

Creative Pathways Programme.



hoot creative arts

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A BIT ABOUT HOOT CREATIVE ARTS AND THE CREATIVE PATHWAYS PROGRAMME

hoot creative arts is an arts and mental health charity based in Huddersfield. For over 20 years, the organisation has used **creativity to support mental health and emotional wellbeing**. **hoot** is an **Arts Council England National Portfolio organisation** and is jointly commissioned by **Kirklees Council** and the **NHS Integrated Care Board** to deliver **adult mental health and wellbeing programmes across Kirklees**.

hoot's work reaches a wide range of groups and settings, including adult mental health services, people living with dementia and their carers, end-of-life care, the criminal justice system, workplace wellbeing, children and young people's projects, supported residential settings, and safe digital platforms. The organisation is also a **member of the 'Working Together Better' partnership and served as the Health and Wellbeing Lead for Kirklees Year of Music 2023**.

Creative Pathways or **Creation Station**, as it's known to participants, is a **hoot creative arts** programme designed for **adults aged 18 or over with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism**.

Offering a range of **free creative activities**, Creative Pathways aims to **empower individuals to express themselves, develop new skills, and enhance their overall well-being**. Participants can join with or without a support worker, and sessions take place in various community and residential settings across Kirklees. Each session is **facilitated by an artist and a hoot creative support worker** to assist participants in accessing their creativity.

Creative Pathways **engage participants in diverse and enriching creative experiences**, designed to **inspire and develop artistic skills**. Through **music, visual arts, dance or other creative forms**, **hoot's** Creative Pathways provides **opportunities for personal expression and social connection**.

HOW IS THE PROGRAMME FUNDED?

The Creative Pathways programme is currently receiving a **three-year funding stream from the Henry Smith Charitable Trust**. A **micro-grant from Pavers Award** supports this programme **to provide essential equipment**.

WHAT ASPECTS OF HEALTH DOES THE CREATIVE PATHWAYS PROJECT ADDRESS?

The Creative Pathways programme addresses **mental health, disability, health inequalities, health prevention and social isolation**.

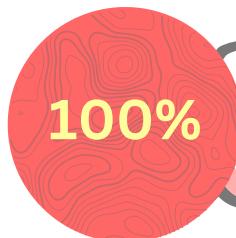
WHO ARE THE BENEFICIARIES OF THE PROJECT?

Creative Pathways is designed to **reach adults over the age of 18 with Learning difficulties and/or Autism** who are residents in Kirklees.

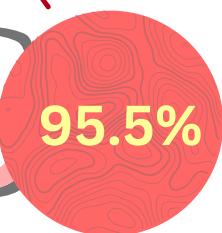
HOW DO YOU DEMONSTRATE IMPACT AND SUCCESS?

hoot's Creative Pathways programme offers opportunities for creative expression and support for adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism, **including those experiencing mental health challenges**. Grounded in **Creative Health principles**, the programme **fosters a supportive, relational environment** where participants can **build confidence and strengthen social connections through creative explorations on their own terms**. Ultimately contributing to improved mental health and overall wellbeing.

Creative Pathways participants reported...



felt an increase in social connectedness & feeling supported within the Creative Pathways community.

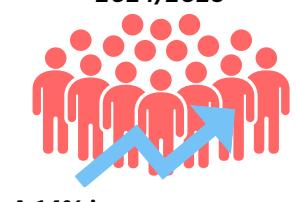


Greater self-expression and increased confidence from attending the sessions.

The most common words used in feedback from participants



114 people
accessed the service in 2024/2025



Co-production with residential settings, as well as community-based delivery, has supported greater autonomy and amplified the participant voice, influencing and shaping the design of activities. During 2024/2025, the programme featured dance, textiles, percussion, and DJing, complementing **hoot**'s established music and visual arts offer.

hoot creative arts utilises a wide range of **data and tools to evaluate their programmes and to gain a detailed insight into the participant experience**. Quantitative data, participant evaluation forms, goal-based outcomes, artist/staff feedback, participant vlogs, and the Artist Attunement Scale are some examples of the types of data and tools currently used for data collection.

The Creative Pathways programme **not only supports participants directly** but also **strengthens the wider network of care and support around them**. For example, 30 carers/support workers are directly engaged in creative sessions, seven family members were signposted to additional resources such as CloverLeaf Advocacy, Orchids Day Centre, Unity One & All, and Dark Horse, and nineteen staff and partner staff members participated in delivery across six settings, all of whom were positively impacted.

Through these achievements, **Creative Pathways continues to reduce social isolation, enhance wellbeing, and foster both personal and community resilience.**



“Watching participants grow in confidence and creativity has been incredibly rewarding.”

~Mencap staff member

WHAT KEY LEARNINGS HAVE EMERGED FROM THE PROJECT AND HOW ARE THESE INFORMING YOUR PRACTICE?

Key learning from the Creative Pathways programme includes the **importance of co-production, particularly in the design of activities**. Involving participants, carers, and partner staff in shaping the programme **significantly enhances engagement, ownership, and the relevance of sessions**. The programme has also demonstrated that **flexibility in delivery, such as adapting pace, format, and art forms, is essential to ensure accessibility for individuals with diverse abilities, communication styles, and support needs**.

The value of relational consistency has emerged as another significant insight. **Regular attendance** by both artists and Creative Support Workers has **helped to build trust and enable deeper creative exploration**. **Close collaboration with partner organisations** has also been highlighted as **pivotal in identifying and reducing barriers to participation**. For example, by offering pre-session tours to help alleviate anxiety.

In response to evaluation data and participant feedback, which show that while residential sessions are valued, many individuals express a preference for community-based settings, the **Creative Pathways model has been adapted to prioritise the need and preference for community-based settings**. Findings suggest that community sessions are more effective in promoting independence and supporting the development of broader social connections than those delivered in residential environments.

HOW IS CREATIVE PATHWAYS AT HOOT ENSURING LONG-TERM SUSTAINABILITY?

Creative Pathways is focused on **ensuring long-term sustainability** through **strategic fundraising, partnership development, and integration into local service frameworks**. The programme has established **strong relationships with the statutory sector**, and its **long-standing partnership with Mencap** continues to provide a **stable foundation for delivery and opportunities for co-designed projects**.

Efforts are underway to diversify funding sources. This includes pursuing **multi-year grants, smaller trust and foundation awards, and collaborative bids with partner organisations, to reduce dependence on a single funder.** The project's proven track record, supported by robust evaluation data and positive participant outcomes, is used to strengthen funding applications and advocacy activity.

By **embedding the programme within community venues and partner settings**, Creative Pathways is **developing cost-effective, adaptable delivery models** that can **remain resilient amid complex and changing funding landscapes**.

HOW HAS THE PROJECT MADE A DIFFERENCE TO PEOPLE'S WELLBEING?

Creative Pathways makes a **positive and measurable impact** on the well-being of participants through the provision of **safe, inclusive spaces** where adults with Learning Disabilities and/or Autism can **explore creativity freely and without judgment**. By offering regular opportunities for **self-expression, skill development, and social connection**, the sessions support **confidence-building and help reduce isolation**. By working relationally and tailoring activities to individual needs, **participants feel valued, heard, and supported**. These outcomes contribute directly to improved mental health, enhanced self-esteem, and a stronger sense of belonging.



Find more information on **hoot creative arts** and their current projects by clicking [here](#) 



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