

OUT OF THE BLUE & BREATHING SPACE

# Annual Report

2021/22

**hoot**  
creative arts



Work by Janine



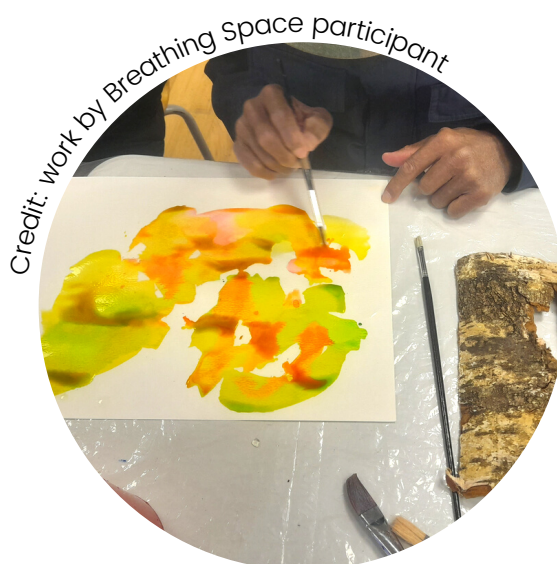
# Introduction

hoot has over 18 years' experience in creativity and mental health. We recognise that care and maintenance of mental health is a vital part of our lives and working with our experienced, compassionate, and skilled team can help people establish wellbeing techniques through creativity.

Within our commissioned service we offer 2 distinct strands of creative activity:

- **Out of the Blue** is for those aged 18+ living in Kirklees with a mental health condition or wanting to support their wellbeing. This programme offers a wealth of creative groups and activities plus one-to-ones with experienced Creative Support Workers. The aims and outcomes of Out of the Blue are wide and varied but ultimately we hope to facilitate progression to greater independence to ensure participants live more enriching lives because of engagement with the arts.

- **Breathing Space** offers positive creative time together for people living with dementia and their partner, carer or support worker. The programme offers a variety of creative activities which are artist-led and fully supported. The aim of Breathing Space is to facilitate a space where people can shed the labels of carer and cared for, and spend quality time taking part in an activity together; building confidence and self-esteem, and enhancing wellbeing.



# Challenges & solutions ☹️😊

2021-22 has been a year of Covid transition for **hoot**, for the community and for the country. **hoot** moved back to fully in-person groups by the Autumn of 2021 although the popularity of our online platform has led us to keep that running concurrently.

Co-production has been in every step: questionnaires were sent to all participants before we re-opened and we have formed our Covid approach accordingly.

Our Covid safety measures have included: ventilation, HEPA filters, hand sanitisers, encouraging LFTs, mask wearing and requesting that people move to online sessions if they are unwell.

We are happy to say that no one has caught Covid at hoot – even when people later found out they had Covid, we have checked in with all group members and no one had caught it. Staff wellbeing has been a priority: we have weekly check-ins and the Out of the Blue team work closely and supportively together. Many staff members had Covid this year and we ensured that people had a phased return until fully recovered.

The pressure this put on the service was heavy but we managed to continue delivery. We have cultivated a pool of cover staff for group support and we piloted our 'Spectrum' model – when an artist was Covid positive but well enough to work they could still facilitate the group remotely.

Credit: work by Neringa

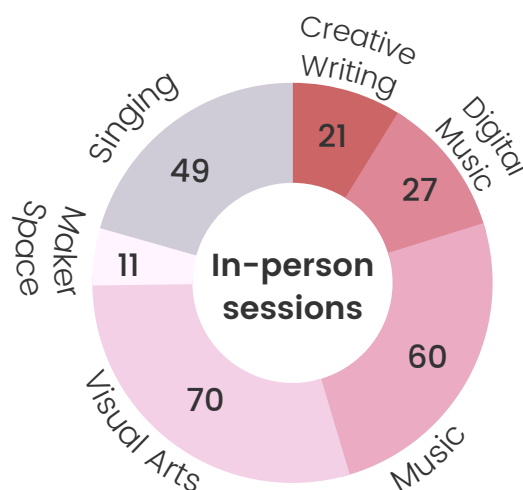


Credit: work by James



# 208

people accessed the Out of the Blue service



853 participant phone calls

61 welcome sessions

7 outreach events

16 awareness raising events

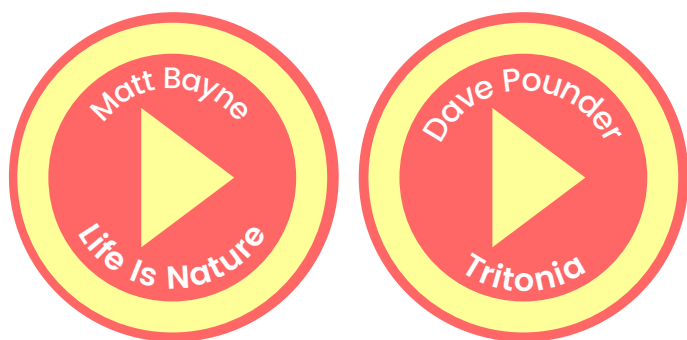
7 volunteer trainings

# Highlights

Groups spanned online, in person and outdoors and these settings allowed us to continue to explore diverse art forms: stop motion animation; stencil; embroidery; punk music; windchime making; digital jamming; soundscapes; creative writing; outdoors-art using natural elements and many more. We also held regular volunteer peer support sessions with our team of volunteers.

Guest artists included visual artist Musarat Raza, poet Rose Condo, music students from Leeds Conservatoire, visual artist Vic Cruz and musicians Penny Stone and Jo Kennedy.

2 participants created their own albums inspired by the **hoot** sessions:



Co-production is embedded into our approach: based on increasing demand we offered a third visual art group, we used the allotment for those who didn't feel comfortable being inside, and our Progression and Participation Coordinator worked hard to turn service user feedback into action and circulated a 'You said, we did' update to all participants.



## BRAND NEW WEBSITE

in 2021 hoot underwent a rebrand and a full website redesign to make our services more relevant to the people we work with.



## LANTERN PARADE

hoot ran a music workshop at this wonderful partnership event. [Click here to listen to the song](#)



## ART OUTDOORS

Face-to-face sessions took place at the allotment which added a new freedom and endless inspiration for songs and visual art.



## INTERNATIONAL WOMENS DAY

hoot enjoyed working with partners to celebrate this day by offering a 'flowerbomb' workshop.



## RETURN TO IN-PERSON

Against a landscape of uncertainty we phased a return to in-person sessions whilst continuing our remote offer to ensure all felt safe.



## ALL HANDS ON DESK

In the face of 6 out of 7 of the delivery team having Covid we continued full delivery thanks to a full team effort



## WINTER WARMER

Our annual winter celebration ran virtually this year, bringing everyone together as a community to showcase the work generated online and offline.



## ALBUM RELEASES

We released a compilation of 11 tracks from hoot from home's first year along with the digital music group's album.

[hoot from home: year one](#)

[Textures on a Big Canvas - Digital Music](#)

# hoot from home



2471 site visits

512 comments/replies

493 posts to the site

56 people accessed online

>765 hours spent online

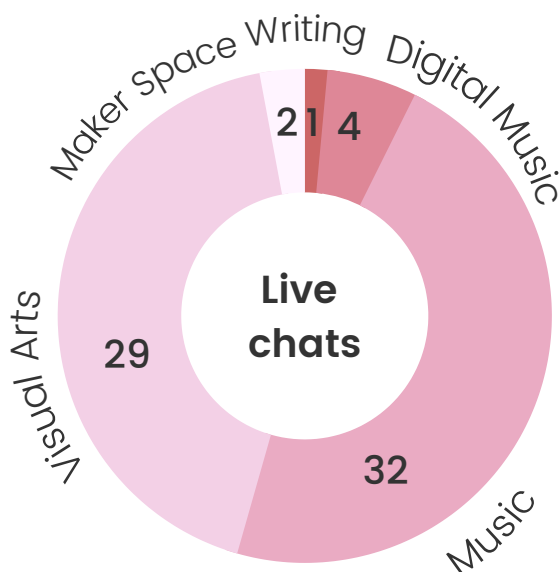
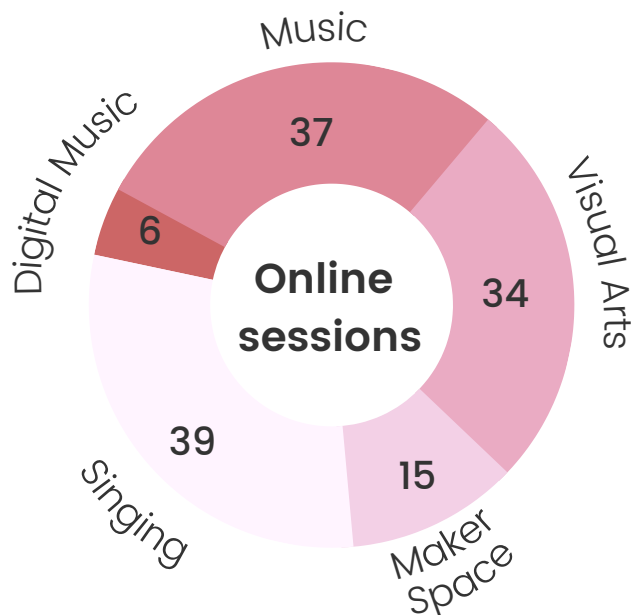
>1740 hours spent being creative offline

## Working Together Better Partnership Development

The Partnership, made up of seven voluntary sector organisations: Carers Count, Clear, **hoot**, Richmond Fellowship, S2R, Touchstone and WomenCentre; commissioned by the Council and CCG; is Working Together Better to:

- Improve community mental health services for people & with people
- Ensure services are accessible to all
- Increase positive outcomes
- Enable independence and resilience
- Increase prevention & early intervention

We have met monthly over the year to progress these aims. Next year we will strengthen our partnership work and impact by employing a support team including: a Strategic Lead, a Communications Officer & an Administrator.

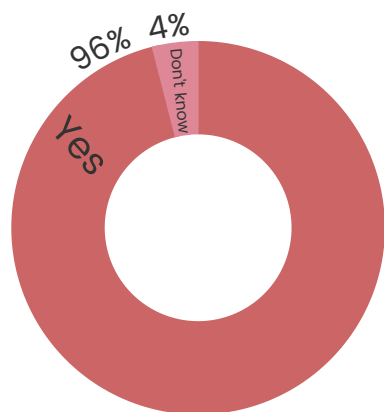


Credit: work by J

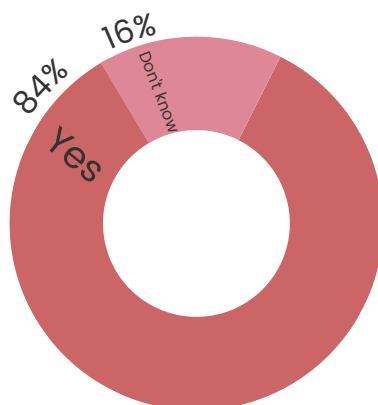
# KPI highlights

Surveys were completed by participants in order to measure the KPI's outlined in the service specification.

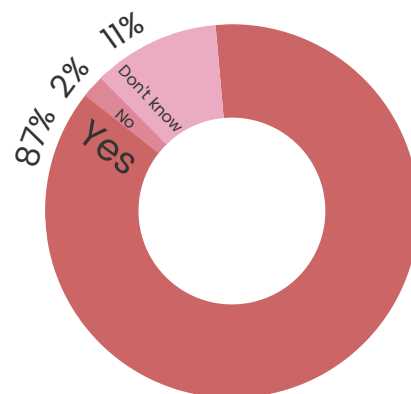
Has being involved with **hoot** this year had a positive impact on your overall health and wellbeing?



With **hoot** in your life, do you feel that you can cope better with your mental health issues /wellbeing?



Do you feel being part of **hoot** has supported you to be a part of a community?



## Participant Voices

**Max** began attending hoot a year before the pandemic, primarily as a way to socialise and connect after feeling isolated and low. Although the pandemic took away face-to-face groups, Max recognises that the online resource allowed a safe and sustainable way to continue connecting. Max now chooses to attend both online and in person:

"I think it is the availability and combination of all of the various platforms that has made this achievable for me. I like the style of encouraging and mentoring through participation. Rather than a "teaching" in an educational way it is much more about inspiring and encouragement. Which suits me. I simply detest being told what to do. More so the older I get!"

**Roger:** "Having hoot projects which have a set amount of weeks is really good for me because I easily get distracted and have a really bad habit of starting a new idea before finishing my current one. This means that I never get the satisfaction that you get from finishing anything - a big issue with my mental health is the feeling that I've wasted years my life while everyone else has achieved so much."



Credit: work by Julie

**Veronica:** “I was very isolated during lockdown. Being part of **hoot** online and now in person is definitely good for me as I get to leave my house, see other people and to achieve something by making in art means so much to me as it means I do not have to be alone at home that day.”

**Sally:** “I love being able to learn new things and make something - it gives me a sense of achievement and also is a good reason to get dressed and leave my house so I can feel a little bit proud that I can be productive on the days I get to go to hoot. The staff are all really friendly and the other people who do art are all nice too. I really appreciate being able to feel part of a group, it is still great sociable time for me as I get to interact with other people and we have little chats with each other.”

All names and identifying details have been changed

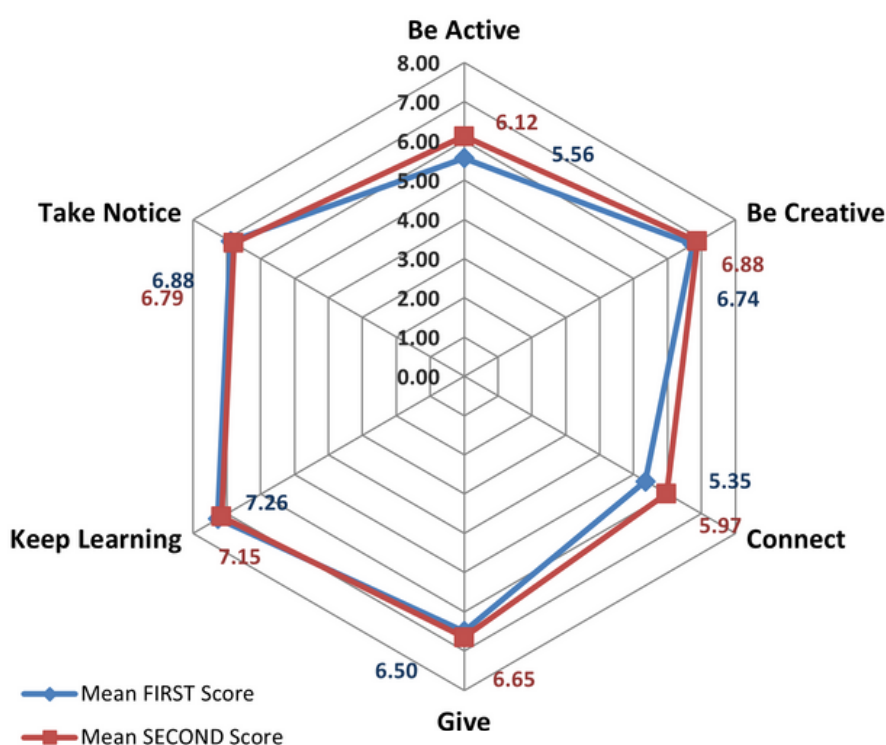


Credit: work by J

## Outcomes

Participants co-produce a Creative Arts Plan (CAP) with a Creative Support Worker. This is a discussion around someone's goals and achievements using the 6 Ways to Wellbeing as a framework.

External evaluator Luminaire analysed all CAPs and the excerpts below are from their report. This year the average change in scores was minimal although overall positive.



# Ways to well-being

## BE ACTIVE

There are signs that people are reconnecting with opportunities to be active with walking being a popular way to exercise. One person reported that being active has enabled them to improve their physical health but also to increase their social interactions.

"I'm walking and meeting people. I'm a lot fitter."

"I can now go to the gym and swimming. I'm getting over a bad accident and working hard at that."

## BE CREATIVE

Several people reflected on the positive impact of being able to attend Hoot again and be creative whilst there. Learning and trying out new techniques at Hoot helped to inspire people and give confidence to be creative.

"I have been much more creative since attending sessions at hoot. It's so brilliant to be back."

"Being creative makes me powerful and happy."

## CONNECT

A significant number of people noted the importance of **hoot** in helping them to feel connected, both in online and in person groups. They said that **hoot's** supportive environment allows them to feel comfortable and connected to others.

"Zoom Sessions really have helped me feel connected to the outside world -without Hoot I would feel completely disconnected."

## GIVE

Through lockdown people found it hard to 'give' with contact being curtailed. This year, the number of ways people are finding to give has increased with people becoming volunteers, supporting friends and informally helping out where they can.

"I'm always helping neighbours and I encourage and help people at hoot. I wash up sometimes and I also Hoover."

## KEEP LEARNING

Comments around this outcome demonstrate that people engaged with learning new things both online and in person through **hoot** sessions.

"Always keeping learning, we learn new songs each week is great."

"I have been learning a lot about weeds from the project with Sally."

## TAKE NOTICE

Some participants reflected that taking notice can sometimes be difficult for them and increase anxiety about their surroundings, others found that taking the time to notice the world around them has a calming effect.

"I am taking a lot of notice about the birds and wild life trees sky the reflection. I have grown some potatoes and wild flowers."

"Taking too much notice makes my anxiety worse."

# Breathing Space

The pandemic continued to impact on the delivery of Breathing Space sessions with a mixture of in person and telephone sessions offered.

- Wellbeing calls – a short phone call to check in with people.
- How do you like your tea? – a more focused phone call designed to illicit more in-depth reminiscence and conversation. A series of prompts/questions guided the conversation over several weeks.
- Phone singing – developed organically as an alternative to ‘How do you like your tea?’ Participants would remember songs from previously attending the Breathing Space group and would also bring songs that they liked to sing together.

Visual art sessions explored textiles and textures by combining natural materials. Techniques including threading, gluing, and sewing, were used to fasten materials to hessian. Participants were invited to bring items from home - old pieces of fabric, dried flowers or a shoelace! - to include in their work. They also worked with clay and brought objects to sessions to make imprinted patterns and textures on the flattened clay. Once dried the pieces were incorporated into an existing piece of work on the **hoot** wall.

Music sessions used the completed visual art works as inspiration for group song writing. Participants played instruments to find the sounds and patterns they wanted and created and recorded a unique music piece culminating with a joyous clout on a gong.

In other sessions colours provided the theme with participants talking about colours and words and feelings they associated with them. These musings were developed as a group into the lyrics of a song. Each participant contributed using voice, keyboards and percussion.

## Highlights

### HAPPY TO BE BACK



Breathing Space was the first to trial in person sessions in the hoot building post lockdown and they provided us with opportunities to test out and evaluate the Covid-19 protocols introduced. Participants were happy to abide by the protocols and enjoyed being together again.

### HOLMFIRTH ARTS FESTIVAL



Participants created colourful windmills which were installed in Holmfirth art's festival's Arts in the Woods exhibition. Hoot musicians Rob Crisp wrote a bright and breezy windmill song with participants and visitors at the site. [Click here to listen](#)

### TREASURY OF ACTIVITIES



[Read here](#)

Breathing Space contributed to this second volume of the Baring Foundation's collection of arts activities for older people; available to anyone and everyone for free.

18

in person sessions ran following successful in-person trials.

hours of activity delivered in-person

27

17 participants

65 wellbeing phone calls

8 phone singing sessions

1500 minutes of phone support



## Impact

The format of sessions impacted on the amount of evaluation data collected with both quantitative and qualitative gathered which gave us a snapshot of the impact Breathing Space has.

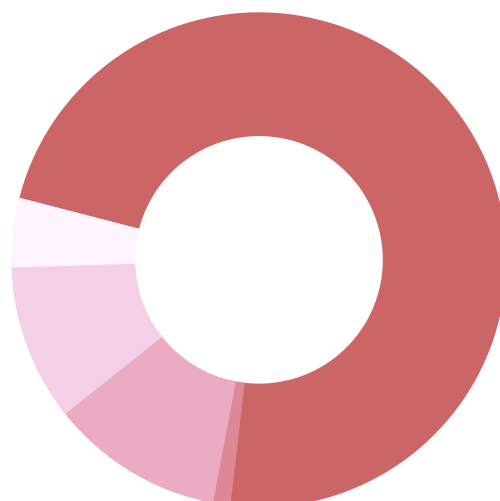
Carers continue to identify a good level of impact for Breathing Space participants with the majority reporting that the sessions had a significant impact across the four outcomes. In line with previous years, the outcome with the highest proportion of high impact being reported was for benefits and relationships.

Carers completed a six weekly feedback sheet. The table below indicates the degree of impact, judged by the volume of instances of reported impacts by the carers.

	No impact		Moderate impact		High impact	
	0	1	2	3	4	5
Communication	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (8.00%)	10 (40.0%)	<b>13 (52.0%)</b>
Relationships	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (24.0%)	<b>19 (76.0%)</b>
Benefits	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (12.0%)	<b>22 (88.0%)</b>
Involvement	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (4.00%)	9 (36.0%)	<b>15 (60.0%)</b>
<b>Total reported impacts</b>	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	3 (3.00%)	28 (28.0%)	<b>69 (69.0%)</b>

# Finance

Staffing costs (inc in house artists, other salaries & management)	64%
Overheads/General Running Costs	3%
Project costs (includes materials, equipment, Artists fees etc.)	9%
Premises (rates, rent, maintenance)	10%
Other staffing costs (travel, external supervision, training)	1%



Kirklees Council	£165,557.00
NHS CCGs	£28,572.80
Underspend b/f from previous year	£32,667.52
<b>Total income available</b>	<b>£226,797.32</b>

## Vision

As detailed throughout the report, 2 years down the line from the initial lockdown we have kept much of the learning from developing our Hoot from Home platform whilst simultaneously phasing back to full in-person delivery. We see this hybrid model as a responsive programme that can adjust immediately for when individuals – participants and delivery staff – have to isolate but want to attend virtually, as well as if there are any further general lockdowns or restrictions in face-to-face delivery.

Priorities for the upcoming year include boosting our numbers. We reopened cautiously with restricted group numbers for safety.

However, as things continue to improve with Covid levels we are keen to bring our group numbers back up to where they were so a sustained outreach campaign is one of our priorities.

Working smoothly with the Working Together Better partnership is a continued priority area – we hope to work closely with those in the 3 paid roles and use this opportunity to enhance the overall partnership offer.

**Out of the Blue & Breathing Space are funded by**



hoot creative arts

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