, heard from residents on the Shirley Estate that there wasn't much going on for families at the weekends so they set out to change that. Over a month the community room at St Mary's was filled with 40 people each Sunday, a multi-generational mix of extended families, telling stories of their heritage and roots, and creating their own family-themed clay pots to be planted up as gifts on Mothers day.



“Everything has been so stressful, it's wonderful to get this special time to spend time together as a family”



“We're telling our stories to each other and finding out things we never knew before!”



## HOW WE WORK

### People Powered: Seasons in A box

Keep Hecky Tidy are dedicated to cleaning up the town centre through litter picks and recycling campaigns. They adopted two vintage telephone boxes to create a Gallery of hope for the town. Over the festive period, we worked with them to create a new exhibition, with local artist Maya M - a whole winter wonderland of creatures based on the wildlife found in Heckmondwike Green came to life!



“To see this beautiful work in the town centre is a real tonic- makes our little village feel very special for Christmas!”



### The Change Project: Exhibition at Oakwell Hall Barn

This year our Weston Jerwood Fellow, Amy, produced the annual Change project with the Mosaic Charity, Batley Girls High School and Cummins Turbo Technologies. The project has a focus on tackling challenges facing the creative and engineering industries - include gender inequalities and under representation of individuals from minority backgrounds. We commissioned a diverse group of artists from West Yorkshire that participants could identify with bringing their creativity to all the workshops to make STEM subjects accessible to young people - and unlocking the students' own creativity and imagination in the process.

# HOW WE WORK

## Make it!

Young people were invited to have a burger on us - with a side of creative careers advice when we teamed up with Kirklees initiative PACE- Participation in the Arts & Creative Economy which explores how young people can get ahead in the creative industries. We teamed up with Batley's Burger Bros to host a free event for young people wanting to find out how to Make It in the creative industries. A panel of brilliant speakers, many of whom had worked with young people in Kirklees were on hand to field their questions and provide inspiration.



“Take challenges as opportunities, create your own space as there might not be one for you.”



“Dream big and celebrate each 'win', each step of your journey.”





# THE 'GLOBAL MAJORITY' WORKING WITH KIRKLEES' ETHNICALLY DIVERSE COMMUNITIES

Throughout the year we have worked closely with cultural partners and community groups/leaders to co-design a series of new activities with BAME communities, including those of South Asian heritage, refugee, and asylum-seeking communities.

The Literacy Circle published their book of poetry, *The New Normal* a poetry compilation created during lockdown, and we worked with them to turn this into a film and online performance as part of MAC-Fest (Muslim Arts and Culture festival).

We partnered with Bradford Literature Festival to bring world-class performances from Shabnam Khan to women at Ravensthorpe Community Centre and The Saheli's Project, as part of post Ramadan cultural celebrations.

We are proud to partner with 6Million+, a charity that get creative with an extended family of refugees, artists and communities, telling stories of migration, genocide and displacement. We hosted their workshops to create Holocaust Memorial Day in Kirklees, and their giant puppets The Weeping Sisters have been seen at events in Batley, Dewsbury and Huddersfield.



## MAKING MAGIC MOMENTS!

Our Spark Community Events Partnerships with community-led events and festivals who share an interest in developing new audiences, and support them to identify and present work they wouldn't otherwise be able to access. This year we brought some extra sparkle to three Festive events for all the community to enjoy.



### **Birstall Lights:**

Ghost Caribou, wonderful large-scale lanterns and shadow puppet theatre by Thingumajig Theatre.



### **Dewsbury Lights:**

The Baghdaddies wandering brass troubadours, with an eclectic mix of music from around the globe.



### **Cleckheaton Lights:**

The Ski Band - bringing fun and mayhem with roving sing - along to around town.



“What a fantastic show - totally different and it brightened up the night for our elderly residents!”



# PLACE MAKING - BRIGHTENING UP BATLEY

## THE JOY PROJECT - BATLEY TRAIN STATION

Friends of Batley Station and Northern Rail wanted to bring some joy for those waiting at Batley Train Station. Artists Emmeline North worked with three local schools to design a series of panels across the frontage and platforms, inspired by the geography and heritage of the town. Their work influenced and sat alongside Emmeline's own striking painting that fills the window and door panels at the station.



“The boys really enjoyed taking part- making their mark in the town and are so excited to be sharing from this was evident in the quality of their own paintings and their excitement to share their art works publicly.”



Sharing Joy At Work and Launch with Kim Leadbeater MP & Ski Band



“I look at them everyday and it changes my mood.”

## SPRING – THE TREE OF LIFE AT REDBRICK MILL

How to celebrate Spring and welcome people back into the town? A 50-metre high printed mural on the gable end of the mill a prominent gateway to Batley seen by hundreds every day. The idea was born out of an idea by local businesses in partnership with Redbrick Mill Artists Collective with artist Tom Woods. They held design workshops with schools to create The Tree of Life, marking the end of the Covid lockdowns and new life in the town.





## INVESTING IN THE ARTISTS - COMMIT TO BEING CREATIVE

The Curiosity Exhibition saw eight Kirklees artists create and curate new work for their own exhibition from their workshops held on Zoom during lockdown. Celebrating the freedom to be expressive and returning to the world after the isolation of the pandemic, it featured kaleidoscopic mosaics and self-portraits looking at fragmented identity, miniature clay sculptures and textiles depicting family. Fifty visitors were taken on a journey through changing perspectives, connection, mental health and motherhood.

## MADE TO BE SEEN

In partnership with the Big Imaginations Network and together with community venues we commissioned a small-scale performance for non-traditional spaces and supported Stute Theatre to carry out R&D for their new show Cardboard Cosmos at Healy Community Centre.



We commissioned performer and theatre maker Guy Hargreaves, who worked with us during lockdown to research memory and connections to the past, for a new show for adults. Guy spent time in community locations to uncover and be inspired by stories which will become a one-man show into local libraries, community, and social spaces.

# WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR

Friends of Batley Station

Milen Care

Keep Hecky Tidy

The Mosaic Charity

Northern Rail

St Mary's Church Community Space,  
Gomersal

Milen Care - elderly day care  
provision

Cleckheaton Christmas Festival &  
Markets

Cleckheaton Matters group

PACE- Participation in the Arts &  
Creative Economy

Burger Bros

Healey Community Centre

Little Town of Play

Cummins Turbo Technologies

Redbrick Mill Yorkshire

Kirklees Youth Alliance

Men's Talk

Dewsbury Community Outreach

Sahelis Project

Go Dewsbury

Birstall Chamber of Trade

Bradford Literature Festival

Leeds Arts University

MACFest - international Muslim arts  
festival

Huddersfield Town Foundation Trust

Batley Bulldogs Community  
Foundation

Support 2 Recovery

The Institute of Public Policy  
Research

Heckmondwike Community  
Association

Batley Festival

Spark Skills

6Million+

Ravensthorpe Community Centre

Brigantia Creative



# WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR: SCHOOLS

Batley Girls High School

Field Lane Junior, Infant & Nursery School

Batley Grammar School

Lydgate Junior and Infant School

Birstall Primary Academy

Hyrstmount Junior School

Manorfield Infant & Nursery School

Carlton Junior and Infant School

Batley Girls' High School

Upper Batley High School

Healey Junior, Infant & Nursery School

Windmill CoE Primary School

Warwick Road Primary School

Mill Lane Primary School

Fieldhead Primary Academy.





# WITH SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS THROUGHOUT THE YEAR: ARTISTS

MAYA.M

Natasha Jackson

Sara Sherwood

Emmeline North

Nathan Towers

Syima Aslam

Imran Azam

Megan Bailey

Nussarat Khan

Tom Woods

Redbrick Mill Artists

Helaina Sharpley

Abigail Barker

Iqra Rafiq

Saba Rifat

Andy Singleton

Chris Squire

Rozi Fuller

Shanaz Gulzar

Irfan Mohammed

Madiha Ansari

6Million+

FlyGirl Films

Media Preview

Musarrat Rahman

The Ski Band

Faz Shah

Mambo Jambo

Baghdaddies

Pauline Leitch

Karen Stansfield

Curiosity Arts

Harriet Lawson

Thingumagig Theatre

Story Craft York

Stute Theatre

Guy Hargreaves

**Photo credits:**

Nathan Towers

Amy Foster

Creative Scene.

Visit our website: [www.creativescene.org.uk](http://www.creativescene.org.uk)

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