



Being creative
makes you feel good

Photo credit Janine

hoot
creative arts

OUT OF THE BLUE
Quarterly Report
QUARTER 1 / APR - JUN 2024

Summary

This is the first quarter of the new Out of the Blue commissioned service and whilst we undertake research and development work around new offers, we kept quarter 1 delivery 'as is'. Our groups have continued in a healthy fashion, and we have been able to use the core programme to identify gaps and programme accordingly for Quarter 2 and beyond.

We enjoyed working with our Working Together Better partners to plan for events and awareness-raising, and **hoot** was present at the Carers Count Celebration Day and the WTB staff well-being day. We were pleased to meet the newly appointed Strategic Lead for the partnership and the timing was perfect for the new tender to start with a clearer strategic vision developed. Additionally, the new Working Together Better communications group met and continued exploring how services could work together to promote the partnership offer.

Our social media channels continued to grow, with increased reach and engagement. Content that particularly resonated with our audience included awareness day campaigns and posts about our Working Together Better partnership away day.

“ I feel proud of my felted piece and having it in a frame has really made it look great - I will take it home and show my family

”

Credit: Manaly



Highlights



Carers Art Walk in Greenhead Park

Our artist Sally Barker led a creative stroll through Greenhead Park as part of Carers Week in partnership with Carers Count. A group of carers felt the benefits of creativity through using sketchbooks and nature to inspire their art.



CPD at Huddersfield University

We worked in partnership with Huddersfield University to develop and deliver 6 workshops around socially engaged creative practice. Areas covered included outcome measures, impact, inclusive practice as well as providing awareness raising of **hoot** and a forum for networking and connecting.



Working Together Better Staff Day

Over 50 staff gathered at the Mission in Huddersfield to learn more about each others services, network together and try taster sessions of the varied offers across the partnership. The atmosphere was buzzing and staff left feeling positive about the next 5 years together.



Good News Story

"**hoot** has given me the time and space over several years to become more confident and self aware. It has been there when I've needed safety, guidance and a creative outlet. Through the support of the wonderful staff my life has changed for the better and allowed me to explore new avenues outside of sessions. It has become a true lifeline when I get to the point of not wanting to exist. [**hoot** is] a huge gift and I hope that when I'm old and grey **hoot** is still around helping the younger generations the way it has helped me"



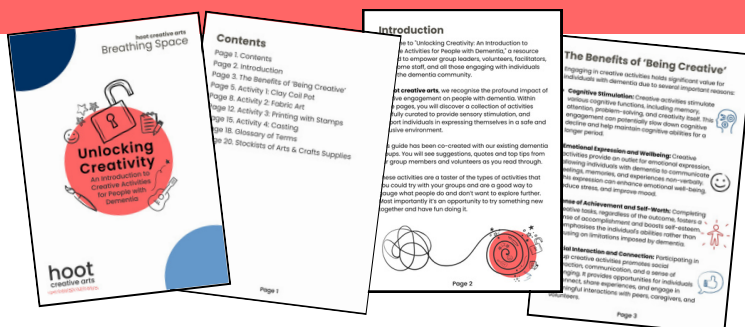
Womencentre x hoot music workshop

hoot musician Rob Crisp met with Womencentre music therapist Emily Druce to develop and pilot a music workshop together at the WTB Staff day. This workshop went so well that the group participants asked to perform their song as the finale to the day!

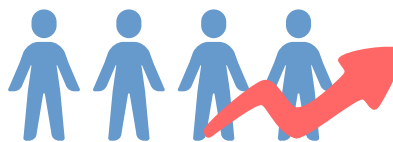


Dementia Awareness Week

We launched 'Unlocking Creativity: An Introduction to Creative Activities for People with Dementia' - an innovative booklet resource aimed at inspiring creativity within the dementia care sector.



The numbers



135

people using the service



90

in-person sessions

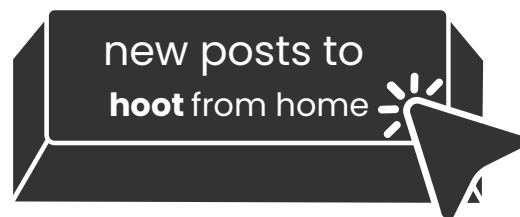
274

hours of contact with participants online



68

new posts to hoot from home



13
hours

spent offline continuing being creative
average per person



24

online activities



Art Sessions

8

Blog Posts

8

Singing Sessions

8

32

individuals at **WELCOME!** sessions



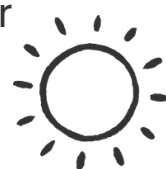
20

new referrals



20

people with autism, dementia, a learning disability, or other hidden disability



100

people over 35



16 people under 35

42

people who identify as disabled



2050

hours of contact with participants



Out of the Blue activities



MUSIC

The Music groups worked on a joint theme this quarter: 'Down by the River'. Writing semi improvised ambient songs on the theme of rivers using small musical compositions layered together to create a textured piece of music representing the changing ebb and flow of the river. Groups really embraced this theme and sometimes got lost in thought around the relaxing sounds of a babbling stream.



VISUAL ARTS

Visual arts groups this quarter spanned various activities. Artist Musarat Raza worked with one group to create landscapes using wet felting – a specific technique that can build colours, layers and texture leading to some beautiful landscape scenes that people could take home.

The groups then had the theme of the sea for inspiration and repurposed plastic waste as resources to print with. These newly created printing tools were used to develop beautiful sea creatures and plants which are currently on display in the creative space.



Credit: Thursday Group

SINGING

We worked with Sam Hodgson this quarter who led the group in beautiful folk songs and harmonies. Sam complemented the in-person sessions with posting resources (recordings, sheet music, background info) on the **hoot** from home platform for people to access between groups.

Jess Baker also worked with the group as she is a firm favourite who pulls out the best from our singers.

“ I always feel so much better physically and emotionally when I attend – it's been a difficult time for me recently but coming to **hoot** really helps. ”

CREATIVE WRITING

We worked with 2 artists this quarter: Marianne Matusz and Sammy Weaver. The group enjoyed the diversity of styles and created pieces that spanned poetry, haikus, fiction and prose. Themes included nature, characters and using objects for inspiration.

“ I always feel better after I've come to a writing session. ”

DIGITAL MUSIC

The digital music group went back to the 80s for their sessions – listening to original computer game music pieces and using them as inspiration to create their own. Using synths and software the group were excited to create new pieces that emulated the old tunes.



Breathing Space / Thursday Group



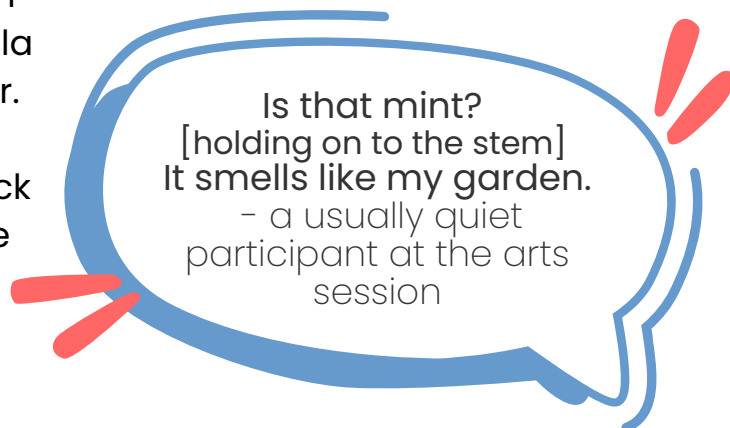
The new tender has put a financial squeeze on the activities, as delivery budget was reduced, however we have been able to squeeze the budget to almost deliver the same number of sessions and the group facilitator Tina, is a fantastic fit and she is proactive in looking for other opportunities to enrich the programme further.



Photos from the Thursday Group

Movement – The monthly chair yoga session has continued, and we have booked Umbrella Yoga to deliver monthly sessions for the year.

Visual Arts – The group have welcomed back last year regular Lianne, and **hoot's** in-house artist Sally Barker delivered the first Spring session with a nature-infused and inspired session, which everyone joined in with.



Music – We tried something new this quarter, and welcomed a musician for sound bath healing, who we had previously worked with on Kirklees Year of Music. It was quite an experience, which some enjoyed and others did not. He will be coming back for another session which the group will be writing a brief for so that they can try out some of the instruments.

Trips/Go Sees – Unfortunately, we do not have budget to continue this offer, however we are seeking free opportunities and the group met outside of regular sessions to have a day out to Halifax through a free offer from Northern Rail, as part of their Dementia Friendly offer.

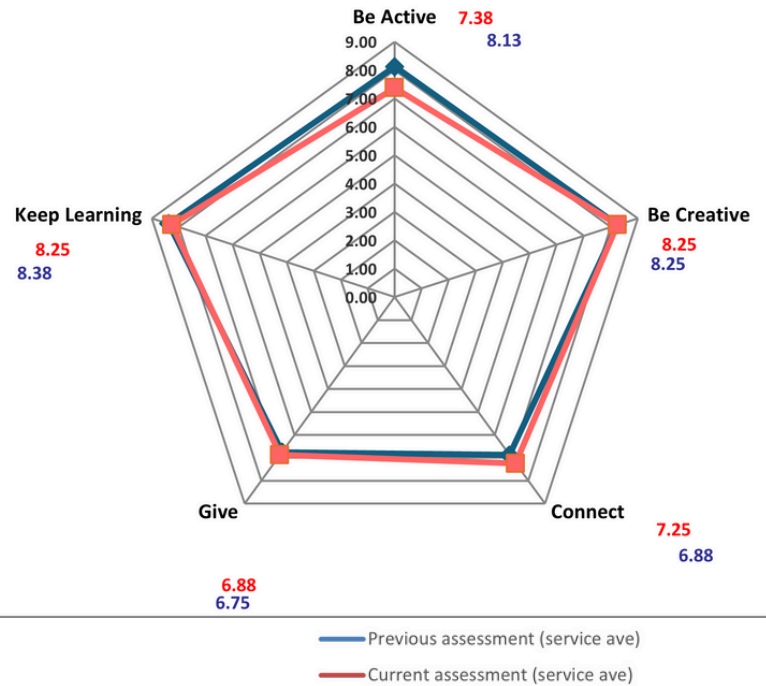
Quick Stats: Thursday Group' has 16 people in the group with a regular attendance of 14 participants, 2 carers and 5 volunteers.



Outcomes

Creative Arts Plans scores stayed relatively stable this quarter. We are currently working with Nick Wilson at [Nesta](#) – a social impact charity – to reevaluate and possibly update our outcomes tools.

Through our tracking process we were delighted to hear that one person who left service had done so because they attained employment and had already progressed into a second job working in a school.



“

I've not been at hoot long but I feel like I am a part of of lovely community. I feel connected.

”

Evaluation: Thursday Group

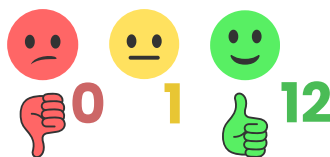
We have devised a 'How's it going?' poster to help us prompt an accessible evaluation. The poster uses a simple smiley and thumbs up/down traffic light system. At the beginning of the session, we check-in as to how we are feeling and tally the thumbs and we check-in at the end with a tally which helps us track how the session went and that people are feeling more positive.

Sound bath with Christian

Start of the Session



End of Session

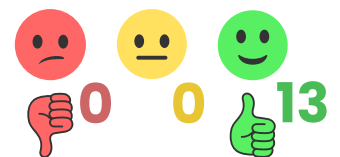


Nature Inspired Art with Sally

Start of the Session



End of Session



Challenges

Time was needed through Quarter One to develop the new offer for the new commission in a meaningful and evidenced way. Whilst delivery continued 'as is' to offer stability to participants, behind the scenes new roles, tasks and creative offers were being developed and coordinated whilst consulting with service users. We are excited about the possibilities going forward whilst being aware that change can be challenging for many.

Volunteering with hoot

Following the recruitment process earlier in the year, we welcomed 3 new Group Support volunteers to join our volunteer team bringing us to a total of 6. All existing and new volunteers completed training in Safeguarding, Boundaries, Data Protection and Confidentiality before joining the groups in April.

As well as supporting our regular groups, volunteers have generously offered extra time to **hoot** to help us run outreach sessions, clean our art store room and help us to trial activities in on evenings and at weekends in quarter 2.

For Volunteers Week each volunteer received a thank you message from our new Chair of the Board to recognise their long commitment or welcome them to volunteering at **hoot**.



82 hours
spent volunteering



31 sessions
supported



Projects that complement and added value

As Kirklees Year of Music 2023 wound down we were pleased to utilise the legacy of **hoot** leading the Wellbeing strand. Year of Music had opened the door to working in libraries we followed up with contacts and began to plan library delivery pilots for OOB from quarter 2 forwards.

Creative Pathways continued to deliver creative sessions across Kirklees to people with learning disabilities. Out of the Blue works in a complementary parallel with this programme to ensure that people are in a group that best matches their style and independence. The project works in Batley Mencap, **hoot** in Huddersfield and Laurel Court and Enfield Down residential settings in South Kirklees.



41 sessions



233 attendances



422 contact hours

What next?



Pilot partnership working with Libraries

During Quarter One, we reengaged with partners developed during **hoot's** tenure as Year of Music Wellbeing Lead, particularly with Kirklees Libraries. They are our venue partner for new out-of-hours delivery sessions, with the first block of visual arts sessions to be delivered at Cleckheaton Library in the summer, which we hope to deliver more of in further libraries across Kirklees.

Out of hours sessions

We are keen to reach people who might be working and not able to attend sessions during weekdays. During quarter 1 we undertook the task of finding alternative venues and delivery times to meet this need. So far, we have scheduled in 'Sunset Sessions' at S2R and Growing Works allotment and the Saturday sessions at Kirklees Libraries. We hope this offer will engage people we have not worked with before.

Closer working with SPLWS

We have expanded from hosting one Social Prescribing Link Worker monthly to hosting 2 each month: one who specialises in Mental Health, one in Learning Disabilities. The information sharing that this allows has already led to increased signposting to **hoot** as well as the first steps towards organising a 'Creative Lunch' for the team of SPLWs in quarter 2.

User-led groups

Over the development and implementation phase of quarter 1 we took feedback from existing groups to inform our programming for the year. We are going to pilot Open Door sessions in Digital Music and online Visual Art as well as keeping our Progress Visual Art group with a phased input from the artist.

hoot creative arts

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Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
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