

Highlights

Funding news

Our tender application to continue delivering the Adult Mental Health and Creative Arts Service for Kirklees was successful! We met Working Together Better partners to set future goals and maximise the impact of this partnership.



Quality 4 Health + Wellbeing

We were presented our 'Quality 4 Health + Wellbeing' Level 2 certificate with the full **hoot** team meeting partners from Voluntary and Community and Kirklees Health and Care Partnership.



Staying social

Social media engagement remained steady with a notable 30% increase in Facebook reach and we promoted our **hoot** from home online programme.



New volunteers

We recruited 5 volunteers, finding strong matches for all roles available. Induction and training will take place over the coming months.



Credit: Mandy


Year of Music x hoot



Our Dewsbury music group welcomed local sound designer and composer Ed Waring, who is creating a commission with Kirklees Year of Music using musical parts performed by the group.

Album releases



We released 3 new albums, with all group recordings mixed and produced by Rob. [Listen online.](#) 

Progress Music group [released their debut album Mindbender](#). This user led session reflects the groups diverse skills.

CPD Training for Artists



With the University of Huddersfield, we've developed training to boost the skills of Kirklees-based artists and facilitators in socially engaged creative practices. Out of the Blue artists are delivering on this training which aims to expand our network, raise **hoot's** profile, and empower local creative professionals.

Partnership Communications



We organised and hosted the first Working Together Better (WTB) Communications teams meeting with representatives from partnership organisations. The meeting was successful and generated lots of actionable items.

Out of the Blue activities



MUSIC

The music groups initially worked on honing the sounds of Brass Bands. They used this Yorkshire tradition as inspiration to compose from and really enjoyed playing with a form they had heard but never performed.

The Huddersfield music group worked with students from Leeds Conservatoire who focussed on soundscapes and modern folk music which all enjoyed. The Dewsbury group came up with their own ideas for songwriting – a few members had seen the new Bob Marley film so guided the group in reggae-inspired creations.

In Digital Music we were delighted to work with Yorkshire Sound Women Network's very own Sophie Russell who brought in new equipment which impressed the group and led to some wonderful new creations.

VISUAL ARTS

Groups created houses and imaginative structures from clay on the theme of 'architecture' before being kiln fired, glazed and decorated.

The groups also worked from a Still Life theme – focussing on painting flowers. This work was almost meditative in its attention to detail and personal focus.

Inspired by ancient Chinese silk art, artist Lianne Woodward worked with us to create beautiful silk paintings.

SINGING

Sam Hodgson led the group in beautiful Celt-inspired 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

“ Being creative has more of a positive impact on my mental health than anything else. ”



CREATIVE WRITING

We worked with 2 artists this quarter: Sammy Weaver and Rachel Newsome. Themes included 'new beginnings' at the start of the year and also a focus on Ray Bradbury's 'Zen in the art of writing' book with participants feeling how engaging in writing can develop a state of flow and zen.

In-person activities



WELCOME!

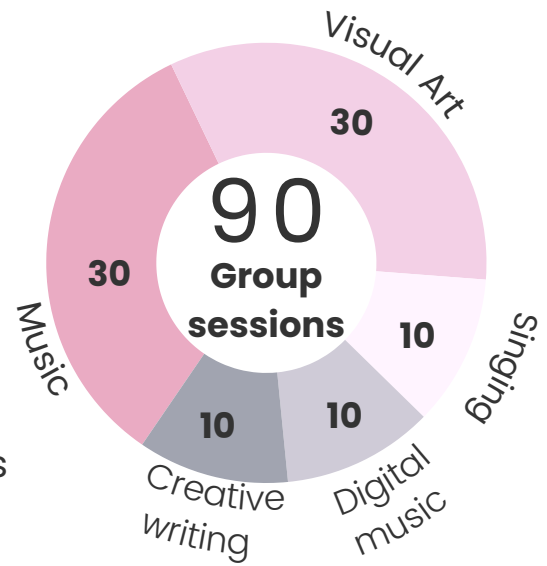
51

individuals at
welcome sessions



113

attendees at activities



CHALLENGES

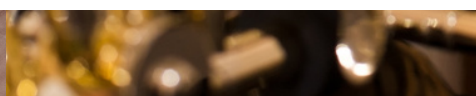
Dewsbury group numbers did fluctuate due to changing bus timetables which came as a challenge for some and added to the already-known barriers people have in accessing the town centre location.



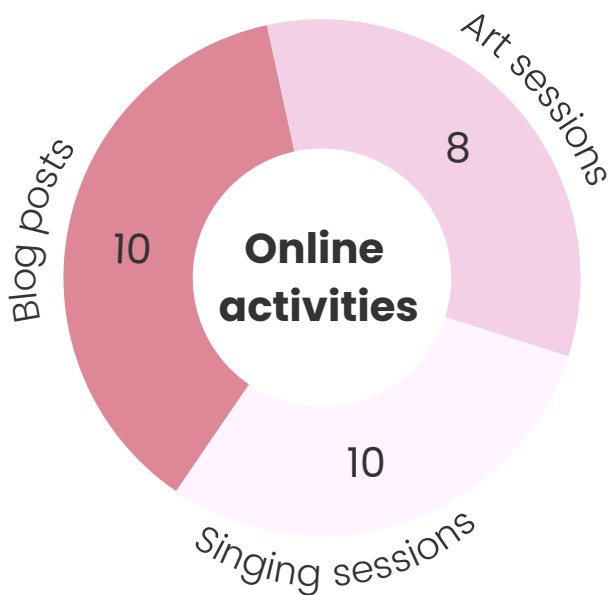
“

The way you run these groups makes people gel, which takes half of the struggle out of it. I find it very good for my mental health. Something to get up out of bed for.

”



hoot from home activity



20 participants took part in online activities



347 hours of contact with participants online



9 hours

spent offline on average per person, continuing creative work independently through the quarter.

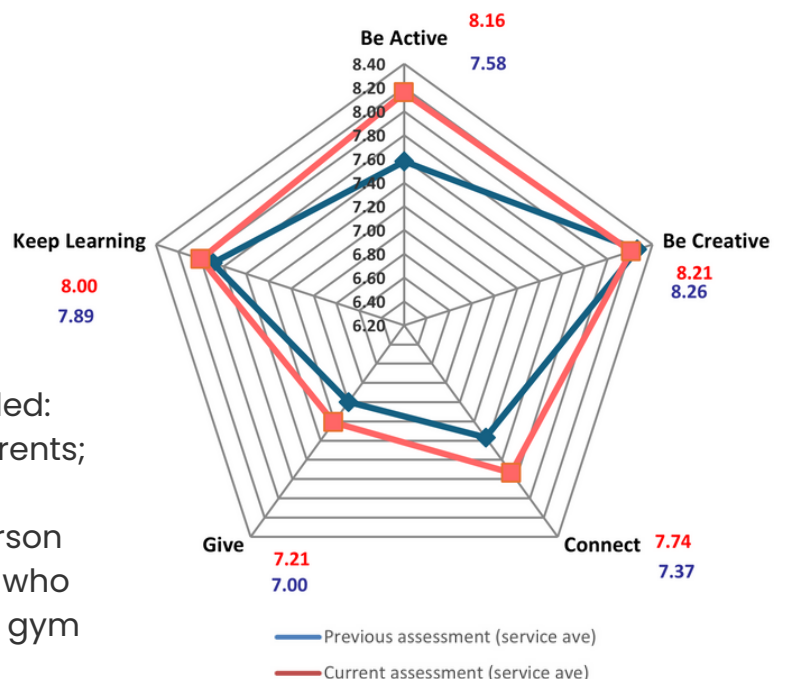
23 new posts

203 visits to the site

Outcomes

Creative Arts Plan score progressions remained relatively steady – people report getting through the winter, focussing on positive goals and looking forward to spring and summer.

The tracking information this quarter included: someone with caring responsibilities for parents; someone feeling unable to attend due to a progressive neurological condition; one person who had gained employment and another who was feeling positive and now attending the gym multiple times a week.



I feel welcomed by the group and staff. I have learnt so much by attending. I have put my camera on a few times now when I am feeling brave. It's a goal which I set with the Creative Support Worker. It has helped me to build up my confidence too.

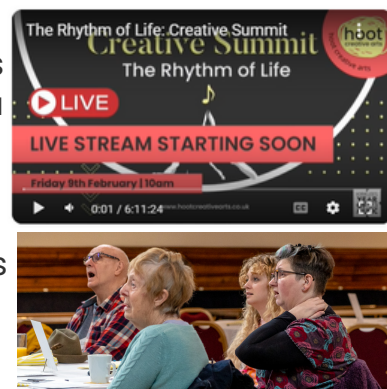
Online live chat participant



Projects that complement and add value

hoot is the Health & Wellbeing programme lead for Kirklees Year of Music 2023 and this quarter the programme delivered 11 sessions to 62 people totalling 136 contact hours.

In February we hosted the Rhythm of Life Creative Summit to showcase work from the programme. The event featured panels and discussions on how we can improve our practices to build a systemic legacy from 'Rhythm of Life' and a reminder from national & regional colleagues on the importance of Creative Health and the structures, tools and initiatives that support sustained quality development and delivery. 55 people joined us for the conference and the event was livestreamed and is available to watch on YouTube.



We also launched our first episode of The Rhythm of Life podcast which features community members, leaders, and groups talking about music and sound, and how it helps their mental and physical wellbeing in the rhythm of their day-to-day how life. Episodes are created by communities that are traditionally not able to take part in mainstream events due to disabilities or access needs.

In this first episode, residents from Laurel Court Supported Independent Living in Huddersfield shared their passion for music and their diverse musical interests. In collaboration with Keighley People First and interviewer Kirran Shah, the residents embarked on a day-long training session, mastering the art of podcast creation, devising questions, and recording their very own episode.

[Listen to the first episode on Spotify.](#)



Our Creative Pathways project delivered 43 sessions with 163 attendances and 262 contact hours. This project delivers creative sessions to people with learning disabilities and/or autism in both residential settings (Enfield Down, Laurel Court) and community settings (**hoot** Huddersfield and Mencap in Batley).

We were commissioned by Kirklees College to provide creative activities for a staff wellbeing day in March. We spread the word about **hoot's** activities and began to build a workplace wellbeing offer. Feedback was excellent and 73 college staff enjoyed engaging in creative workshops with **hoot** totalling 54 contact hours.

Breathing Space activities



Thursday Group

The group is now up to 17 people (2 carers), and we have an additional volunteer (a previous volunteer moved abroad for a year) totalling 4. Our partner, Kirklees Dementia Hub, successfully recruited a new facilitator Tina and she has gelled very quickly with the group and is supportive of the style of delivery. The group are now noticeably confident to share their opinions, thoughts, and ideas on what they would like to see programmed and this has been encouraged at a recent group review of activities and co-creation of the new 12-month programme.



Photos from the Breathing Space Thursday Group

Movement

The monthly chair yoga session is consistently well-received by group members. We held a group review on activities at the end of March and the whole group agreed that they wished to continue, with a request to the facilitator for more chimes, as they find them incredibly soothing.

Visual Arts

The group have enjoyed the variety of creative sessions that they have had this year, and at the 'year-end' review we talked about the different artists, and they were keen to keep varied accessible activities. As a result of the reviews and group discussions, there is a supporting document for artists which they receive in their contracting pack, for how they might adapt sessions for the group.

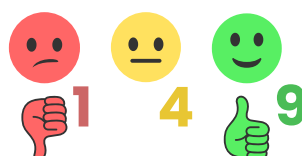
Music

We partnered with Kirklees Year of Music 2023 (KYOM) sessions which included a lively sing-along session with Karen Clegg a stage-trained singer and dancer, and we had a 'have a go' session where the group were able to try an assortment of instruments and share which sound they enjoyed the most, and reminiscence about favourite songs, musicians and gigs, some of which was recorded as part of a podcast for KYOM.

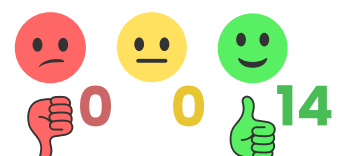
How is it going?

'Have a go session' & Podcast

Before the Session



After the Session



Trips

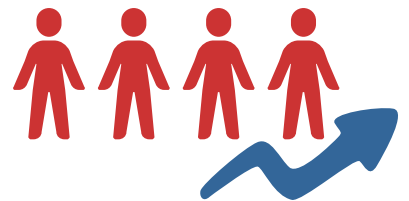
Unfortunately, our last trip of the year was cancelled due to a snowstorm. Together we will explore further trips for the new programme.

Evaluation

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. So far, so good we have had 100% thumbs up on leaving and this facilitates more conversation about how people have found the sessions.

Quick Stats:

- **Regular sessions** - 'Thursday Group' has 17 people in the group with a regular attendance of 15 participants, 2 carers and 4 volunteers, and there have been 12 sessions this Quarter.
- **Taster sessions** - x5 new groups reached across Kirklees, each had x2 sessions (movement and visual arts). 93 new people reached in total.



Outreach & Awareness

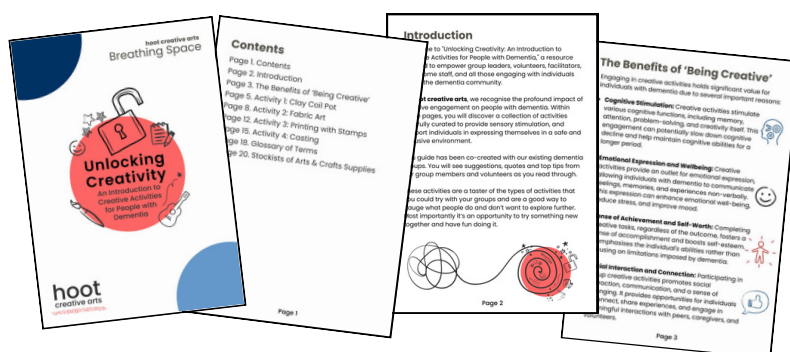
No sessions were planned for this quarter due to uncertainty of funding due to the re-tendering process.

Developing Services

We delivered 10 sessions with dementia groups run by Royal Voluntary Service and Gwennie's Getaways. These sessions, featuring movement and visual arts/craft, took place in Cleckheaton, Thornhill Lees (Dewsbury), Oakes (Huddersfield), Holmfirth, and Slaithwaite. We engaged with 93 people who were new to the service. This connection and the feedback gained will help us develop our model of delivery and will inform our development of a new Older People's workstream.

Training and Awareness around Creative Dementia Services

We have designed the 'Out of the Box' resource, this will be officially launched in Dementia Action Week on our website, and we will have a print copy which will provide an additional training resource for CPD (Continuing Professional Development) training. A marketing plan will be devised by the end of this month to target places to share and explore of revenues for building on this work.



People



140

people accessing
the services



37

new referrals to
the service

31



people under the age of 35

103



people over the age of 35



48

people who consider themselves
disabled



25

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

What next?

New Ways of Partnership Working

We are renewing our partnership with KDH, and we are pleased that the new group facilitator has settled in well and is bringing a lot to the group in terms of ideas and linking up with other services that support people with dementia.

Developing Services

The taster sessions with Gwennie's Getaways and RVS (the Royal Voluntary Service), went well and both the participants, and artists, benefited from the sessions. We will be exploring places for further funding to further develop this work and model.

Training and Awareness around Creative Dementia Services

We have developed the 'Out of the Box' resource, and this will be available in a digital and physical format. It is aimed at people who lead on activities for people with dementia and we will officially launch it during Dementia Week in May. We will be exploring the best places to share it with such as; our recent taster groups, KirCA's Activity Coordinator Forum, our partners at Kirklees Dementia Hub, our CPD training for socially engaged artists (starts in April) and more.



hoot creative arts

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