

A man with a beard, wearing a brown and gold traditional garment, is shown in profile. He has a large, curved horn resting on his head. The background is blurred, showing other people in similar attire, suggesting a cultural performance or festival.

# Bradford Producing Hub Year 3 Evaluation Report

December 2022

*"There is a magic about Bradford you rarely find in other places and dreams have room to flourish here."*

Creativity Council Member

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# About this report

Funded by Arts Council England, Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) “aims to make sure Bradford is a creative city where lots of amazing live performance is happening all the time.”<sup>1</sup> This report evaluates Year 3 of the project.

The report contains the following sections:

- **Summary** provides an overview of this report and its findings.
- **1: Introduction** outlines what BPH is, its programme in 2021/22, the Bradford context and the approach taken to the evaluation.
- **2: Reach And Experience** makes up the core of this report – providing an analysis of who the participants were in BPH’s programme and their experiences of taking part.
- **3: A More Skilled And Confident Workforce** considers the impact of BPH’s training on Bradford’s artists and creatives.
- **4: Increasing Opportunities** explores how BPH has developed artists’ and creatives’ prospects for work in the city.
- **5: Shifting The Bradford Cultural Ecosystem** explores the changes in the arts and cultural sector as a consequence of BPH.
- **6: Conclusions And Recommendations** draws together what we have found in this evaluation and presents suggestions for BPH’s final year of operation.

Sections 2 to 5 respond directly to the intended outcomes of BPH from the Story of Change.

Data for this report was collected from a number of sources and this is discussed in the Introduction. A full list of sources is provided in the Appendix.

This report is delivered by Ruth Melville Research Ltd, an innovative and forward-thinking research and evaluation agency, with in-depth experience of working with arts and cultural organisations.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/the-project/>

# Summary

This report evaluates Year 3 of Bradford Producing Hub (BPH).

BPH is a pilot project, four years in duration and funded by Arts Council England Bradford Council and others. Its objective is to ensure that Bradford becomes a creative city with Live Art performance “happening all the time”<sup>2</sup>.

Overall we find that the project continues to deliver an inclusive, responsive and successful programme of talent development and support for the Live Arts sector in Bradford, despite a number of challenges this year.

BPH has continued to provide diverse, wide-reaching, high-quality events, training sessions and tailored support that receives glowing praise from the sector. In Year 3, we continue to see the skills, knowledge and confidence of individuals and organisations engaging with BPH increase.

This comes against the background of the continuing impact of COVID on creative practitioners in Bradford and the pressures of a rapid increase in the cost of living – as well as other personal and structural barriers to creative work. Freelance practitioners often feeling these effects most sharply – either overloading themselves with new work or looking for more reliable income from outside of the sector. The organisation continues to work towards the long term aims and impacts outlined in the Story of Change, and we summarise our findings around these below.

<sup>2</sup> <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/the-project/>



## Reach and Experience

This year again we see BPH reaching into some of the most deprived communities in Bradford. It is supporting development for a diverse range of creative practitioners across the district, as well as drawing in diverse audiences to BPH funded productions. The team are continuing to operate in challenging climate of socio-economic uncertainty.

Bradford's creative practitioners, at varying stages of their careers, have engaged in the different programmes and projects, events, and networking or one-to-one support offered by BPH. The programme strands are effectively designed to meet the needs of the sector through ongoing needs analysis, and overall participants are very positive about their experiences.

Compared to 2021, general experiences for artists this year seem to contain equal amounts progress, uncertainty and challenge. There is a definite sense that people are reevaluating and realigning what they do – sometimes as part of a process that started during COVID and sometimes due to financial pressures.

People are finding it harder to secure new work with several referencing the need to develop their marketing skills to stay visible. However, people continue to value networking and are making use of the opportunities as they arise. They are working hard to adapt and grow, with a large number of survey respondents saying they have been able to progress despite these challenges.

## A More Skilled And Confident Workforce

Participants show a range of professional skills gained via education or industry specific routes. There appears to be a lack of mid-career artists taking part in the programme overall, with most at the beginning or much later in their creative careers. Although participation data shows that 82% of artists are between the ages of 25 and 59, the traditional prime working years.

Training programmes have equipped people with new skills and confidence, but mentoring and other one-to-one approaches really help to build both professional and self-confidence. Live events have inspired people with high-quality, bold performances.

New Producer and Production Management programmes have significantly progressed individual ambitions and career prospects, whilst Culture Cubed training has helped to embed the crucial skills for measuring and articulating the value of the work being done.

One-to-one support also generated new connections for people and a sense of feeling better informed about the sector overall.

Go-Sees' have formed a part of several programmes and continue to be one of the best and most valued professional development opportunities. This is particularly true when there is the opportunity to talk directly to other performers or technical teams and then collectively reflect on and consolidate learning afterwards.

Skills-focused programmes, like Production Management and New Producers Training, show successful skill building, but also leading indicators of improved confidence and career progression as a direct result of taking part.

## Increasing Opportunities

Informal and targeted networking support is proving a very positive approach to creating a more connected, skilled and healthier sector.

In the case of the music scene, a new Steering Group is supporting this process, stimulating new work, skills and confidence and providing a joined-up voice for musicians. But this much needed intensive work can take its toll on the team.

BPH is exploring more opportunities to support mid-career artists and leaders – again much needed – and there are early positive signs of impact here.

There is a mixed picture in terms of progression. We see clear evidence of progress for many artists and for organisations, gaining new work or funding or moving on to higher support, but others say that moving on is more difficult.

And whilst there are more opportunities created through the work of BPH and wider cultural programming in the City, there are still challenges for artists securing new work.

## Shifting The Bradford Cultural Ecosystem

We see a cultural ecosystem in Bradford stimulated by BPH's work and the strength of its partnerships. This has been reinforced by the successful bid for City of Culture 2025.

The power of BPH is in its culture, ethos, values, and principles for working with creative practitioners and changing an entrenched system, not just in the programmes it delivers.

The socio-economic fluctuations and structural changes at Bradford Council have also created "a perfect storm for the arts to develop"<sup>3</sup>. We see a clear change in where decision making is happening through the work of the Creativity Council, and practice led by the interests and expertise of the Creative Instigators, a model now replicated by Bradford Council in its heritage work.

We see ongoing funding for the creation, or redevelopment, of new spaces that will support the Live Arts infrastructure. Transforming Spaces is an annual fund, this year supporting 3 spaces:

- Mezzanine Arts Depot mill space in Queensbury
- People's Property Portfolio feasibility study in the city centre
- Rockwell Centre community space in Thorpe Edge

These shifts are happening in a cultural ecosystem where people are anticipating the possibilities and challenges offered by City of Culture 2025 bid - the focus it brings to arts in Bradford but also concerns about inclusivity, exclusion, and empowering local artists.

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<sup>3</sup> Ben Rothera, Creative Producer

## Conclusions And Recommendations

We find that overall BPH has had a successful year in terms of:

- Reaching people at all stages of their careers.
- Unearthing and supporting new practitioners in Bradford.
- Diverse programming.
- Talent development and confidence building.
- Generating new pioneering work.
- New processes that make life easier for an artist.
- Promoting a stronger and better-connected Live Arts scene.
- Strengthening the overall cultural ecology of Bradford.

There is much to reflect on and integrate into Year 4 delivery, to build on this progress.

### What works and what's challenging

What makes the BPH model work so well? The team have identified the following critical success factors

- Investing in a quality team.
- Understanding the needs of the sector.
- Programming tailored support for diverse needs.
- Designing the right roles – The Creative Instigator.
- Providing the opportunity and permission to take risks.
- Platforming high quality work.

## Recommendations

### I. BPH'S ROLE

- Strengthen, clarify, and articulate the position and role of BPH within the City of Culture 2025 programme, sharing the load effectively with other key organisations.
- Continue to carefully manage the expectations of partners and the sector.
- Develop more partnerships with diverse organisations and education sector partners within the city.
- Continue to support the Creativity Council to develop projects that meet the aims of BPH.
- Work to demonstrate impact and visibility in Keighley.

### II. REACH:

- Continue to review and focus on 'in-time', accessible marketing in different formats, including publishing an annual funding schedule.
- Continue to work on reaching the most underrepresented groups across Bradford and making sure "Bradford promotes its own".
- Offer more, and more accessible, programmes and events

### III. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Plan for externally facilitated team, Consortium and Creativity Council planning and reflection.
- Build in more time for core team creative work.

- Continue to invest in, and encourage, professional development opportunities for the team.
- Develop the Creative Instigators work to include mentoring other 'early' Creative Instigators, building the diversity of voice and programming.
- Promote the visibility of the whole BPH team with inclusive opportunities for people to meet the Consortium members.
- Continue to co-fund artform specific Instigator roles with the Council, where co-working generates sharing and profile raising and supports integrated networking.
- Focus Year 4 evaluation data gathering on programmes with little evidence of impact to date.
- Further explore changing trends in the evaluation data.
- Continue to develop a growing training resources library for people accessing support.

#### **IV. ARTISTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- Continue to focus on:
  - Providing continued support whilst moving artists on to take responsibility for their own development.
  - Challenging and stretching artists whilst maintaining high quality creative work.
  - Supporting artists to focus on quality *and* relevance, rather than one or the other, to bring in audiences.
  - Encouraging ideas led decision-making whilst ensuring that funded projects are feasible.
  - Retaining a strong team whilst bringing in a continuing diversity of new perspectives
- Offer training to support artists in managing workloads, financial forecasting and 'saying no'.
- Develop more post training/event/funding/mentoring support to help participants embed practice and learning.
- Develop an alumni model for programmes where previous successful project leads can support new applicants.
- Continue to focus on wellbeing needs for artists and the team.

#### **V. THE FUTURE**

- Articulate a more explicit approach to sustainability, ethical consumerism and climate action through the programme.





# 1. Introduction

In this section we explore how Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) works, the programme in 2021-22, provide background on the socio-economic context of Bradford and discuss our approach to evaluation.

## 1.1. About BPH

BPH is a pilot project, four years in duration and funded by Arts Council England. Its objective is to ensure that Bradford becomes a creative city with Live Art performance “happening all the time”<sup>4</sup>.

To achieve this, it will:

- Try out new approaches to producing Live Arts.
- Support creative talent.
- Develop a local arts workforce.
- Partner with Bradford’s communities make the city a hub for performance.

BPH began with a Joint Cultural Needs Assessment (JCNA) – a six month research period to understand the needs, barriers and desires of Bradford’s creative sector and audiences. The first 2 years of BPH activity have been designed to directly respond to the needs identified at that point. It is recognised that the JCNA was created

in a very different political and socio-economic environment prior to the COVID pandemic and may need to be revisited.

In Year 3 BPH was led by a consortium of Bradford artists and organisations including Theatre in the Mill (lead), Kala Sangam, and Displace Yourself Theatre. 2021 saw founding partners 154 Collective, Mind the Gap, and Common Wealth Theatre step down from the Consortium and recruitment began for three independent artists to join. The funding for the project came in September 2019 with a £1.5 million award from Arts Council England.

## 1.2. About the 2021-22 programme

The BPH programme is made up of eight strands of work. In this section we explain these and highlight the work carried out in 2021-22. A more detailed description of each offer can be found in Appendix 3.

### 1. Need assessment

The first strand aims to understanding the needs the project should address and to support the creation of more Live Art in Bradford. The key element in this is the **Creativity Council**, a group of 14 people with a range of experiences, skills, and knowledge, giving advice, guidance, and support to the BPH team and reviewing grant applications.

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<sup>4</sup> <https://bdproducinghub.co.uk/the-project/>

## 2. Talent development

The talent development strand of work delivers a structured and responsive training and development for all artists at any point of their career. It supports the creation of more Live Art inside and outside of the city. This strand provides working group sessions, online 'expert' discussions, one to one support, training courses, residencies and funding opportunities such as Spare Bob seed funding for individual development of up to £500.

## 3. Reaching people

This strand ensures that work is relevant, reaches the audiences and shares ways to improve how audiences engage with Live Arts.

In 2021-22 this included Live Art events and performances, informal socials, and supporting existing or developing new networks for, Global Majority artists, musicians and emerging producers.

## 4. New work

The New Work strand provides research and development funding, commissions and creative support to enable more Live Art *in* Bradford and *by* Bradford artists.

In 2021-22 this included: Make Work R&D, Testing and Delivery funding of between £3,000 and £18,000

## 5. Transforming Spaces

Funding of up to £2500 to help people and organisations in Bradford to develop new spaces that will support the live arts sector. Projects can include expansion or creation of new spaces, purchase of resources and feasibility study and business planning processes.

## 6. Shared resources

This is a selection of practical resources available on the BPH website including videos and documentation relevant to funding and research. In addition, BPH developed Bradford Performance Places website, a searchable database of Bradford's venues and spaces, and the Guide to Outdoor Arts.

## 7. Management and delivery

Ensuring the programme is well managed and supported, while creating new routes into the arts sector, including the Consortium, PAYE systems and a freelance team structure.

## 8. Evaluation, learning and legacy

Evaluating and sharing the successes and failures of the project, proving need, and having a constant eye to the future.

## 1.3. About Bradford and its needs

### 1.3.1. Population

The City of Bradford District is a district in West Yorkshire, England. With over 546,400 residents, it is the fifth largest local authority in England for population<sup>5</sup>. It is one of the youngest places in Europe, with more than 30% of the population under the age of 20<sup>6</sup>.

Bradford is one of the most diverse places in the UK – by 2025, it is predicted that over half of the population will have South Asian, Eastern European, African, Caribbean, or Arab heritage amongst many others. However, currently 64% of the district's population identify as White British<sup>7</sup>. 46% identify as Christians, nearly 25% identify as Muslim, and over 20% have no religion<sup>8</sup>.

### 1.3.2. Economy and employment

Bradford has high levels of deprivation. 22% of children are living below the poverty line, 15% of people are experiencing fuel poverty, and the local authority district is ranked the 5<sup>th</sup> most deprived for income and 6<sup>th</sup> most deprived for employment in England<sup>9</sup>. Rates of

unemployment in Bradford are high – 7.1%<sup>10</sup> compared to 3.8% for England.<sup>11</sup> However, there are signs of improvement – there was a reduction of over 20% in levels of unemployment in the last year and self-employment in Bradford has grown 23% in the last 10 years<sup>12</sup>.

### 1.3.3. Health and welfare

For certain health and welfare indicators, Bradford residents have a higher risk than the UK average. In the most deprived areas, life expectancy is on average 10 years less than the general English population<sup>13</sup>, with urban inner-city wards such as Manningham, Bradford Moor and Keighley Central most affected. People from Bradford are more likely to struggle with diabetes, alcohol abuse, or cancer, and there are higher rates of infant mortality<sup>14</sup>.

ONS wellbeing scores in 2022 for Bradford<sup>15</sup> are all slightly lower than the national average, other than anxiety levels which are slightly higher.

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<sup>5</sup> Census 2021 data, see

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/Eo8000032/>

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.cultureisourplan.co.uk/>

<sup>7</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/ethnicity-and-religion/>

<sup>8</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/ethnicity-and-religion/>

<sup>9</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/poverty-in-bradford-district/>

<sup>10</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/unemployment-in-bradford-district/>

<sup>11</sup>

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peopleinwork/employe>

<ntandemployeetypes/bulletins/employmentintheuk/april2022#:~:text=The%20UK%20unemployment%20rate%20was,below%20pre%2Dcoronavirus%20pandemic%20levels.>

<sup>12</sup> <https://www.cultureisourplan.co.uk/>

<sup>13</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/health-and-life-expectancy/>

<sup>14</sup>

<https://jsna.bradford.gov.uk/Our%20children%20have%20the%20best%20start%20in%20life.asp>

<sup>15</sup> <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/dvc1262/wellbeingmap>

This context should be considered alongside the findings of this evaluation, particularly when considering barriers to work and wellbeing challenges within the sector.

#### 1.3.4. Arts ecology and engagement

Bradford has a bustling arts scene, with 54% of revenue in the visitor economy coming from arts and culture<sup>16</sup>. However, arts and culture engagement by residents themselves is lower than the regional and national averages, and creative Higher Education learning opportunities are limited<sup>17</sup>. In 2022 Bradford was chosen as City of Culture 2025, and this will see new investment in the arts ecology of the city with 1,000 new performances and events planned and 365 artist commissions<sup>18</sup>.

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<sup>16</sup> <https://www.cultureisourplan.co.uk/>

<sup>17</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/intelligence/heritage-and-culture/>

<sup>18</sup> <https://bradford2025.co.uk/>



## 2. Reach and Experience

*"It's hard to find an organisation that is so universally valued, I can't find anything to criticise them for!"*

Freelance consultant

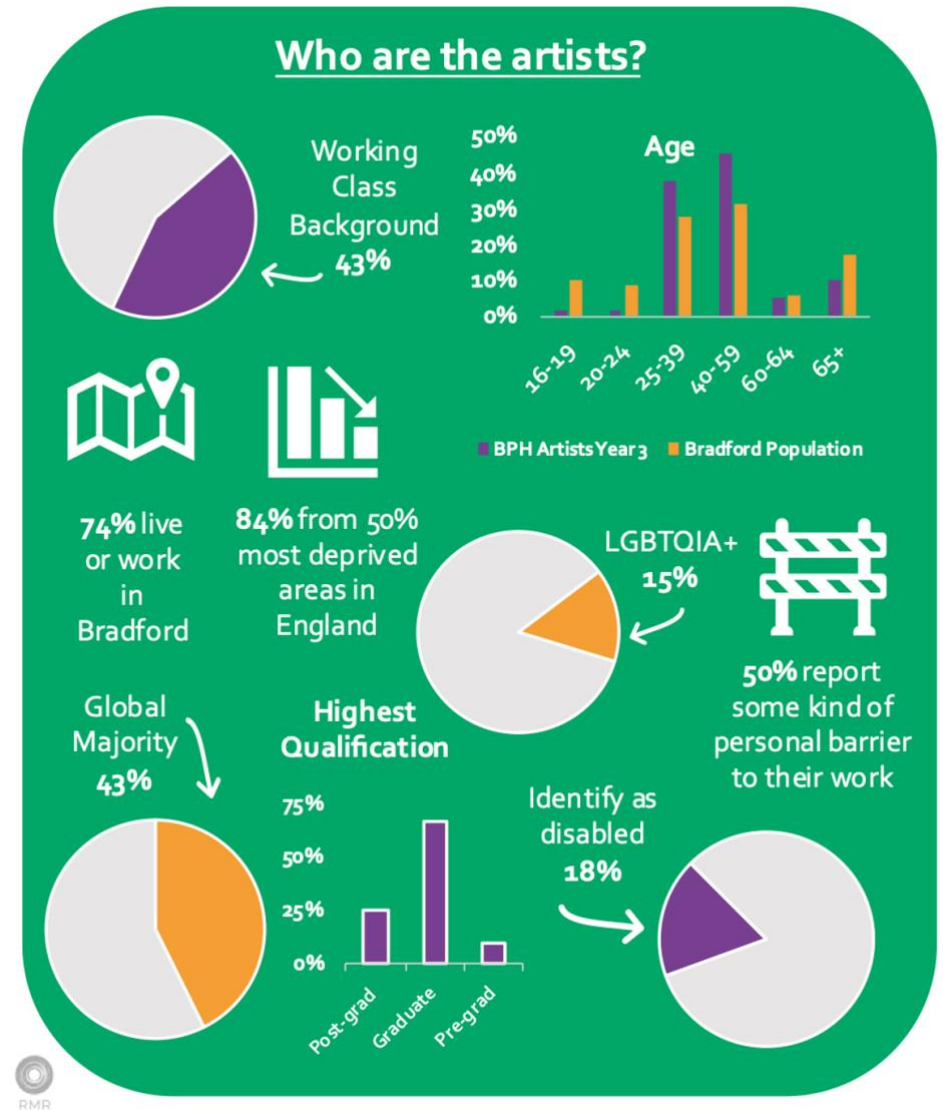
This section focuses on the reach of BPH's programme – exploring a number of aspects of who the participants are, barriers to their working and who their work is aimed at. We then consider participation in specific parts of the programme. And finally, we examine peoples' responses to taking part in BPH programmes and projects and experiences of those working with BPH.

Data is drawn from the 63 responses to the annual BPH survey (sent to creative practitioners who attended any BPH course), from interviews with artists, from project specific evaluation and from monitoring data including postcodes collected at events.

### What we find

This year again we see BPH reaching into some of the most deprived communities in Bradford, supporting development for a diverse range of creative practitioners across the borough as well as drawing in diverse audiences to BPH funded productions. The team are continuing to operate in challenging climate of socio-economic uncertainty.

Compared to 2021, general experiences for artists this year seem to contain equal amounts progress, uncertainty and challenge and a definite sense that people are reevaluating and realigning what is



needed, sometimes as part of a process that started during COVID and sometimes due to financial pressures.

Needed to stay visible. However, people continue to value networking and are making use of opportunities as they arise, working hard to adapt and grow, with a large number of survey respondents saying they have been able to progress despite these challenges. More generally people are finding it harder to secure new work with several referencing the need to develop their marketing skills.

*"It has been a year of development and repositioning as I start out on a freelance basis after 15 years of working for small scale organisations. Also thinking about how to do this within the context of the City of Culture."*

Survey Respondent

During the year Bradford's creative practitioners at varying stages of their careers have engaged with a number of different programmes and project, events, and networks or one-to-one support offered by BPH. The programme strands are effectively designed to meet the needs of the sector through ongoing needs analysis and overall participants are very positive about their experiences.

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<sup>19</sup> Data includes information provided by the BPH team, as well as data gathered through the annual survey and monitoring data from events.

<sup>20</sup> Maps created using 1006 valid postcodes from all BPH engagements in Year 3

## 2.1. Who does BPH reach?

This section focuses on the artists and creative practitioners that have participated in the programme.

The majority of participants come from Bradford although there are participants from as far as Scotland, London and Wales but who are working in Bradford. Individual project data continues to show wide diverse participation figures in terms of ethnicity and disability. There is good reach into the most deprived areas of Bradford although less than last year. Data shows that the programme is supporting people at mainly at the start or later in their careers, both with and without formal arts 'training', successfully platforming some artists for the first time. The infographic summarises who BPH has reached in Year 3.<sup>19</sup>

### 2.1.1. Where people are based and where they work

The maps below show the reach of BPH in Year 3<sup>20</sup>. Figure 1 shows that BPH has reached the length of Britain with their offer. It also shows the same map expanded to show the distribution of participants around the centre of Bradford. 74% of all BPH engagements in Year 3 live or work in Bradford<sup>21</sup>.

<sup>21</sup> Data from 1,006 postcodes provided at events in Year 3. People were asked to provide either their work or home postcodes.



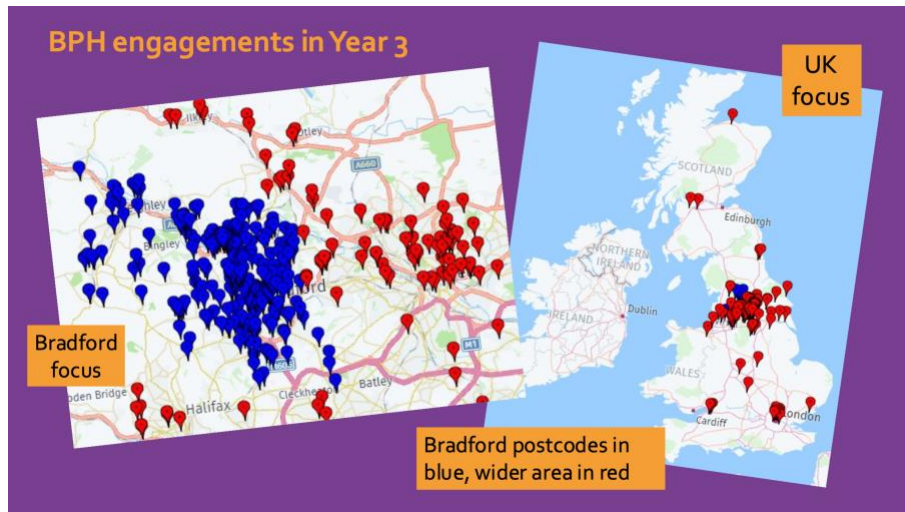


Figure 1 Maps of BPH engagements, blue shows Bradford-based postcodes, red is wider area. UK wide and Bradford focuses shown.

The majority of BPH artists in Year 3 who filled out the annual survey (84%) live and work in Bradford some or all of the time (over a quarter work in Bradford all of the time). Figure 2 shows that 6% of those polled lived in Bradford, but work elsewhere, and a further 6% live and work elsewhere.

### 2.1.2. How people define themselves

How people define themselves has slightly shifted over the last year. 4.6% of people define themselves as artists, around 8% less than last year (see Figure 3). This decrease in people viewing themselves as artists corresponds with an increase in people viewing themselves as "Someone who works in the arts sector", which could reflect the current financial climate, given that many creatives are now having to supplement their finances with non-

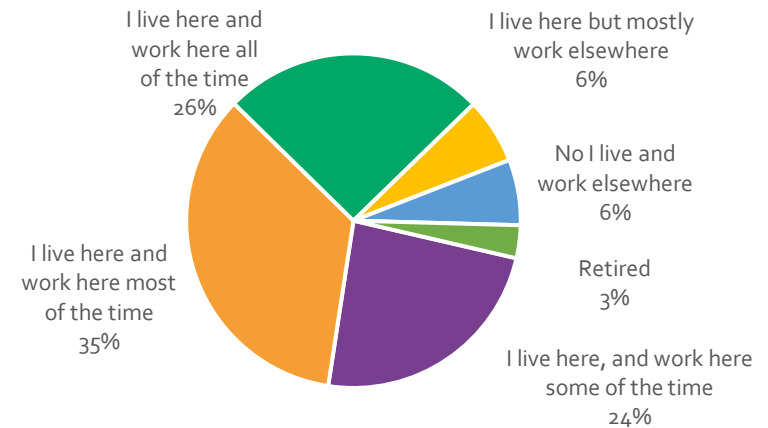


Figure 2 How many artists live and work in Bradford. Base = 63

creative income, so feel less certain defining themselves purely as an artist.

It could also be a natural progression as BPH moves to support people at earlier stages of their artistic career, where they are just beginning to see themselves as someone in the creative industry.

Only 2% of people consider themselves a trainee or learner, nearly 10% less than last year, which points to an increased sense of confidence through BPH training and events. 78% of people, a similar number to last year, describe themselves as a creative (44%) or creative practitioner (34%). Other definitions included tutor, mentor, amateur and creative therapist, with far more people (16%) wanting to self-define than last year.

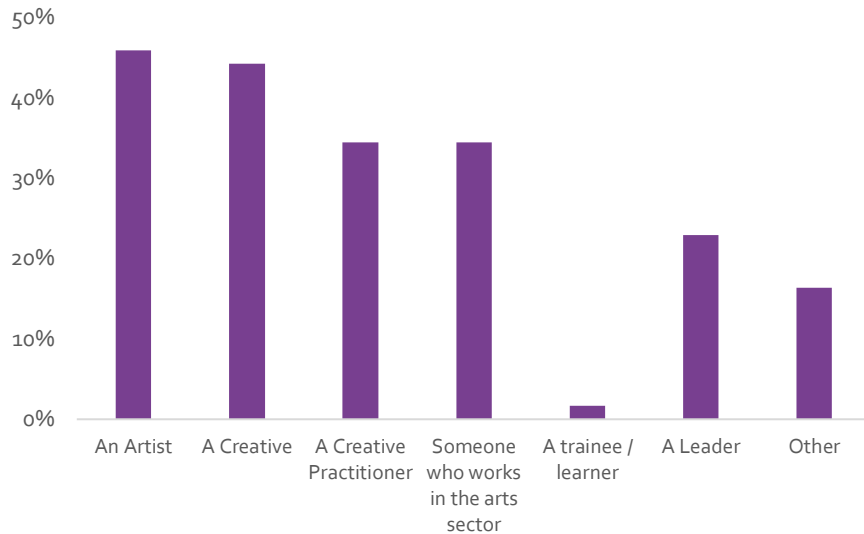


Figure 3 How people define themselves. Base = 61

Figure 4 shows the ages of artists compared to population estimates for Bradford<sup>22</sup>. 82% of artists are between the ages of 25 and 59, the traditional prime working years. In contrast we see a lack of artists defining themselves as mid-career, mapped to the graph in Figure 13, suggesting that people may be starting a creative career later in life or returning after a period of inactivity. There have been gains this year in the 65+ category suggesting

<sup>22</sup> Comparison data from Bradford population estimates 2020 <https://jsna.bradford.gov.uk/documents/The%20population%20of%20Bradford>

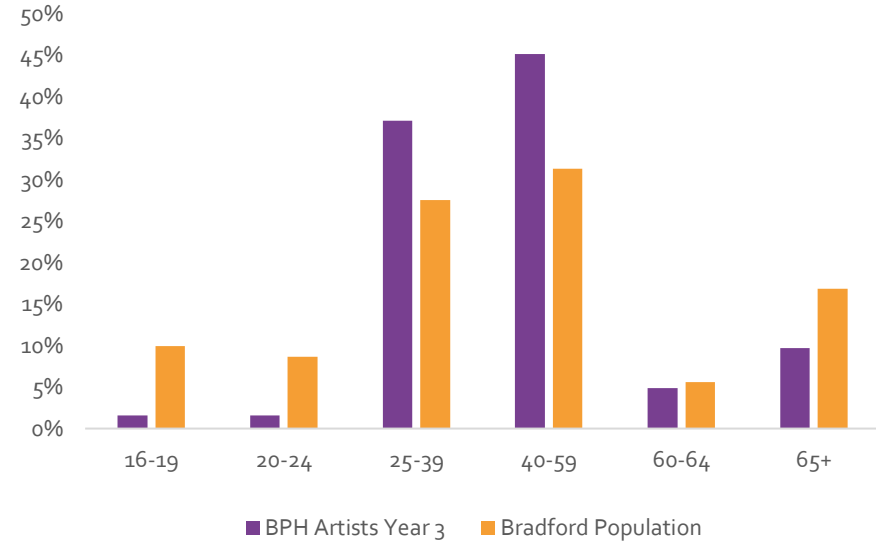


Figure 4 Ages of BPH artists in Year 3 compared to population estimates for Bradford. Base = 62

BPH programme has been more attractive or relevant for this age group.

Where possible we have drawn this data from in-programme monitoring. We also asked annual survey respondents, but they are not as likely to be a balanced sample.

People attending training, in person sessions (excluding one-off sessions) or applying for funding were asked to self-describe their demographics as they chose, using an open question and an example answer. This process is now an embedded practice at BPH

<https://jsna.bradford.gov.uk/documents/Demographics%20of%20Bradford%20District/Demographic%20of%20Bradford%20District.pdf>

and continues to show interesting results in terms of level of detail given allowing people to self-report any or all of their characteristics.

This year the demographics are not significantly different between Bradford based and all responses, but both sets of figures are higher than last year indicative of BPH reaching a more diverse group of participants altogether.

In addition to these figures, we also asked 63 people who completed the survey to respond to multiple choice demographic questions. Of that sample:

- 79% women (15% more than last year), 2% non-binary, 2% AFAB Gender Queer (14% more female, the same non-binary as last year, AFAB Gender Queer a new category)
- 13% with some form of disability (4% more than last year) and were most likely to identify as having a learning disability or being neurodivergent.
- 16% identified as LGBTQIA+ this year, (less than half of last year's figures)
- 66% of artists identify as White British (13% less than last year but slightly higher than the Bradford population as a whole<sup>23</sup>), 13% White Other 13% Asian (the same as last year), 5% Black and 3% Multiple Ethnicities

Comparing these two sets of results we see that BPH is reaching a more diverse group of people altogether this year. It is not yet clear

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<sup>23</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/ethnicity-and-religion/>

whether the new BPH self-report model is completely reliable and there are some discrepancies that need further investigation. There are contrasting trends in the likelihood of self-identification in either a traditional EDI form or the BPH self-report model. As noted last year, the survey results represent known bias for certain characteristics, in that those who fill in surveys are more likely to come from certain demographic groups. This bias is seen again this year for Ethnicity, as around 10% less people reported themselves as White British in the open format monitoring question than those who filled in the annual survey. We see a similar pattern with higher level of disability reported in the self-report open questions than in the annual survey. The self-report model encourages some people to share more personal information but may miss other essential information.

There are several possible reasons for the declining numbers of people defining as LGBTQIA+ that also needs further investigation. This might be down to bias in who responds to a survey, but it might also represent the difference between the more local audience who completed the open format monitoring question, and the wider audience for one off training events who would have been sent the survey and wouldn't have been asked the monitoring question.

### 2.1.3. Indices of Multiple Deprivation

In terms of reach into diverse socio-economic groups, we have mapped postcodes of all participants from all activities and events, against the Indices of Deprivation<sup>24</sup>, to explore relative deprivation

<sup>24</sup> Indices of deprivation are an official way of measuring levels of deprivation in local authorities in England. They rank local authorities using a number of

as a proxy. Bradford is the 13<sup>th</sup> most deprived local authority in England<sup>25</sup>.

Group	Total	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
BPH Artists	%	30%	15%	19%	7%	13%	6%	3%	3%	2%	2%
Bradford Local Pop	%	35%	14%	14%	7%	6%	6%	5%	5%	3%	5%

Table 1 Indices of Multiple Deprivation comparing BPH artists to Bradford population. Darker brown shows more deprived areas. Base = 724

The table above compares the proportion of BPH artists that are from areas of greatest deprivation against figures for the whole Bradford population. The darker the brown, the higher the levels of deprivation. Overall, BPH is reaching more people who come from the most 50% deprived areas of England (84%) than in the Bradford population in general (76%), shown above as a green bar. On average, people who engage with BPH are more likely to come from a deprived area than the general population.

At a more granular level, we see that 30% of BPH engagements come from the 10% most deprived areas in England, compared to 35% for the Bradford population as a whole. This figure is down 9% on last year but is still a relatively high figure for a programme focusing on creatives who would have been underrepresented in other development programmes. There is more to be done to

metrics such as employment, income, health deprivation and crime. For more on Indices of Deprivation please see <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/english-indices-of-deprivation-2019>

continue to reach these less engaged and potentially excluded groups.

The New Queers on the Block Commission Applications and the One-to-One advice sessions with Hannah Bentley from Arts Council England (ACE), were two strands that had particularly high proportions of people from the poorest 10% of areas, but as these only have 8 and 6 postcodes respectively, more data is needed to investigate if this pattern is significant. BPH could look at location, attendance, and some of the critical success factors from these activities to explore the impact on reach and whether this can be replicated elsewhere.

<sup>25</sup> <https://ubd.bradford.gov.uk/about-us/poverty-in-bradford-district/>

#### 2.1.4. Barriers to work

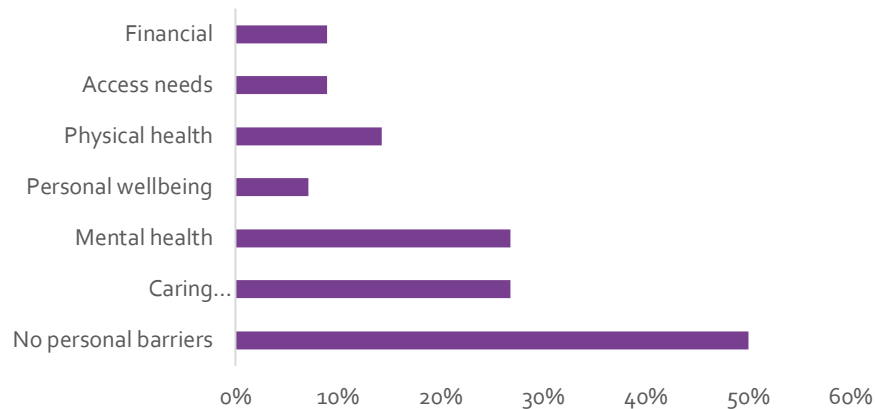


Figure 5: Barriers to artists' work. Base = 56

Artists were asked about their personal barriers to their work. Half felt they did not have any barriers. Most significant again this year (over a 25%) reported caring responsibilities or mental health influencing their work. Several highlighted financial barriers, including not earning enough or considering themselves working class. Mental health issues continue to affect people's ability to work, and these figures show that BPH is reaching people really in need of support. This is all the more important in the context of the declining ONS wellbeing scores previously noted in Section 1.3.3. We comment on this, and the potential 'burn out' effect we are now seeing in creatives who are taking on too much work or responsibility or need to supplement creative practice with other employment.

46% of all artists reported having caring responsibilities. Around a third having children under 16, and 10% care for their parents.

Other responses here are caring for a partner or sibling. This figure is slightly lower than last year. From the chart above, only 27% felt these caring responsibilities were a barrier to their work.

Many artists felt that BPH helped them address their barriers, with people specifically mentioning how the team were always there to listen, and access support being put in place before people had to request it. Others note that while they did not receive any extra support in this way, they felt confident to ask for adjustments if they had needed to. Common barriers perceived by survey respondents when working in Bradford are listed below. Some of these challenges are nation-wide issues in the arts sector but some are particular to Bradford.

- A lack of infrastructure and funding in the area.
- Accessibility and lack of availability of venues, including disproportionate parking charges
- External (and internal) perceptions of Bradford are poor and doesn't always feel safe in evenings
- A feeling that support is going to the same group of people, a sense of elitism and exclusion because of that. Some feel this is because their work is not 'edgy' enough, or that they just don't fit the criteria.
- Some artists feel excluded because of their age (young and older), this was particularly noticeable in the feedback from musicians.
- A feeling that there aren't artists 'who look like me' or that people in their ethnic group don't value art in the same way.

- Perceptions that funding for Bradford is not reaching people in Keighley and surrounding areas.
- Lack of 'growth routes' and opportunities for artists
- Lack of resources for artists, although some sense that it is improving.

Our research shows that many of the issues around accessibility, inclusion and progression are areas of focus for BPH. But these challenges continue to emerge, albeit in lower numbers, and we suggest further work to understand or address them.

### 2.1.5. Who their work is for

Coming back to live audiences has been inspiring for artists and audiences themselves, although audiences generally in the arts are not back to pre-COVID levels.

Nearly half of artists say their work is designed for everyone but we see some of the Make Work commissions targeting particular audiences, for example, Khooghi. Popular growth target audiences this year include young people and those traditionally disengaged from cultural activities. We continue to see a range of other specialist audiences catered for. Other responses included

students, retired people and those interested in heritage as audiences.

The team feel confident that BPH is supporting socially engaged

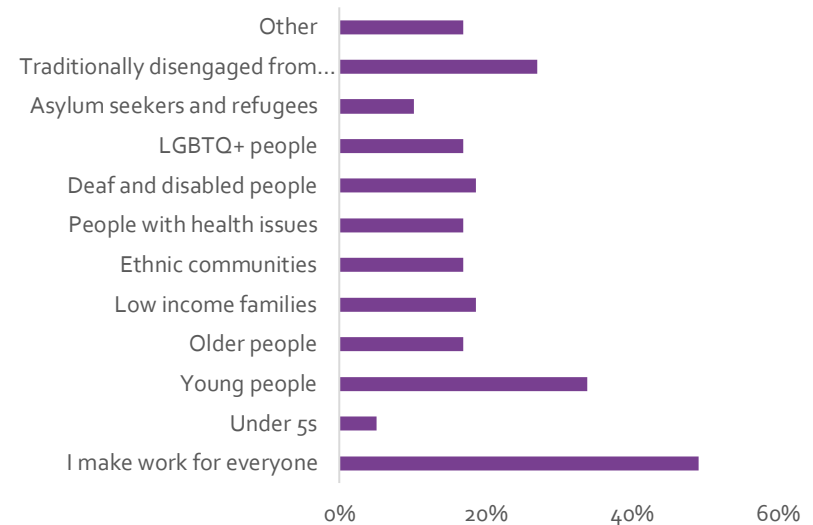


Figure 6: Who the artists make their work for. Base = 59

new work that is reflective of and resonates with diverse audiences and see this in the work that is produced, directly commissioned, and supported by the team. There is recognition that there could always be more, and work must continue in the next year of delivery.

## 2.2. Artists' experience of taking part

### 2.2.1. Open events and training opportunities

73% of artists attended at least one event or training session with BPH this year, with the Creative Social events, Front Room Poetry and some of the Make Work productions proving the most popular, with other responses highlighting the Go and See events, and Advocating for Womxn In Music with Vick Bain.

This is around a quarter less than last year where all respondents reported going to at least one event or training session. On average, artists attended 3 sessions over the year, rating them 4.7 out of 5.

*"Creative socials [stand out most] as it's great to have 'networking' events that don't feel awkward or forced! And Front Room Poetry because it just feels really Bradford and it's amazing to have a platform where everybody shares work equally."*

Consistently the most 'stand out' experiences for artists were also the creative socials, Front Room Poetry, and Make Work productions, all offering connectivity and new ideas for work with different audiences and in unusual spaces. Although lower attendance numbers are shown for Play Days, they were also highly valued in feedback, particularly for their quality and support for new knowledge and skills.

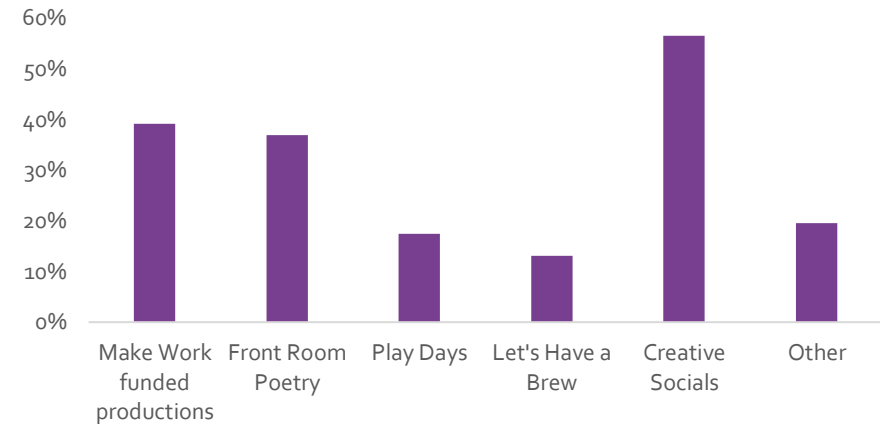


Figure 7: BPH events and training sessions attended by artists. Base = 46.

*"The Play Days I attended were well worth it too. The quality of teaching particularly by choreographers from London was exceptional. Their attention to detail, work ethic and high standards inspired me in terms of showing me what kind of attitude it takes to achieve excellence."*

83% of people said they were likely to attend a BPH event in the future, with similar scores to last year, so even though attendance is slightly down, the quality is not.

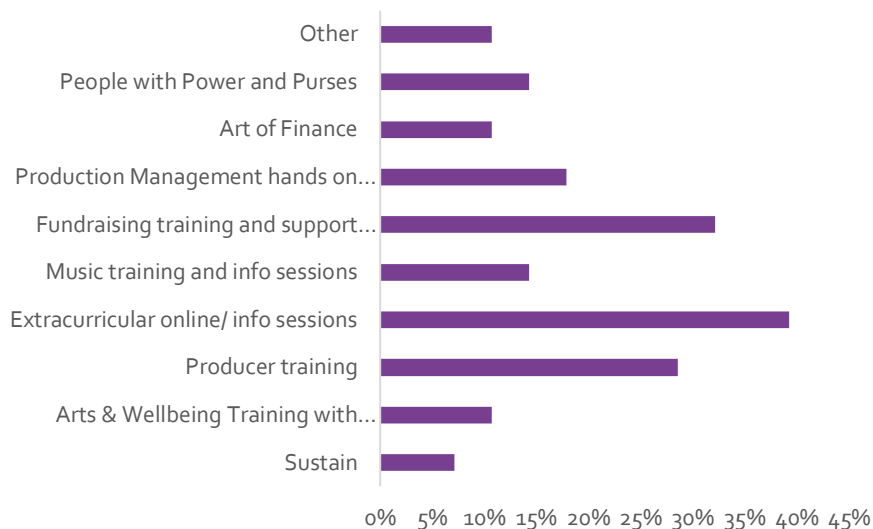


Figure 8: Training courses applied for by artists. Base = 28

44% of artists applied for BPH training courses, which is a considerable increase on the 30% from last year, showing an impressive improvement in uptake. Fundraising and Producer training were the most popular courses, with others including R&D training.

*"I loved the play Full English. Relevant to me as a Bradford resident. It was funny and moving. I also learned a lot from the 'What is an R and D session'."*

*"Transitorio, fantastic performance and very welcoming!"*

*"Kirsty's 'Cashy C's' was genius and hope to see it again in the future. I think the city will benefit from a lot more original piece of work like this."*

Survey Respondent

Suggestions for improvements to events on offer were varied. About a third of answers said there were no suggestions just requesting that BPH 'keep going' or that more is needed'.

More and better, in time, marketing and having a shared calendar of events was mentioned several times, where people felt they weren't always informed. At this time BPH was without full time marketing support, likely affecting this experience.

*"Just getting the word out. Lots of creative people in Bradford never even heard of the Hub - I think more publicity to reach people who may not be on socials."*

Survey Respondent

We found consistent appreciation for hybrid events which offer greater accessibility and flexibility. A small number of respondents would like to see more events in hyper local community venues where people feel more comfortable. Alongside this came recommendations for more evening and weekend events. And 'Safe Space' or targeted sessions for specialised audiences for example neurodiverse, women, asylum seekers and young people and families, although care should be taken to then not be excluding wider audiences.

*"All people aren't okay in all spaces and can't be themselves. Inclusive doesn't always mean all in together!"*



Several respondents suggest more opportunities where post show or follow up contact with the artists, producers, technicians, 'experts' is offered.

Other requests included:

- More dance-related events including taster sessions.
- Acting workshops.
- More explicit focus on ethical and green issues and local providers.
- And requests for the return of previously successful programmes like Let's Have a Brew.

*"More practical sessions where people can come together in a space to co-create for the day"*

*"More socials!"*

Survey Respondents

The quality and content of training events was also highly rated by the nearly all respondents, who describe these as relevant, excellent, engaging, supportive, informative, and well presented.

Several mentioned that confidence or motivation was raised, or that they had benefitted from skills and networks, or been able to develop as a freelancer or improve time management. The Touring Pack, budget templates, and timelines, or sometimes a specific session or tutor, all received mentions

Again, people valued the chance to connect to others, although necessary online sessions hampered this to some degree.

One very clear and achievable suggestion for future training courses is to share more widely the developing online 'library' of

resources with a particular focus on supporting participants pre and post training.

*"The training was even better than expected and helped to connect me to other creatives."*

*"Open up the demographic requirement through rerunning sessions, as I'd have liked to [attend] Art and Wellbeing with displaced theatre but my protected characteristics didn't fit."*

Survey Respondents

4/5 training participants said they had managed to use their new skills, knowledge, or ideas already with some integrating this into successful funding applications, with a smaller number saying that use in the future was already planned. For some these skills are completely new and need time to 'bed in' before future plans are clear.

### 2.2.2. Funding support

*"Please don't change your application system- it's great and easy to access and the questions you ask have helped improve my projects even when I've not been successful. Your process makes me excited about the work I'm developing instead of sucking all the creative energy from my soul. Sorry ACE."*

Survey Respondent

The variety of needs across such a diverse sector of creative practitioners requires a tailored approach to support and this is the USP of BPH. Programmes like Make Work are championed by participants because of the way the wrap around support programme offered. And Spare Bob is valued for its light touch

approach to application and delivery but the opportunity to transform lives through enterprising approaches.

In this section we explore the numbers and experiences of those applying for funding.

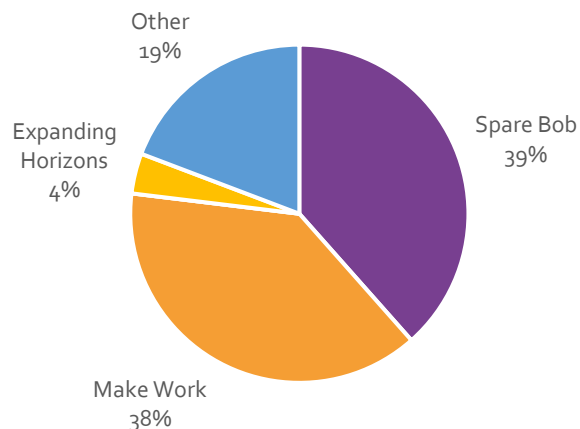


Figure 9: Which funding streams artists applied to this year. Base = 22

35% of artists applied for funding, slightly less than the 46% who had last year. Similar to last year, 62% of those who applied for funding were successful. Spare Bob and Make Work were by far the most popular funding streams, with nearly half of all artists who had applied for funding going for at least one of these two options. There was 100% success rate for applicants to the Transforming Spaces fund with 3 grants awarded worth £7500.

Of the 21 people who commented about the process of applying for funding, around three quarters found it positive, 12 directly using the words the word 'straightforward', 'easy', or 'simple'. The following quote goes straight to the heart of BPHs ambitions to

reduce red tape, maximise opportunity and realise creative potential.

*"I felt supported and that BPH wanted to hear from Artists like myself (from marginalised backgrounds) and that my application would be judged on its merits. You also offered support with making an application and feedback on why it wasn't successful - both made me feel like you understand how difficult it is for people like me and encouraged me to apply."*

#### Survey Respondents

Mostly the application procedure was found to be clear and accessible, and support with filling the application in was appreciated. For a small minority the guidelines could be clearer still, particularly those applying for the first time, and others suggest that decision making needs to be quicker and feedback more specific.

Some other suggestions for improvements include:

- A collated annual schedule that offers advanced notice of when all funding applications will be open and closed.
- Sharing successful anonymised applications to show what the standard and detail should be.
- Longer lead into application deadlines.

13 people said they were successful in applying for funding. Of the 13 responses, 4 mentioned that it had improved confidence or supported inspiration, sometimes mentioning that it had helped improve mental health as well. Seven indicated that the direction or development of their work had improved or that they had been able to further develop professional skills, and four said they had

been able to develop working relationships. Mention was made of being able to access training as the grant paid for childcare, or to develop a specific residency, or that it had enabled them to attend a particular training event elsewhere.

8 people commented that they had been unsuccessful with their application. Three of these asked for further support and advice and of those, two found it valuable but one found it less useful:

*"The advice was given in a quick and disengaged way - or at least it felt that way. The idea is currently on a shelf."*

Survey Respondent

How can BPH continue to encourage those who were previously unsuccessful to redevelop their ideas in the future?

There is still evidence of confusion about whether the funding is solely for Bradford Artists and whether certain funds can be used to develop existing ideas. These issues could easily be resolved in future funding rounds.

### 2.3. Artists' experience of BPH

*"Fantastic hub for creatives in the city, helpful and resourceful. I feel like it's a bit of support at a time when it's hard to be a creative with no other backing, or contacts, carving your own path into the artistic world."*

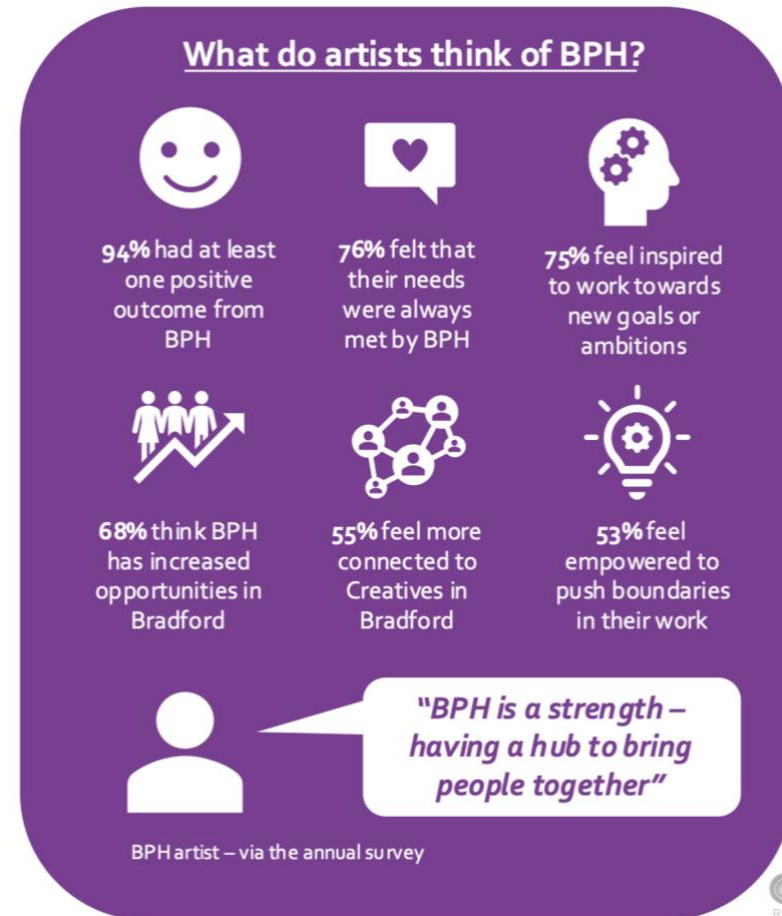
Survey respondent

The team is held in high esteem by all of those who have worked with them, with 90% of survey respondents finding support good or excellent. Each year we see continued unequivocal support for the organisation from individuals and partners. People value the creative support they gain, and the general friendly, warm, and supportive nature of the organisation. Others valued it for helping them enter the creative sector and were clearly just beginning to realise the potential for them. For many the ongoing relationships with the team was really important to them. The infographic summarises their experience.<sup>26</sup>

*"Proud that we have such an amazing service in Bradford."*

*"An invaluable organisation for Bradford and it's creatives. BPH responds to the needs of the people and knows how to fill the gaps."*

Survey respondents



<sup>26</sup> Data includes information provided by the BPH team and Creativity Council, as well as data gathered through the annual survey and event monitoring data.

BPH has made it their business to actively reflect on and respond to ongoing feedback through social media or direct emails from Bradford creatives. Most comments are overwhelmingly positive telling the story of individuals and of the crucial role of BPH in Bradford. The minority of negative criticisms are from those who feel excluded by the programme.

There were a very small number of responses that reveal a lack of familiarity with BPH’s purpose and programme, and it is worth mentioning that there continues to be concerns about elitism, albeit a very small number, which echo the same concerns about inclusion within the forthcoming City of Culture programme. The team must continue to advocate for representation from the most underrepresented communities, in their role as a core 2025 partner.

### 2.3.1. Working with BPH

10% of artists applied for paid work with BPH this year, down 7% on last year’s figures. This may be due to several reasons, from less need to lower numbers of artists overall. Looking at trends across the national arts sector we see increasing evidence that artists have been forced to look for more stable paid work beyond their creative practice.

Those working with BPH this year have had overwhelmingly positive experiences including connections made, feeling valued and feeling part of a movement that is changing the landscape in Bradford. There are still niggles with contracting and invoicing systems, something that BPH is continually reviewing to improve the experience for creatives.

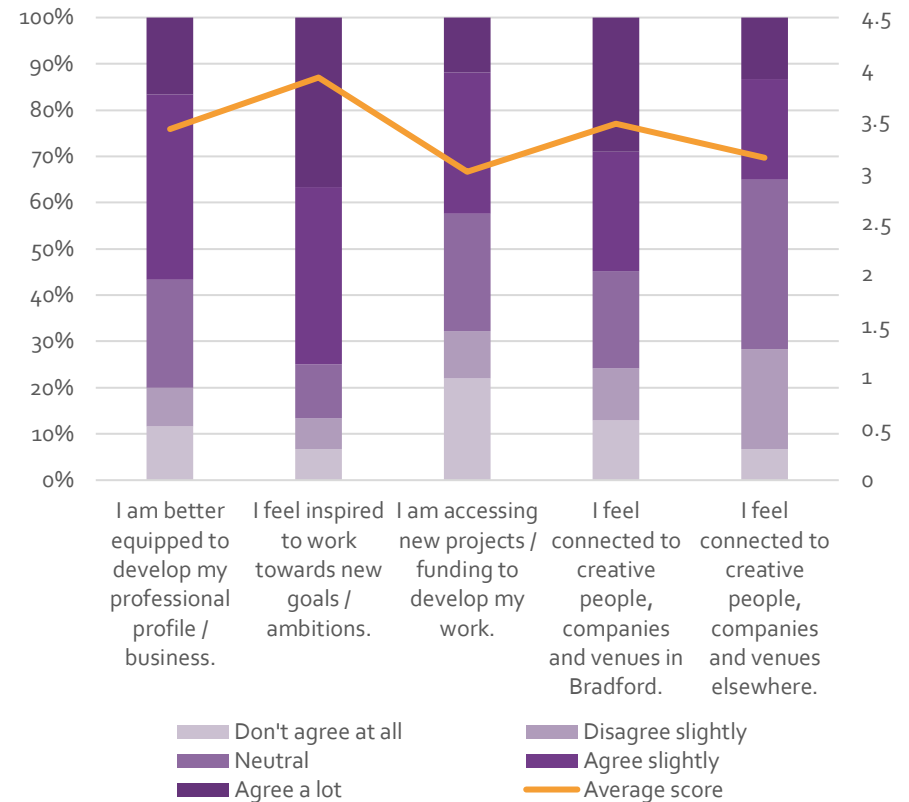


Figure 10: How much artists agree with each statement. Darker colour indicates more agreement. The line shows average scores. Base = 60:62

*"It's great to be part of the team - and see how BPH is making a real difference to Bradford's cultural offer. Also, great to contribute to supporting opportunities for creatives to develop their practice."*

*"BPH has been critical for me to enter the creative sector as a person of colour without any previous experience of this sector."*

Survey Respondents

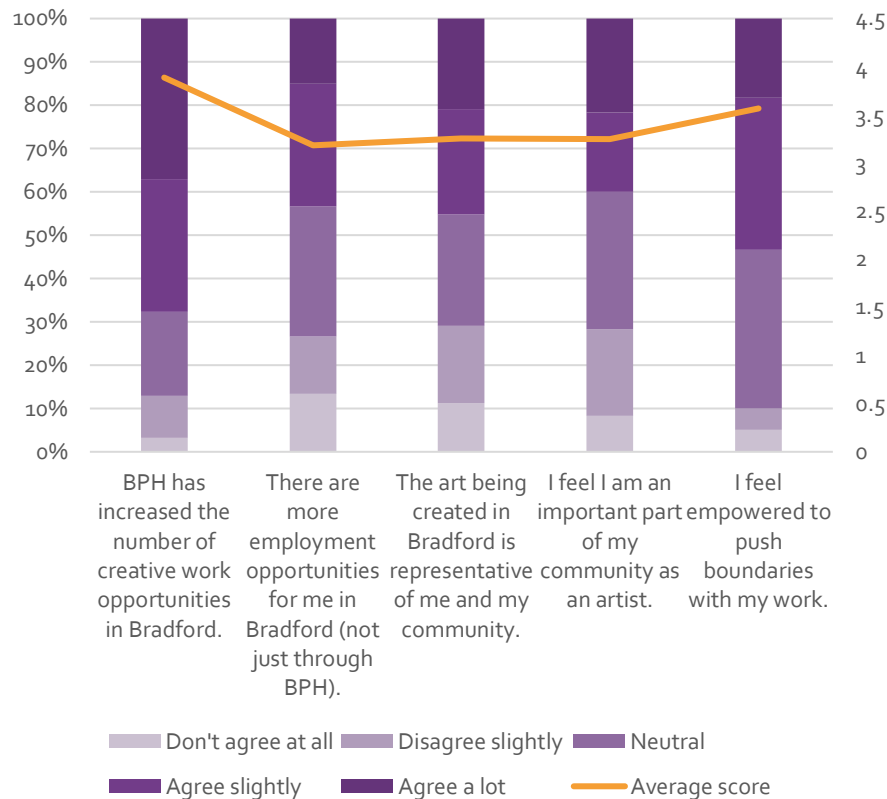


Figure 11: How much artists agree with these further statements. Darker colour indicates more agreement. The line shows average scores. Base = 59:62

Artists were asked how much they agree with certain aspects of working with BPH. Figures 10 and 11 show the results, where the darker the shading, the more people agreed.

Overall, artists agreed that BPH had made positive impacts on their career and opportunities but are less sure about the implications for Bradford as a whole. The most significant result is that 75% are more inspired to work towards new goals or ambitions, up 10% on last year. This is such an important result with inspiration a leading indicator to real progression in the sector. However, we find that this is matched in the percentages of people accessing new projects or funding to develop their work from BPH. This may be just that not enough time has elapsed for this to happen, but further investigation would be useful.

68% of artists felt that BPH had increased the number of creative work opportunities in Bradford, the same as last year, and while people were less sure that there were more employment opportunities overall, the 43% who agreed is more than double the amount last year - a positive sign that the sector is recovering post-pandemic.

57% of respondents feel supported with profile building and business skills. Mirroring previous findings, artists also feel more connected to creative people, companies, and venues in Bradford, but less so for those elsewhere.

The data shows that artists are more hesitant to say the art being made in Bradford is representative of them and their communities (45% agree), but the results show marginal increases since last year, backed up by anecdotal evidence in the feedback received. Only 40% of artists feel important to their communities, down 5% from last year.

75% of artists felt BPH had met their needs consistently, evidencing a positive approach to inclusivity and responding to need. A further 13% felt their needs had been met successfully at least some of the time. Only 11% felt BPH had not met their needs sufficiently.

There are some recurring requests to BPH that are reflective of the lack of support generally in the arts sector in Bradford (and beyond). In particular, support for wider artforms such as dance and greater visibility in Keighley. More explicit connections or signposting to support from The Leap may address the latter.

*"As one of the organisations that has dance at the heart of what we do, I would like a more direct access to conversations, support, and strategic thinking to endeavour pioneering new dance development in the district and beyond. Demonstrate the great work already taking place -which has been recognised on a world scale - whilst inclusively moving forward the art form."*

Survey Respondents

## Case study 1: Reach and Experience Make Work

Make Work is a grant opportunity offering funds of between £3,000 and £18,000 to support people to research and develop, test and make new products.

The Self-Assessment of Readiness to apply and the wrap around support built into makes this programme unique. The Self-Assessment for some projects process enables potential applicants to identify their own stage of development. Wrap around support is carefully tailored to individual applicants. It has worked well and presents a high investment but high impact strand of work.

*"In a case like this, I think the support of an experienced producer... helped to level the playing field for this applicant to make a stronger stage 2 case that could compete with applicants that have more experience and/or a team to work with."*

Make Work Producer

In Round 3 this year there continues to be changes to the programme overall and there is still some evaluative opportunity around whether these changes have had a positive impact.

*"The Make Work grant has made a massive difference to my career and work. It's had a huge and positive impact on my confidence as a creative [it] was one of the first grants I got, and it has allowed other artists and companies to take me more seriously since."*

*Considering this was just a small idea at the beginning and BPH took a chance on me as an early career and the project is something I will always be thankful for. It has allowed me to network with local artists and companies and BPH has been nothing but supportive*

*throughout the whole journey... the wraparound and additional support has allowed me to grow as an artist too."*

Make Work Recipient

There is considerable legacy of Make Work Round 1 projects, and this is likely to be similar for Rounds 2 and 3:

- 3 artists received DYCP on the back of their Make Work grants.
- 3 projects received ACE Project Grants.
- 3 projects received CBMDC funding.
- Estimated total additional funding unlocked – more than £120,000, doubling the BPH investment.
- 5 productions are already touring beyond their original plans, including national and international dates already delivered, and further touring being planned for next year.
- 8 artists developed new partnerships or collaborations with other artists, venues, creatives.
- 3 projects developed new ongoing relationships with schools, young people, communities.
- Projects received considerable Press Coverage, including T&A, Yorkshire Post, Yorkshire Evening Post, Asian Standard, The Times, The Observer, BBC Radio Bradford, BCB Radio, collectively raising the profile of Bradford.
- 1 project won a national Award (Best Stage Production, Asian Media Awards).



## Case study 2: Reach and Experience

### A focus on Spare Bob

*"We know that this £500 can really change people's lives."*

BPH team member

Whilst championing fair pay for artists, BPH also recognises the importance of stimulating self-starter, DIY growth through small funding pots like Spare Bob. The creativity of approach and accessibility of the application process has led to inspiring work, empowering people to generate their own successes.

*"Spare Bob is easy and efficient and not too labour intensive which is representative of the fund."*

Survey respondent

A new Spare Bob programme was launched after realising this was a much needed and unique (there is no other equivalent) form of support. The last round attracted 15 applicants all of whom had viable projects and ideas, so some rejuggling of the budget was necessary to support them all, a recognition of the value of this funding. Over year 3, 38 applicants were supported and over £19k invested.

For many this fund provided a vital springboard to the next level, allowing artists to focus on developing their own skills and practice and move on to new collaborations and opportunities.

*"We welcomed a new player into Mookie + The Bab to play bass... Spare Bob helped him develop skills in bass to be able to play with us at a professional level."*

Survey respondent

Seed funding grants should continue and be marketed as crucial to the early creative R&D process whilst clearly aligning to progression routes to accessing more funding.

*"Really appreciate the spare bob, it has changed my practice habits and improved my live performance too."*

Spare Bob recipient





Front Room Poetry on the Road in Girlington, by Bradford Producing Hub

### 3. A More Skilled And Confident Workforce

**This section outlines the existing level of skills across participants and explores aspects of the programmes that have particularly influenced participants' professional skills and confidence, and their ability to understand and navigate the Bradford Live Arts scene. We have focused in on two case studies that exemplify the journeys that people have taken with regard to these outcomes.**

Data is drawn from the 63 responses to the annual BPH survey (sent to creative practitioners who attended any BPH course), from interviews with artists, from project specific evaluation, team reflections and from monitoring data including postcodes collected at events.

#### What we find

Participants show a range of professional skills gained via education or industry specific routes. There appears to be a lack of mid-career artists taking part in the programme overall, with most at the beginning or much later in their creative careers. Training programmes have equipped people with new skills and confidence, but mentoring and other one-to-one approaches really help to build both professional and self-confidence, and live events have inspired people with high-quality, risk-taking performances.

New Producer and Production managers programmes have significantly progressed individual ambitions and career prospects,

whilst Culture Cubed training has helped to embed the crucial skills for measuring and articulating the value of the work being done.

One to one support also generated new connections for people and a sense of feeling better informed about the sector overall.

Go-Sees' have formed a part of several programmes and continue to be one of the best and most valued professional development opportunities for e.g., Production managers, Creativity Council, particularly when there is the opportunity to talk directly to other performers or technical teams and then collectively reflect on and consolidate learning afterwards. In the case of Production Managers applying learning in a timely way was also important.

Skills focused programmes like Production Managers and New Producers Training show successful skill building but also leading indicators of improved confidence and career progression as a direct result of taking part.

### 3.1. Professional skills

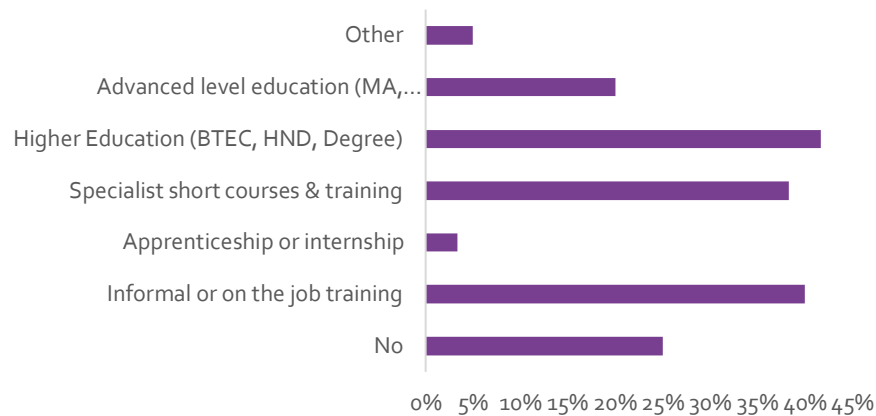


Figure 13 Levels of training completed by artists. Base = 60

Most of the artists had at least some level of training besides what they have done through BPH, with only 25% saying they did not have any form of training. 40% had received informal training, and over half had completed training at degree level (42%) or higher (20%). Other responses included industry-specific schemes.

The data from the question of how long artists have been working in the creative sector shows an interesting dichotomy, with over half of artists having worked either under 5 years, or more than 21 years. The results show that BPH is doing well in terms of reaching early career and well-established artists, but less engagement by mid-career or emerging leaders in comparison. This pattern is similar to our findings last year, and work should continue to try to reach with these groups. New programmes particularly targeting mid-career practitioners, like the Sustain Programme, are now in

place with the evaluation results due next year but are already showing significant need and early positive impact on participants.

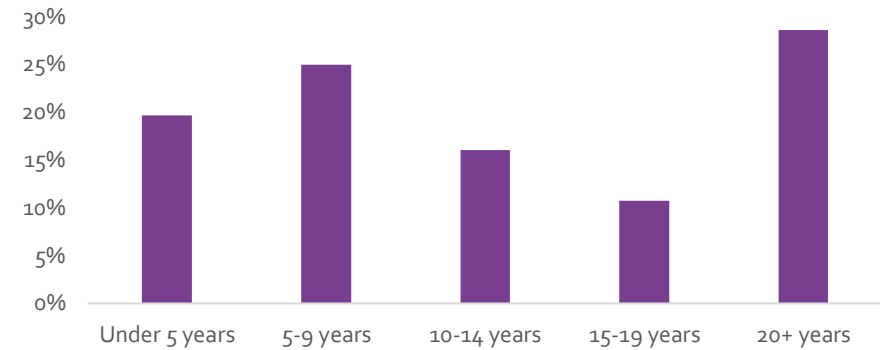


Figure 12 How long artists have been working in the creative sector. Base = 56

### Case Study 3: A more skilled and confident workforce Culture Cubed

*A series of online evaluation training sessions.*

*"I really got to see that Evaluating can be fun! We can be creative in our approach and that has opened up a whole new world for me: I feel much more positive about it"*

Participant

Investment in the development of the Creative Instigators, through opportunities to lead and evaluate programmes, as well as formal 'evaluation training' through the Culture Cubed Programme, has been successful in building professional skills and confidence within the team.

Five people took part in Culture Cubed training. Two of the participants were BPH Creative Instigators and two are represented on the Creativity Council. All are creative practitioner working in Bradford.

The training uses a detailed approach to measuring and articulating value, with a particular emphasis on understanding the social value of arts and culture to people, planet, and prosperity.

It was delivered through four online workshops with the opportunity to apply learning to participants own projects during the delivery period. Working as a whole team, in pairs for peer support and with individual feedback in-between the session, provided a rich environment for sharing skills, ideas and challenges.

Good evaluation skills are crucial for a resilient sector that can clearly articulate its value. However, our wider experience shows that these skills are often lacking or not prioritised.

Early on, participants had low levels of confidence and knowledge of effectively measuring and articulating the value of their work. After the training, the feedback suggests that participants had increased in the amount they knew about evaluation (the purpose, the processes, how to do it, etc.) – as well as gaining confidence in evaluating their work.

As facilitators of training, RMR felt that further ongoing support is needed to really embed these skills and encourage practitioners to prioritise time for more effective evaluative work.

*"We've used it in our steering group from the beginning to help us plan and we will return to it as a group so that we can stay on track and connected to why we wish to make a difference. It's a great tool."*

Participant

## 3.2. Understanding the landscape

### 3.2.1. One-to-one support

48% of artists received one-to-one support from BPH this year, which is down slightly from the 56% who had at least one form of one-to-one support last year. Of those who did receive support, by far the most common was 'conversations with the BPH team'. One of the unique and invaluable offers that BPH makes is this sort of ongoing ad hoc tailored support for individuals. Mentoring was also very popular suggesting the need for more formalised and long-term commitment.

Those who received one-to-one support gave 100% positive reviews. It is clear from feedback the one-to-one support has offered a range of skills, knowledge, understanding and attitudinal change in particular raised confidence. But there is also evidence that with that confidence came a better understanding of the sector as a whole and how to navigate that.

*"I just wanted to also say that ... I feel that I am probably the most informed about funding opportunities and what networking opportunities there are ... than any time I can previously remember and that's spanning over a period of probably more than 15 years!! So yeah, it's definitely working."*

Musician

The team is regarded as approachable, friendly, and supportive, and generally people felt communication with the team was good. Specific members of the team were mentioned where strong supportive relationships had clearly been built.

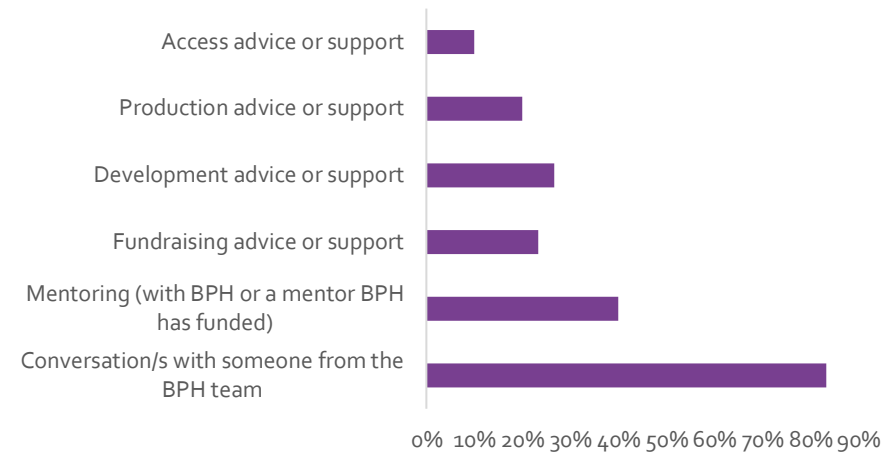


Figure 14: Forms of one-to-one support taken up by artists. Base = 30

## 3.3. Confidence

*"Can I just say a massive thank you for your support mentoring me over the last few months. It's helped me regain a lot of the confidence and eased that daunting and hardest first step of re-entering the music after so long."*

BPH Mentee

We find that intensive residential style programmes and longer-term one-to-one support like mentoring are key to developing confidence. Front Room Poetry and Play Days have also been successful in encouraging participation at different levels of engagement, building confidence, connectivity, and mutual awareness

Anecdotal evidence of the impact of the Outdoor Arts residential suggest a transformational experience for those attending. Further

research into the longer-term impact of intensive residential style work would be beneficial in the future.

*"Thank you for those amazing few days. We still haven't come down to earth, and we are so fired up with creative inspiration both personally and professionally."*

Mentee

*"... I've come to some decisions on what direction I want to take in the future ... We've made new connections and definitely new friends for life."*

Mentee

### **Play Days – Back to live**

*"We finally met up in real life!"*

Play Days have been great ways from all kinds of creatives to come together, play, and tap into the local scene. From well-known artists to first timers, the feedback has been positive in meeting the aims of feeling a bit more connected and has again, led to people going on to other opportunities including paid work.

### **Front Room Poetry - risk and reputation**

The evolution of Front Room Poetry has been successful, particularly for people who met online through BPH and who have now progressed on to performing to a live audience for the first time. Other local performers have felt inspired to join the open mics which have gained a positive reputation and has attracted artists who wouldn't usually participate, as well as first timers. Audiences for these events are observed to be very diverse, although there is no formal analysis of demographics specifically for Front Room Poetry.

## Case Study 4: A more confident workforce Mentoring

*A programme pairing organisations or individuals with mentors and experts to support development and growth.*

The mentoring programme is a real highlight, mentioned consistently by the team and by mentees, who talk about it providing critical support at pivotal moments.

*"My mentoring was a TOTAL game changer... so useful and made my bid a million times better even if it wasn't successful. The support available makes me feel I can take on bigger and more ambitious projects and makes me excited to be a Bradford creative."*

Mentee

There have been 23 mentees in Year 3 (45 to date), all at different stages of their career, benefitting from working with 42 industry expert mentors with extensive sector experience.

Mentors were selected for their skills, experience and expertise – as well as for having a passion for supporting Bradford creatives and empathy for the challenges faced by the sector. They have worked one-to-one with mentees over the year, supporting reflective thinking and exploring skills gaps and future priorities.

*"No questions are too stupid and he's [mentor] really great at helping navigate the theatre world which can feel a bit daunting"*

Mentee

*"I think... perhaps of the greatest value was meeting Anna and using her expertise and existing contacts to enhance my own networks".*

Mentee

The programme supported people planning their own creative work, writing funding applications, navigating the sector (for those early in their careers) and offered shadowing opportunities for skills sharing. These stages are crucial in the chain of events that leads to a more skilled and confident creative workforce, as well as in the creation of higher quality work.

In many cases mentoring support has led people to develop new skills, new partnerships, get funding, secure new work or commissions, and really progress to the next level. At this stage we can already see increased inward investment into the arts in Bradford.

But most noticeably, we see frequent mention of increased confidence, or (in one case) regained confidence. This is the confidence to develop their own artform further where this has been previously neglected in favour of managing projects.

The evaluation shows that this sort of one-to-one support provides in the moment and timely emotional support, as well as the reflective time and practical advice that people have really needed.

*"These sessions are just incredible I feel so lucky!"*

Mentee





PLEASE ASK REP  
FINALIST  
BEST TAKEAWAY IN  
YORKSHIRE  
2018  
THE SWEETIE PEOPLE

FINALIST  
BEST TAKEAWAY  
DELIVERY DRIVER  
Keith Evans  
Sweetie People

Kingsway  
KING OF CONFECTIONERY

Pick N Mix, Kim Olivia, Sweet Shop, by Carolyn Mendelsohn

## 4. Increasing Opportunities

**This section focuses in particular on targeted networking, supporting the progression of mid-career practitioners and leaders and generating and signposting for professional progression for artists.**

We use these themes to explore how BPH is responding to identified needs in the sector and how tailored programmes of support can address these needs. We finish with an analysis of the 'development journey', using the Four Stages of Competence model alongside a change curve. Here we see where BPH can best intervene to support people along the curve.

Data is drawn from the 63 responses to the annual BPH survey (sent to creative practitioners who attended any BPH course), from interviews with artists, from project specific evaluation and from monitoring data including postcodes collected at events.

### What we find

Informal and targeted networking support is proving a very positive approach to creating a more connected, skilled and healthier sector. In the case of the music scene, a new Steering Group is supporting this process, stimulating new work, skills and confidence and providing a joined-up voice for musicians. But this much needed intensive work can take its toll on the team. BPH is exploring more opportunities to support mid-career artists and leaders, again much needed and there are early positive signs of impact here. But there is a mixed picture in terms of progression. We see clear evidence of progress for many artists and for organisations, gaining new work or funding or moving on to higher support, but others say that

moving on is more difficult. And whilst there are more opportunities created through the work of BPH and wider cultural programming in the City there are still challenges for artists securing new work.

### 4.1. Networking

Networking is happening informally throughout BPH delivery, partly because of the way that events, workshops, training consistently builds in 'social' sharing time. People really value these opportunities and there are frequent references in the annual artist survey to the benefits of connecting Bradford artists.

*"A growing supportive community of artists; the vision of City of Culture; it's young diverse demographic; the opportunity to work both with and beyond venues."*

Survey Respondent

More formal networking opportunities have targeted particular groups or strengthened a particular artform. Most notably these include Bradford Black Artists Network, a new Creative Care Network, responding to increased need to support wellbeing and the New Music Steering Group, led by the Creative Music Instigator, Sinead Campbell. The core BPH team were also very clear about the value of networking internally.

*"Team Day when all contributors to BPH work got together with Board was very useful to connect with wider team and understand roles and strategic direction."*

Survey Respondent

## Case Study 5: Increasing Opportunities

### Moving on: Kauser Mukhtar, artist

In 2020 Kauser was awarded Make Work Round 1 funding for her show Khooghi. This was an autobiographical family-friendly show, set within a beautiful toy theatre stage. It used puppetry, music and song to explore heritage, culture, identity by visualising, Khooghi, a song about a Red collared dove from the 160-year-old Kashmiri Sufi folk tale, Saif ul Mulooq (The Journey of Love).

Early in the process Kauser said,

*"I am keen to continue in creative journey and to call myself an artist, a word I would not have used to describe myself at the start of this journey. I am hoping to tour Khooghi and have other ideas that I would like to develop.*

*I have learnt new skills and understanding of the creative process and how much work it takes to create a piece of work from an idea. I have made new creative collaborations with amazing artists, directors, producers...*

*I am so grateful they [BPH] took a risk..."*

Since the initial development and performances, Kauser has received a small amount of funding from Bradford Council and took part in BPH's Outdoor Arts Residency. This gave her the skills and confidence to progress her show.

She did three performances as part of BD: Festival this year plus additional shows have been delivered in the centre of Bradford, in Keighley, Gillingham, Holmfirth and Huddersfield – all receiving positive feedback from audiences.

Kauser used her Council Grant to make improvements to the set, get sound and light equipment, and train up new actor, a South Asian female puppeteer.

All the while she was receiving advice and brokerage from BPH – in the latter stages in the form of one-to-one support directly from Lisa, who she describes as a great advocate.

Kauser thinks it is the first proper piece of bilingual work within the region and maybe in the country that works as a bilingual piece. Her audiences in Bradford Cathedral were a 50% mix of Punjabi dual language speakers and English speakers.

It has raised awareness in the sector that dual language work is crucial to attract wider audiences – particularly those with limited English or who just like to hear their own language.

Kauser feels that quite often productions like this sit outside the system. This is because bigger organisations, without necessarily the diverse leadership needed to champion this work, have the established 'machinery' around them to have a higher profile of work and a louder voice in the sector.

With development funding she is now looking at touring Khooghi next year and is championing support for more South Asian artists. She has new ideas, now integrated into the successful Bradford City of Culture 2025 proposal and has secured her first arts job Creative and Community Engagement Officer for South Asian Arts UK.

## Case Study 6: Increasing Opportunities Moving on: Louise Hodgson, Liberty Arts

Back in 2021 we interviewed Louise as part of the evaluation process. She had already been on a journey to broaden the offer of her company Liberty Arts and to develop her own business and artistic skills.

She said in 2021:

*"It was BPH that made me realise I have a business brain as well as an artist brain and through their advice and mentoring, Liberty Arts took a different direction... Without BPH support Liberty Arts wouldn't be as much of a success as it is now..."*

Since then Louise has accessed the BPH programme in a number of ways to further her vision for the company and feels she now can always go to them for advice.

After two rounds of BPH mentoring support, she has now set up Liberty Arts as a CIC. Also she was awarded two rounds of Spare Bob seed funding.

She is clearer about her company and individual vision, and more skilled in business and financial planning, marketing and communications, and time management – as well as developing the creative aspects of her work.

Following participation in the Outdoor Arts residency, she decided to expand her freelance producing work. She has also developed her skills and confidence by participating in the Production Management training course.

Balancing those developmental activities with networking and attendance at BPH Creative Socials, she is now working with

Bradford University Faculty of Engineering on a 'Theatre in a Box' about women in engineering.

Louise says that without BPH none of these things would have happened.

*"If you're unsuccessful on one thing, they'll guide you in another direction or recommend something that will help... BPH will always offer you other kinds of ways they can help"*

## 4.2. Supporting higher development

Supporting mid-career artists has long been a challenge for the arts sector. In 2011 Axis Web reported on this issue, summing up a common feeling amongst established practitioners, that “I have emerged but nobody noticed.” The perceptions were that the majority of support offered within the sector was for emerging artists. For many reasons, including the relevance of the offer, too little time to prioritise self-development, increased caring responsibilities, lack of self-confidence linked to a reluctance to recognise growth needs, these people have not accessed existing training opportunities.<sup>27</sup>

This year BPH offered support for mid-career artists through the SUSTAIN programme which included:

- At least 3 individual one-to-one online meetings with the lead facilitator
- 2 group online meetings
- 1 in-person group Away Day

The early indicators are that this has been another transformational and much needed programme, enabling participants to co-create the content of the programme, shaping it to their needs and offering several different types of engagement. Further evaluative work with the participants will happen in Year 4, to explore long term change.

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<sup>27</sup> <https://www.axisweb.org/archive/news-and-views/our-news-and-stories/mid-career-artists-survey-findings/>, Accessed November 2022

The approach to commissioning this work has been well thought out by the team, the ambition being for support to go beyond action learning, coaching, and mentoring and use a dramaturgical model, where participants are able to better and more authentically articulate, share and achieve their vision through group and individual reflective and developmental support.

## 4.3. Progression routes

The picture here is mixed in terms of new opportunities, partnerships, personal development, and organisational development post BPH support. For some progress has been significant whilst for others moving on from early support has proved more difficult.

*"I've never felt so good than signing the contract for my show ... a massive thank you to @bdproducinghub for supporting me and seeing my vision for this show, I'm so excited to dive into the process and discover what this next chapter brings! #joy"*

Social media post

Almost half of survey respondents say that they had seen more work opportunities for them in Bradford overall, a significant figure that will impact on people staying to live and work in the area. Several feel that there are signs of more vitality in the arts scene.

*'There seems to be a real buzz around Bradford at the moment'.*

And 77% of survey respondents said that they had made new partnerships and connections within Bradford through their engagement with BPH.

But a considerable number say there are no more opportunities than last year, with some struggling to find work or create their own opportunities. One person indicated that they'd found less opportunities since becoming disabled - potentially indicating further work needed on access needs.

*"There are limited opportunities, but I believe the sector is building so this could shift."*

Survey respondent

The most frequently mentioned place people looked for job information was social media, stated in 29% of answers with Twitter the most frequently named platform (11% of total answers). 23% used newsletters, often from specific industries, or mailing lists, and 10% of total responses mentioned 'arts jobs'. 19% said they heard about jobs through word of mouth, often mentioning colleagues or networks. 13% said they looked for jobs in their own geographic locality, centred on Bradford usually but often Leeds, South Yorkshire etc. 8% looked on the BPH website and 8% looked at other places online e.g., curator space.

Organisational support/development was offered through the Expanding Horizons funding for small organisations, and through an NPO (Arts Council National Portfolio Organisation) development opportunity. 8 organisations were supported by the latter, with 2 subsequently deciding not to apply for NPO funding and 6 applying.

This was a well thought out piece of work, recognising the need for organisations to really explore their practice and readiness to apply

for long term Arts Council funding. Looking at the Change Curve in Figure 15 below, it is clear that for some, an honest realisation of the scale of work required to get to NPO stage meant a re-evaluation of whether to apply. For others who went on to apply 2 out of 6 applicants were successful with several being unlikely to apply this time round without the support. This represents an additional investment into Bradford of approximately £300,000 per year (not including uplifts to existing NPO's)

In a similar way, the support offered to Make Work applicants resulted in some deciding they were not ready and investing in wider organisational development needs instead.

Survey respondents and interviewees commonly mention the need for post training/event/funding/mentoring support to be in place. Most participants want to either move on with their training, access different training, talk to other experts to extend their practice, or access support in applying their learning to their own practice. Those receiving funding mention a desire for follow up work 6 months and a year after the end of projects to check in on progress. It's this sort of formal commitment and accountability that often drives individual progression. And some want to be able to access support even when their project is no longer 'new' and feel that is not currently provided within the BPH offer.

Our research shows a common phenomenon in artist and organisational development journeys. Early on, in receiving advice and training, participants move into what psychologists' term 'conscious incompetence' on the Four Stages of Competence. Mapping these stages to a Change Curve (see Figure 15) this is seen as a downward trend, associated with frustration at the realisation of the amount of work needed to really improve in a particular area. BPH has been skilled at supporting some artists throughout the

Change Curve to the point where skills, behaviours and understanding are embedded, to 'conscious competence'. However, there are a number who still feel more is needed, with planning and committing to the next steps, regular long term check ins and more signposting. It would be useful for BPH to map provision against this change curve to fill the gaps where needed.

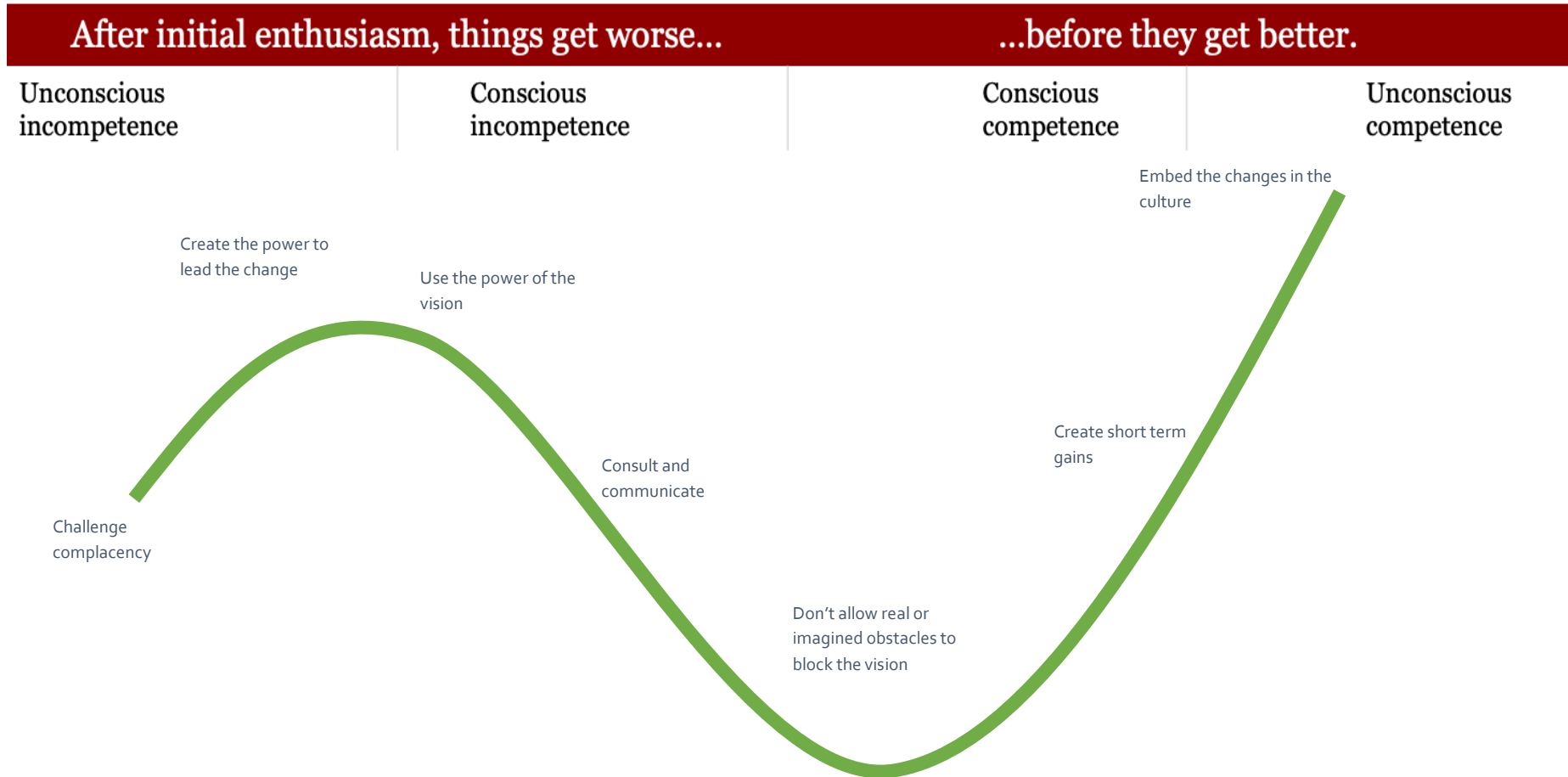


Figure 15: Kotter's Change Curve and the Four Stages of Competence

## Case study 7: Increasing Opportunities Get it Done: Production Management Training

Production Management Training offered to build participants' understanding of how to bring together lighting, sound, staging, special effects, event management and creative vision to make things happen.

*"The production management training programme has honestly changed my life and has led me to the conclusion that although I produce, production management is where my passion and skills lie."*

Production Management participant

Workshops were initially held online but the desire was clear for in-person training when this was finally offered. Attendance at the online sessions was more variable. A 'Go-See' to a performance delivered by Imitating the Dog at Leeds Playhouse was the highlight of the training.

People felt that the programme had expanded their knowledge and understanding of the potential of lighting effects and lighting technologies. 7 out of 8 respondents felt that the programme had increased their knowledge and understanding around sound amplification and audio set ups. All respondents felt significantly more confident in working with technical staff and designers around using lighting and sound.

People were inspired by their experience, by the quality of the facilitation and the content of the programme. In particular, opportunities to understand and apply their learning in a live context – for example the Go See at Leeds Playhouse – were appreciated. Everyone loved the opportunity to talk to Imitating the Dog about their work at Leeds Playhouse. They were empowered,

and fascinated by what they saw and heard, and it was clearly the most enjoyable aspect of the programme.

*"Loved it... It made me realise that artistically and almost technically I have the skills to bring such elements together, and the ideas of creating an immersive theatre experience is not beyond me."*

Production Management participant

All participants felt that their access needs were well supported through the programme. Networking with peers was seen as positive but an aspect of the programme that could be enhanced further. The small group size and informal delivery gave participants the confidence to ask questions, have them answered in depth and to develop a strong connection with each other. They most frequently mentioned a desire to do more shadowing with professional practitioners and organisations. One person requested more advice for running small scale and portable shows.

There are indicators that these people are very likely to seek out more training or development opportunities. One person has successfully applied for creative development funding from ACE and subsequently spent 6 months training under professional Production Managers. For participants who are employed, skills learnt are already impacting on their own organisational development.

*"Has definitely had an impact on our venue and the way we look at the lighting"*

Production Management participant



## Cat Scott, Production Manager trainee

Cat Scott is a young creative practitioner specialising in using STEM processes, and wave phenomena to make kinetic sculptures, installations, and experiences. Cat had recently finished an international residency when lockdown happened and was looking to capitalise on opportunities to expand her portfolio and career potential. Having recognised a gap in her technical skills she applied for a place on the course. Cat says that she was inspired by Ben Pugh's quote "knowledge of the technical makes creativity possible" and notes an improvement not only in her technical skills, but in her confidence to take the leap into being a full-time artist, self-producing better and with a new ambition to produce others.

The small group size and the way the course was delivered was perfect for offering in depth individual and collective support, and in cementing a new peer support network. Cat is more positive about the opportunity to work as a creative in Bradford and is now receiving BPH mentoring support from a professional curator.



The Big Creative Social, by Bradford Producing Hub

## Case Study 8: Increasing Opportunities Music Instigation

*Supporting networks, diverse leadership.*

With a new Music Instigator, Sinead Campbell, in place there has been significant development within the Bradford music scene, although there is still a long way to go.

Working to build connectivity across a very disconnected sector from scratch has presented a real journey for Sinead, both in terms of skills and relationship development but also in her leadership role. Sinead has developed strong partnerships initiating shared decision making and better trust within the Council.

*"This [music sector support] is the first step on the ladder of development for the sector..."*

Survey Respondent

This work has been strongly evidence-based, starting with a detailed needs-analysis. As well as sector research and making connections – with individual musicians, groups, venues, charities, and companies – Sinead has helped to set up a much-needed Music Steering Group, and developed better relationships with the Council and local education providers. As part of the Bradford 2025 application, she co-hosted and consulted for 2025's music round table talk.

The role has presented an ongoing line of support for musicians and music organisations, including advice, guidance and signposting to other opportunities and funding and help in setting up performances, events, and nights. The amount of work and commitment this has needed has taken its toll, but also provided

Sinead with the opportunity to step up her leadership role and become more strategic in her approach to supporting the Bradford music scene.

*"I gained lots of first-hand experience by throwing myself in - which has helped me understand the needs of the sector better & what it's like to run events in Bradford."*

Music Instigator

The lapse in BPH delivery in January 2022 offered an important pause and reflection time. Sinead took the chance to take part in Culture Cubed evaluation training. This has enhanced her confidence and ability to measure and articulate the value of the work she is doing and that of the Music Steering Group going forwards.

The longer-term impacts of this work are yet to be seen, but there is already evidence of:

- New work generated for people in the music sector
- Better engagement within the Black community
- New performance opportunities
- New relationships
- New skills and confidence
- Leverage of new funding into the sector
- More musicians accessing wider support including funding from BPH.



Our Time  
Our Place

BD25

BRADFORD  
City of Culture  
2025

BRADFORD 2025  
UK City of Culture Bid

00:00:25

BEAT THE  
BRATFUD  
BUZZER

BD25

BRADFORD 2025  
UK City of Culture Bid

## 5. Shifting The Bradford Cultural Ecosystem

*"Looking back at what has been a surreal year, it is obvious to me I would be poorer in ideas, reflections, and resources without the BPH. You make a difference in the art and cultural landscape of Bradford and in many people's lives."*

Survey Respondent

**This section focuses on the longer term aims outlined in BPH's Story of Change. This includes the influence of BPH on the Live Arts scene and the broader cultural ecosystem.**

We explore what makes Bradford a unique place for the arts and how BPH has capitalised on that, progress towards the sector becoming more inclusive and with more diverse leadership. We go on to consider whether BPH is helping to secure a more resilient sector overall. Finally we use the developmental journey of the Creativity Council to demonstrate progress in these areas.

Data is drawn from the 63 responses to the annual BPH survey (sent to creative practitioners who attended any BPH course), from interviews with artists, from monitoring data, and specifically from ongoing team reflection workshops and logs.

### What we find

Looking at the evidence in this report, we see the continued indicators of a shifting ecosystem stimulated by BPH's work and the strength of its partnerships. This has been strengthened with the successful bid for City of Culture 2025. The power of this organisation is in its culture, ethos, values, and principles for

working with creative practitioners and changing an entrenched system, not just in the programmes it delivers.

The socio-economic fluctuations and structural changes at Council level have also created what Ben Rothera, Creative Producer, calls *"a perfect storm for the arts to develop"*.

We see a clear change in where decision making is happening through the work of the Creativity Council, and practice led by the interests and expertise of the Creative Instigators, a model now replicated by Bradford Council in its heritage work. As a core partner in 2025, BPH could help to realise some of the longer-term ambitions, identified in the Story of Change, for shared back-office functions and a shared 'What's On' programme.

*"It is obvious, but I think Bradford 2025 is HUGE for artists of all kinds working here."*

Survey Respondent

Artists clearly articulate the richness on offer in Bradford and the opportunities City of Culture might offer:

- A strong sense of community, diversity, and potential for growth with such a young population.
- A history of creativity, culture, ambition, and a DIY ethic
- A beautiful landscape
- Low cost of living and renting spaces.

*"This is a city that seems to truly understand that a highly diverse community is a strength, can be a great source of creativity and the*

*starting point for a vibrant city which is an exciting place to live, work in and visit.”*

Interviewee

At the same time artists responding to our survey and those interviewed agree that this is just the beginning. People are anticipating the possibilities and challenges offered by City of Culture 2025. It's seen as a strength and something that will promote a focus on the arts in Bradford. But there are also concerns about inclusivity and exclusion. The sector must be very transparent in what the opportunities are and for whom. Local communities, artists and organisations must be the primary consideration.

Empowering artists of all artforms, supporting Infrastructure and improved funding are what most respondents felt could address the wider challenges in the city.

*"BPH has created an orbit and force that is holding everything together whilst still retains flexibility and is moving."*

BPH team member

This year we also see ongoing funding for the creation or redevelopment of new spaces that will support the Live Arts infrastructure. Transforming Spaces is an annual fund, this year allocated to the development of three spaces, bringing the overall number of projects supported to 7 since 2020. There was no evaluation data to share at this point.

- Mezzanine Arts Depot - a mill space in Queensbury for a trial period including some heating and fire safety equipment
- People's Property Portfolio - a feasibility study and community engagement process for a potential new space on Piccadilly in the city centre

- Rockwell Centre - a community space in Thorpe Edge that has been taken over by Bloomin Buds theatre company. The funding is supporting purchase of staging, lighting and sound equipment to enable the community centre to receive touring productions

## 5.1. Arts embedded in wider sector initiatives

For those at the coal face of delivery it's hard to see the partnerships and collaboration that is happening behind the scenes. When we asked the team to think about how well BPH is supporting the arts to be embedded in wider local agendas there was a mixed response. Arts and culture are high on the agenda at a strategic level, with interest from social care, education, and health sectors but this value hasn't necessarily cascaded down to community level initiatives.

## 5.2. A fairer and more inclusive arts ecology

This is where we see BPH making a big difference. The team are committed to building trust, rebuilding bridges with excluded or disengaged communities and making sure that the arts is accessible to all. There is always room for development but there has been a real shift who feels part of the creative community in Bradford.

Part of the culture of the team is to be there for people to make sure the system is fair. And there were frequent references from the team to the potential for BPH programmes to 'unearth' new creative practitioners, providing routes into the sector for people who would never otherwise make it.

*"Great response to summer social, again including lots of new people we haven't yet come across."*

Creative Instigator

We see more opportunities and more diverse voices being heard in the focused work building connections within the music sector. Buskival, for example, was a successful joint project with the Council that championed local talent and diversity.

However, again there is more work to do. Team reflections and our own work outside this project, but in the Bradford area, reveal that there is still a divide and mistrust between some communities and the Council and other organisations seen to be the 'gatekeepers'. Time must be planned in to bridge these gaps and build trust with under-represented communities.

The Music Needs Analysis research has also outlined significant challenges for musicians and the ambitions for an inclusive music sector that forms an integral part of the overall arts ecology. The new Music Steering Group is well placed to bring focus and pressure to deliver on the findings of the needs analysis to make sure all the music that happens across the district is supported.

There were several suggestions from survey respondents for improving inclusion for parents, young people and culturally diverse groups:

*"You are good at breaking down barriers to participation, but can you do more to focus on parents / carers working in the arts? Caring responsibilities have a massive impact on how creative's can progress in their careers."*

Survey Respondent

*"I think BPH need to do more work to support the South Asian Community which is a big part of the Bradford population but a very small part of the creative sector. The young people need to understand how to access the sector and also opportunity to create relevant art."*

Survey Respondent

### 5.3. Diversity of leadership

There has been one leadership programme targeting global majority practitioners and support for 3 diverse artists to attend the Common Purpose Emerging Leaders Programme. But most significantly, although not labelled as a leadership programme, the Creativity Council has enabled a much more organic leadership development process. The case study below outlines the key areas of work and impact.

Our research reveals that there are still low perceptions of the growth and impact of global majority leadership and representation at strategic levels, and still some way to go to ensure that the arts are universally valued for their social impacts. Continued work to support and advocate for diverse leadership, and to demonstrate the difference this can make to the sector, is necessary in Year 4.

### 5.4. A thriving, diverse, high quality, and resilient arts infrastructure

Whilst BPH has gone a long way to diversify the sector, the sector is not yet thriving nor resilient and the quality of provision is mixed.

We are seeing increasing cases of artist 'burn out' from overcommitment to increasing work opportunities and the impacts

of the cost-of-living crisis are already evident and impacting audiences, creating further vulnerability in the sector.

In terms of quality there is a dilemma, some free but high-quality work doesn't necessarily draw a large audience whilst other 'lower quality' work has generated large numbers because of its perceived relevance to the community. Is relevance more important than quality? How can we achieve both?

Quality also comes from sharing excellence and expertise within and outside of the sector. There is potential to look beyond the arts sector for strong practice in how quality is assured. BPH is responding to these dilemmas through a new programme called the Creative Quality programme which will support artists in self and peer reflection both within and outside of Bradford. Good evaluation of the process and outcomes from this work will be key next year. NPOs also have a key role to play here but the team feel that there are not enough producing NPOs or opportunities in the area for people to access and learn from.

We have found several instances where BPH has been asked to share models, practice, and ideas with non-Bradford arts orgs for example: Absolutely Cultured, Hull; The Lowry, Salford; Forest Tribe Theatre, Cheshire; SWAP'ra, Leeds; Good Chance, London. There have been a number of evolving partnerships over the year including: Transform, Leeds; Leeds 2023; and New Queers on the Block, Marlborough Productions. And we have anecdotal evidence that the arts scene in Bradford has a national reputation for quality radical Live Arts - inspiring one team member to apply for her job in Bradford. However, there is little other evidence of perspectives outside of Bradford. In 2023 there are plans for a tour of BPH to share more widely across the UK and providing a great opportunity to understand changing perceptions of the arts scene in Bradford.

## 5.5. Sustained investment in and commitment to arts and culture in Bradford

Over the last 3 years BPH has supported over £1m of additional funding into the arts in Bradford. And there is clearly a strong and growing commitment to the arts in Bradford seen in policy, strategy, structure, and immediate investment with the success of the 2025 bid. However, sustained investment needs more work. Lisa Mallaghan says that corporate sponsorship for the 2025 bid was a rare achievement and something that needs to be embedded in the wider corporate culture moving forwards. This could be achieved through more robust demonstration of the real social and economic value that the arts can bring to businesses and their communities.

## Case Study 9: Shifting The Bradford Cultural Ecosystem The Creativity Council: Diversity of Leadership

*"It feels like something special is happening in Bradford and I think the Creativity Council has the real power to uplift and support Live Arts and artists. I'm privileged to play a small role in it."*

Creativity Council Member

The Creativity Council has a remit to:

- Imagine how live performance and creativity can make Bradford a better place to live and work.
- Create new ideas and talk about how these could work.
- Help the project think about all the different communities in Bradford and what they want and need.
- Talk about how things are going, what we should be doing more of, and what we should do differently.
- Review applications for training and funding and help select what the project should support.

The Creativity Council is a group of people from different backgrounds and experiences with a minimum membership of 15, on annual contracts for their support work.

Overall, the Creativity Council has engaged 24 people to date. This is a diverse group of people but there are areas that need to be

strengthened, particularly around representation of disabled and young people.

At their April 2022 meeting the Creativity Council agreed they would like to open up some more places to take the group back to 19 members. They discussed implementing a buddying system and reviewing safeguarding to enable this to happen.

The Creativity Council has developed an innovative needs and ideas-led approach to funding decision for BPH programmes. This worked very well to support ground-breaking new work through Make Work 1 and 2 programmes, but also presents challenges that the Council are working through in their leadership role.

With new management, the Creativity Council is working well to focus strategically, exploring becoming an entity in its own right, and thinking about impact.

The Creativity Council has recently developed plans for their own creative project which has really encouraged creative challenge and leadership skills and included the opportunity for members to take part in producer training and co-mentoring support. The increased skills, confidence and capacity of the Creativity Council will contribute to a stronger legacy for an alternative governing body within the sector.

Mapping the journey over the next 12 months will offer a useful model of good practice and learning for the wider arts, cultural, and community development sectors.





## 6. Conclusions And Recommendations

**This section summarises the aspects of the structure, programme, delivery, management, and team ethos and vision, that are working well and are crucial to the success of BPH. We make conclusions that reflect on the overall journey of the organisation summarising the 5 competing challenges that BPH must continue to address and communicate about in Year 4.**

The report ends with a series of recommendations drawn from these findings and organised into Role, Reach, Develop, Opportunities, and Future focus.

Data is drawn from across the report but most heavily from the ongoing reflections of the team over the year.

The results demonstrate an overall successful year in terms of reaching people at all stages of their careers, unearthing, and supporting new practitioners in Bradford, diverse programming, talent development and confidence building, generating new pioneering work, new processes that make life easier as an artist, promoting a stronger and better-connected Live Arts scene and strengthening the overall cultural ecology of Bradford. There is much to reflect on and integrate into Year 4 delivery, to build on this progress.

### 6.1. What works well and what's challenging

So, what makes the BPH model work so well? The team have identified the following critical success factors consistently over the year showing it is not just the diversity of programming for

creatives at different stages of their careers, it's about the way its delivered and the team that delivers it.

The fundamental ethos of the organisation comes from its existence to support others, often those whose voice or creativity would not otherwise be represented.

#### 6.1.1. Investing in a quality team

This is a team committed to learning and development, to understanding where things work and generating shared solutions to the challenges, where risk and failure are accepted. The team talk most frequently about the strength of shared vision, strong management, opportunity development for the team and the sector and a culture of openness, empowerment, and creativity. The development of good practice is captured well through frequent whole team reflection and shared planning for the future. But most importantly all of this is done with an inclusive ethos embedded into practice internally and through the programming at an early stage.

The Creative Summer Social and shared planning workshops were noted by the team as being particularly successful team building opportunities, and all want more.

The whole team are encouraged to attend events and meetings and talk to artists to understand needs and to present a team of 'real' and approachable people. This goes some way to managing the heavy expectations felt by BPH, offering clarity on roles and opportunities. It was demonstrated particularly well at the Sustain programme away day, where the whole team attended an evening

meal with the participants, offering social time and a forum for open discussion about the arts in Bradford.

More time for shared reflection as a core team for the instigators would be welcome as this has proved so effective in learning, sharing, and troubleshooting. The request for more creative time together runs consistently across the team and throughout the year in individual reflective logs.

*"Creative Brainstorming- the couple of occasions with the instigators have been inspiring and creative and a long time coming!"*

Creative Instigator

### 6.1.2. Understanding the needs of the sector

Understanding artists needs is key to delivering the programme well. This includes understanding and responding to accessibility issues and the financial stability/instability barriers faced by freelance artists, and continual evolution, reflecting on what's needed and what's a challenge.

At the same time, BPH is seen as having an open door which means that they receive both positive and negative feedback openly and often they hear 'every' complaint. The team make every effort to respond to negative feedback, but our research reveals that this has a negative effect on the wellbeing of the team. Whole team training in giving, receiving, and managing negative feedback in a constructive way would be a good investment next year.

### 6.1.3. Programming tailored support for diverse needs

Tailoring programmes is one of the USPs of BPH. A significant investment that reaps significant rewards.

Programmes, in particular Make Work, have pushed some artists out of their comfort zones, platforming some who have never performed before and supporting others to create projects in unusual spaces. Wrap around support has been particularly effective - one Make Work project applicant had never performed live before and was supported by artist Victoria Firth to develop skills and confidence to do this.

### 6.1.4. Designing the right roles – The Creative Instigator

\*Dictionary definition of an 'Instigator': Prime mover, ringleader, mastermind, troublemaker:

BPH Instigator's roles are crucial to its success and represent a real range of experience, artform, talent and ideas. Creative Instigators connect, trigger, influence, challenge, support and motivate the sector bringing their own ideas to the table to support developments. They are there to work out what's needed and help make change happen, but they are not necessarily the people that will deliver that change. Change needs to be delivered by individuals, by partners, or in collaboration.

The Creative Instigators focus is providing work and stability for artists, as well as paid work for the Instigator team. Lisa Mallagan says seeing that work has been amazing in particular the development of Women in Music, work for global majority groups and Front Room Poetry. But the model presents a double-edged challenge where employing people for 12 months creates a potential risk to continuity but also provides the opportunity to bring in new Instigators with a different focus, enriching the programme. How do we retain and develop this team of skilled participatory creatives whilst bringing in new perspectives and ideas to build a diverse programme?

### 6.1.5. Providing the opportunity and permission to take risks

Taking risks is in the make-up of BPH. From changing traditional bureaucratic models to challenging hierarchy and democratising decision making. At a project level Make Work and Spare bob are funding programmes that particularly encourage risk taking.

The range of work selected for Make Work Rounds 1 and 2 was strong and diverse. Projects ranged in artform and were led by a diverse range of artists with very varied levels of experience. All projects had a strong element of risk, ranging from subject matter to skills and experience, to performance styles, etc.

Whilst this shows that the ideas led decision making process enables those very unlikely to get through other funding application processes to realise their creative ideas, it also presents a number of challenges in how and whether those ideas can make it through to a successfully delivered project. The BPH team say that the two rounds of Make Work delivered in full so far have been *"really exposing"* in terms of the lack of basic knowledge of applicants who then needed intensive wrap around support.

In Round 3 this has been seen most sharply, where 'ideas' were very strong, but where skills and capacity to deliver projects require significant support. BPH and the Creativity Council are continually reviewing their decision-making processes and further funding rounds are likely to embed new feasibility criteria.

There are some challenges to taking creative risks discussed in previous sections. And there are dilemmas for the team around supporting quality whilst stretching and challenging participants beyond their comfort zones. How does the team and the Creativity

Council continue to support emerging art whilst striving for high quality?

### 6.1.6. Platforming high quality work

Returning to live performance in person has been very positive on all levels for artists and their audiences. Whilst digital engagement must continue to reach those unlikely to attend events in person for access reasons, live engagement is still seen as the most impactful kind of engagement and where the real 'quality' of work can be experienced.

Working with high quality artists like Carlos Pons Guerra on 'The Bull and the Moon', who stretch boundaries with their work is important for BPH, in terms of platforming 'quality'. Projects like this can demonstrate not only high-quality performance but high-quality planning, marketing, and audience development. BPH could make more of highlighting 'quality' across the planning and delivery cycle in its marketing and comms materials.

Extra-Curricular has also been very successful in inspiring artists and platforming high quality role models and strong practice.

*"This has been the most useful and inspiring session I have attended in a year!"*

Social media feedback

*"Very inspired to bring Jude Cloke into any conversation. We rarely hear from brilliant technical managers in this industry, especially female, and it's crucial this role & work better understood by those at start of producing journey."*

Social media feedback

For the team, Consortium, and Creativity Council the following things have made most impact this year:

- **Delivery**
  - Production Management Training
  - Front Room poetry
  - Black Artists Network
  - Funding support: Make Work, Spare Bob, Transforming Spaces
- **Resources and communication**
  - More accessible frameworks e.g., funding applications
  - Regular updates on opportunities & jobs
  - BPH newsletters have been well received by more than the average newsletter readership even, over the quieter periods.
- **Networking**
  - Connecting Bradford creatives
- **Management**
  - Smoother, quicker, and more efficient payments
  - A new paperless system for managing bursaries
  - Using digital technology better to connect to brilliant creatives from across the country
- **Organisational development**
  - Unconscious Bias and Gender Awareness training

## 6.2. Conclusions

BPH continues to pioneer successful new approaches to strengthening and supporting Live Arts in Bradford. It is unusual to find such considerable evidence of positive impact across all areas of work in an organisation, particularly when the external environment is so unstable. Programmes that pioneer will always experience significant change. Growth is not linear and progression means continual reflection and embedding new learning, something that this organisation is committed to.

It's been a roller coaster year for the team internally, with two staff resignations and a review of governance alongside annual planning and contribution to the City of Culture 2025 bid (see Figure 16). The team describe the ups and downs, and the challenges this presented to morale and energy, but also the opportunities offered for reflection and development at times of low activity. Several talk about having the rare time and permission during April and May to focus on professional development.

Later in the year the team highlighted the importance and positivity of collective reflections and co-production the new plans for Year 4 with the consortium and Creativity Council.

*"The Team Day when we got together with the Board, was very useful to connect with the wider team and understand roles and strategic direction."*

Team member

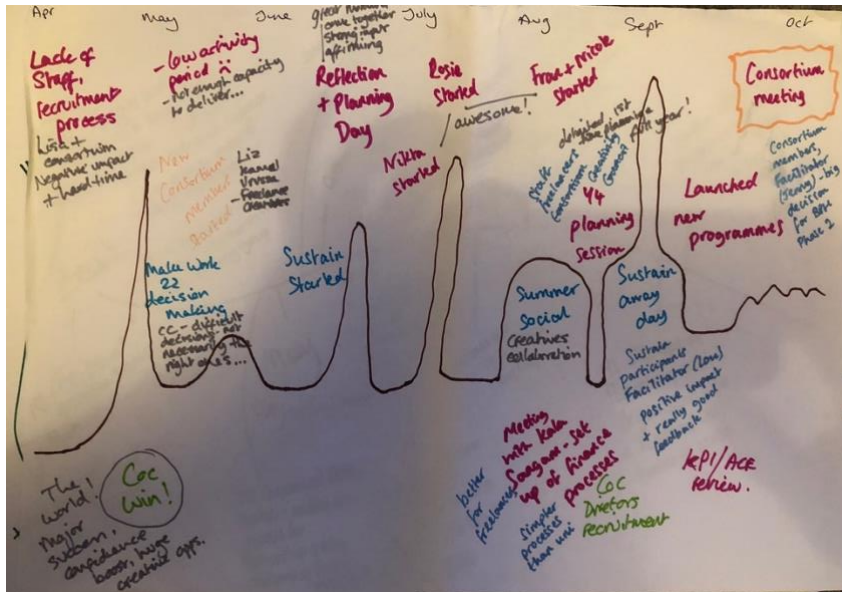


Figure 16: BPH's journey this year drawn during a team reflection workshop

The success of the BPH model relies on several interlinked elements. Taking individual elements in isolation won't work for other organisations wishing to develop similar programmes. This works because of the strength of the vision, ethos, and values of this committed team and the well thought out structure of the wider programme that supports progression and signposting. A good example is where the "creative instigator" model for developing needs led programming, has been used by the Council to develop a Heritage Instigators led package of community support.

Without the long-term investment, development, and ongoing team support for these Heritage Instigators, achieving the same sort of success has been difficult.

With the continued sense of uncertainty, we appear to see less people applying for funding. Many freelance artists are having to work elsewhere to sustain an income to support themselves. And although the City of Culture 2025 is seen as a positive generally, there is already some scepticism about who will get the money, demonstrating a lingering mistrust about how funding is organised and distributed. Funding criteria needs to be clearer still and feedback consistent and specific to each applicant.

Continuing support over the next few years is the only way of sustaining the sector at the moment. Many models of success rely on social capital and good partnerships - artists who know how to make partnerships and garner support from others. Whilst BPH must continue to cultivate an environment that encourages people to act independently and take more responsibility, there is still evidence of a heavy reliance on BPH to 'handhold' artists.

The findings in this report present 5 ongoing competing challenges that BPH should continue to reflect on, create a clear rationale and comms about, and respond to in future programming:

1. Providing continued support whilst moving artists on to take responsibility for their own development.
2. Challenging and stretching artists whilst maintaining high quality creative work.
3. Supporting artists to focus on quality and relevance, rather than one or the other, to bring in audiences.
4. Encouraging Ideas Led decision making whilst ensuring that funded projects are feasible.
5. Retaining a strong team whilst bringing in a continuing diversity of new perspectives

## 6.3. We recommend

### I. BPH'S ROLE

- Strengthen, clarify, and articulate the position and role of BPH within the City of Culture 2025 programme, sharing the load effectively with other key organisations.
- Continue to carefully and explicitly manage expectations of partners and the sector.
- Develop more partnerships with diverse organisations and education sector partners within the city.
- Continue to support the Creativity Council to develop projects that meet the aims of BPH.
- Work to demonstrate impact and visibility in Keighley.

### II. REACH:

- Continue to review and focus on 'in-time', accessible marketing in different formats, including publishing an annual funding schedule.
- Continue to work on reaching the most underrepresented groups across Bradford and making sure '*Bradford promotes it's own*'.
- Offer more, and more accessible, programmes and events
  - In hyperlocal venues
  - At weekends and evenings
  - For specialised 'underrepresented' audiences
  - With childcare support for parents

### III. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

- Plan for time and space for externally facilitated team, Consortium and Creativity Council planning and reflection.
- Build in more time for core team creative work and take planned advantage of pause periods.
- Continue to invest in and encourage professional development opportunities for the team, including offering training for the core team to support a giving, receiving, and managing difficult feedback.
- Develop the Creative Instigators work to include mentoring other 'early' Creative Instigators, building the diversity of voice and programming.
- Promote the visibility of the whole BPH team with inclusive opportunities for people to meet the Consortium members.
- Continue to co-fund artform specific Instigator roles with the Council, where co-working generates opportunistic sharing and profile raising and supports integrated networking.
- Focus Year 4 evaluation data gathering on programmes with little evidence of impact to date including:
  - Capitalise on the 2023 plans for a BPH sharing tour to gather data on changing perceptions of the arts scene in Bradford.
  - Residency style programmes, like Outdoor Arts
  - Mid-Career and Leadership support programmes
  - Transforming Spaces funding

- Audience reach and experience, for new work supported by BPH
- The journey of the Creativity Council
- The impact of the new Creative Quality programme
- Further explore changing trends in the evaluation data including:
  - The decreasing number of participants identifying as LGBTQIA+
  - The number of mid-career artists taking part
- Further develop the training resources library for people accessing support.

#### **IV. ARTISTS AND OPPORTUNITIES**

- Continue to focus on:
  - Providing continued support whilst moving artists on to take responsibility for their own development.
  - Challenging and stretching artists whilst maintaining high quality creative work.
  - Supporting artists to focus on quality *and* relevance, rather than one or the other, to bring in audiences.
  - Encouraging Ideas Led decision-making whilst ensuring that funded projects are feasible.

- Retaining a strong team whilst bringing in a continuing diversity of new perspectives
- Offer training to support artists in managing workloads, financial forecasting and 'saying no'.
- Develop post training/event/funding/mentoring support to help participants embed practice and learning including:
  - 'Moving on' support offer for those struggling to take the next step.
  - Meet the expert/artist/producer/technician
- Extend the new programmes delivered in 2022 including, Outdoor Arts, Leadership and Mid-Career artists support, to increase the social value of these programmes.
- Develop an alumni model for programmes like Make Work, where previous successful project leads can support new applicants.
- Continue to focus on wellbeing needs for artists and the team.

#### **V. THE FUTURE**

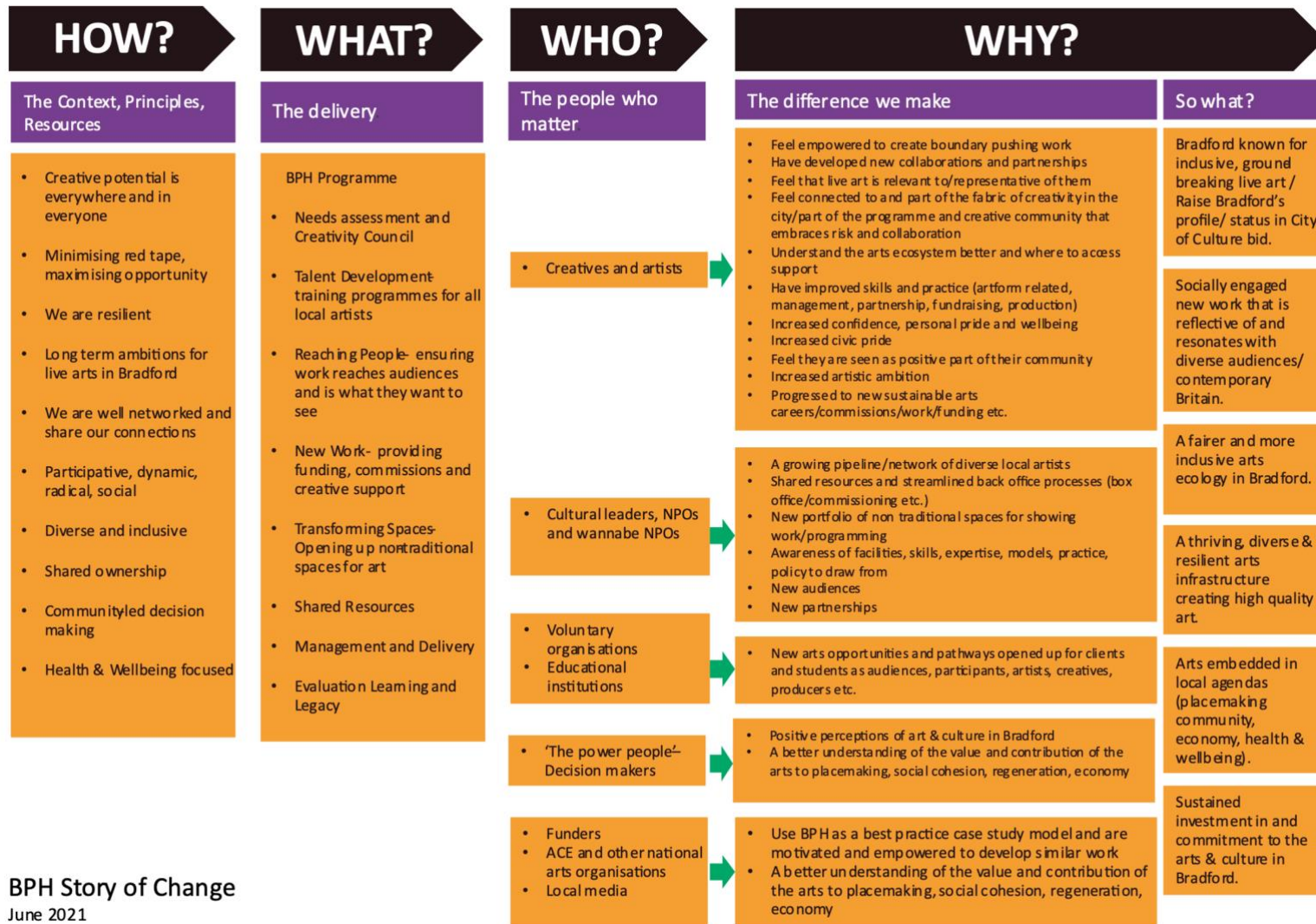
- Articulate a more explicit approach to sustainability, ethical consumerism and climate action through the programme.





Brenda Murphy and Payal Ramchandani - AJAYU Transitorio,  
by Joe Armitage Boneshaker Photography

# Appendix 1 – Bradford Producing Hub Story of Change



BPH Story of Change  
June 2021

## Appendix 2 – Evaluation data sources

Data for this evaluation was drawn from the following sources:

- **Postcode analysis** was carried out to determine the reach of the programme with particular focus on target areas across the city. 724 valid postcodes were gathered through programme records and the artists survey and analysed against the national Indices of Multiple Deprivation (IMD).
- **Stakeholder survey:** The annual BPH survey, sent out by email to creative practitioners in October 2022. There were 63 responses to the survey
- **Project and participant information** in the form of:
  - People and Programmes Tracker
  - Attendance and Audience Summary
  - Postcode and Diversity Info
  - Feedback Tracker – one off stakeholder feedback quotes through social media and emails
- **Interviews:** A series of 8 interviews with key stakeholders identified by the BPH team.
- **Team reflections:**
  - Team reflection logs completed regularly by the team over the year.
  - 3 team reflection meetings to explore outcomes achieved and critical success factors and substantial challenges.

- **Programme meetings:** 2 wider programme planning meetings involving other partners, the Creativity Council and Consortium members.
- **Project specific evaluation:**
  - An online evaluation co-creation workshop with 6 of the New Producers trainees resulting in an overall digital survey for all participants. Completed by 9 people.
  - An online survey for participants on the Production Manager programme. Completed by 8 people.
  - 3 structured in-depth interviews with Production Manager trainees.
  - An online survey for participants in the Outdoor Arts residency. Completed by 3 people.

A review of the Culture Cubed evaluation training delivered to 5 creative practitioners including 2 BPH team members.

## Appendix 3 – Full list of 2021/22 activities

### 2. Talent development

- **Extracurricular:** A series of online discussion covering topics such as How to Build a Tour Pack, Getting Gigs and Growing Your Audience and an Introduction to Rural Touring.
- **Fundraising Working Group Sessions:** Practical sessions to support fundraising application writing for PRS Foundation, National Lottery Awards for All, The National Lottery Heritage Fund and ACE Project Grants.
- **DYCP session and one-to-one sessions with Hannah Bentley:** Sessions on ACE applications for developing creative practice, and one-to-one advice for artists.
- **Get It Done: New Producer Training:** Supporting more people who want to be producers to start their career, and people already producing to keep developing.
- **LVL/UP:** A bespoke Producing and Management training opportunity for aspiring producers.
- **Optimists:** Training for early career producers, in collaboration with Derby Creative Arts Network.
- **Get it Done: Production Management Training:** Understanding how to bring together lighting, sound, staging, special effects, event management and creative vision to make things happen.
- **Music Development Programme:** connecting the music sector in Bradford and providing bespoke advice and support through a new Music Instigator role.
- **Outdoor Arts training:** a residency programme for those new to programming outdoor arts.
- **Common Purpose:** A leadership development programme.
- **Spare Bob:** A £500 micro-grants programme for artists/creatives.
- **Mentoring:** A programme pairing organisations or individuals with mentors and experts to support development and growth.
- **Culture 101:** A development programme for ethnically diverse women in Bradford.
- **NPO Development Programme:** A series of conversations, grants and support for organisations developing to NPO status.
- **Culture Cubed:** A series of online Evaluation training sessions
- **Sustain:** Development programme for mid-career creatives.
- **Expanding Horizons Fund:** Funding to provide Organisational Development support for artists and small companies.

### 3. Reaching people

In 2021-22 this included:

- **Black Artists Network:** For global majority artists in Bradford.
- **Creative Care Network:** A network for artists and creatives who deliver wellbeing activity and opportunities.

- **Music Network:** A new network supported by the BPH Music Instigator.
- **Yorkshire Producer Collective:** New and emerging producers from across Yorkshire meet for training and development.
- **Front Room Poetry On't Road:** A series of in-person poetry events with headliners and an open mic, and poetry workshops.
- **College and School sessions**
- **Let's Have A Brew:** Meeting for artists to connect and chat about opportunities in Bradford.
- **Plays Days:** A series of four workshops for artists led by Tyrrell Jones and Jan Blake, Cultural Comedy Tours and Ella Tighe, Frantic Assembly and Beccy Durham, Told by an Idiot.
- **Creative Socials:** Event for local creatives to meet other artists and hear about new or potential opportunities within the arts and cultural sector.

#### 4. New work

In 2021-22 this included:

##### **Make Work 2020: 4 strands that continue into 2022:**

- **Playing Out:** A Compendium of Mythical Beasts, Hidden Winter and The Bull and the Moon.
- **Your Idea, Your Way:** Khooghi and Full English

- **Test It R&D:** Destination Bradford and Intercultured.
- **Just R&D It:** A Love Story on Leeds Road and Thyme Café.

##### **Make Work 2021: 3 strands:**

- **Your Idea, Your Way:** Tale of 2 Estates, Dancing with Colours and AJAYU Transitorio.
- **Test it R&D:** Santa Must Die! And Fishing Net Soul.
- **Just R&D It:** Love in a Northern Town and Bradford Psychogeographical Synthesiser.

##### **Make Work 2022: 3 strands:**

- **Your Idea, Your Way:** Pick n Mix, F\*ck What Other People Think (Working Title), Bradford 12
- **Test It, R&D:** A Sense of Place and Moments with my Father
- **Just R&D It:** RIDE! and Bradford Women's Evening Cricket League
- **Partnership Commissions:**
  - **Transform Co-Commission:** The Sound Grief Project
  - **NQOTB:** 4 x Artist Development Residencies