



**hoot creative arts**

Bates Mill, Milford Street, Huddersfield, HD1 3DX



[hoot creative arts](#)

## 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...

100%

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



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

95.5%

### The most common words used in feedback from participants




30

*individuals supported in residential settings.*

**114 people**  
*accessed the service in 2024/2025*



*A 14% increase on year one*





**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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