



Being creative
makes you feel good



Piece by Sarah
hoot participant

OUT OF THE BLUE
Quarterly Report
QUARTER 4/ JAN - MAR 2025

Summary

This quarter the group attendance figures stayed high – despite this being the coldest few months – and we continue to invite more people where spaces allow.

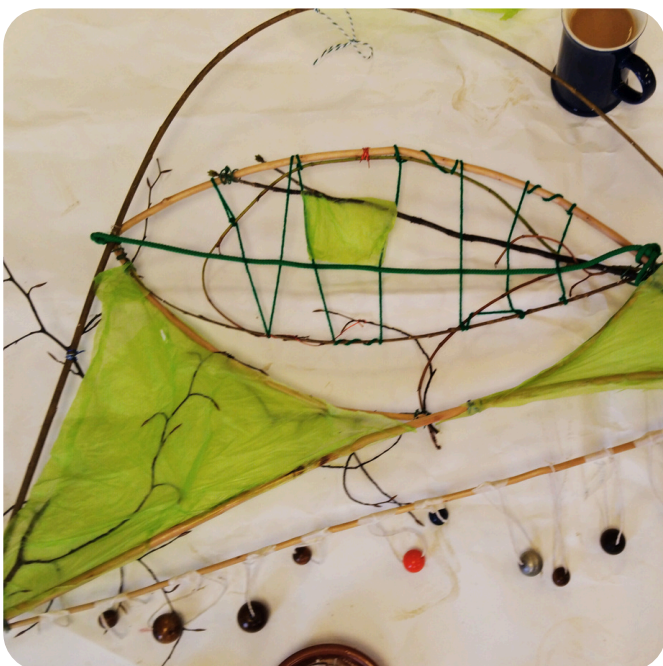
Our out of hours sessions were very successful this quarter – singing sessions on Saturdays attracted up to 21 people in one session and singing in the evening at the Lawrence Batley Theatre was also popular.

As in quarter 3, the proportion of referrals that were interested in our evening and weekend groups was high: 43 out of a total of 71 referrals were for out of hours sessions.

On social media our numbers were up on some counts and lower on others, we have stopped posting on X as the flavour of the platform has changed and engagement was sharply decreasing.

We enjoyed getting out and about this quarter at various events in the community including for International Womens Day, student wellbeing events at the University of Huddersfield and Clear's "Beat the Monday Blues" group.

“A great place to share ideas and learn from each other”



Piece by Julie – **hoot** participant



Piece by Helen – **hoot** participant

Highlights



Caring for you Roadshow

hoot attended the Kirklees and Calderdale Care Association Caring for You Roadshow offering creative wellbeing activities to social care staff.

View the [photos here](#)



Cleckheaton Choir

Saturday mornings started with a sing at Cleckheaton library, a session that proved to be extremely popular: 19 people turned up for the first with 21 attending at another session.

Due to the strong numbers and positive feedback we will be returning for more of these sessions.



International Women's Day

We took part in a celebration of womenhood, community and wellbeing at an event at the Mission led by Womenscentre and involving all partners.

hoot ran a warmly received mark makingworkshop with artist Sally Barker.

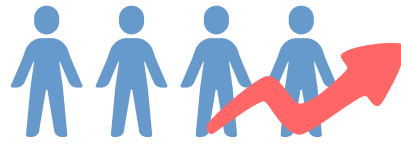


hoot x hcmf//

We delivered 4 online music tech sessions in partnership with Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival.

The attendance spanned people from around the world due to the far reach of hcmf// (we prioritised places for Kirklees residents) and the group enjoyed hearing about the spread of locations that people were beaming in from!

The numbers



192 people using the service

71

referrals to sessions

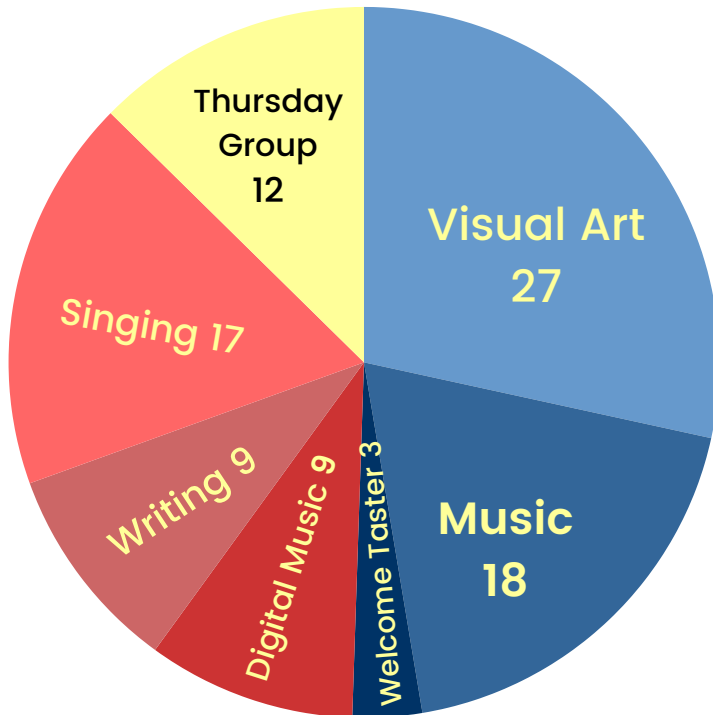


95 in-person sessions



24

individuals at
WELCOME!
sessions



4



evening sessions in-person

4



weekend sessions in-person

3944

hours of contact with participants



Online sessions

28

new posts to
hoot from home



17

online creative sessions



7
hours

spent offline continuing being creative
average per person



People



24

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

146

people over 35
22 people under 35



47

people who consider themselves disabled



Out of the Blue activities



MUSIC



Recycling was the theme this quarter for music and visual art groups. **hoot**'s music groups have been creating original songs for many years: our library includes soundscapes, shanties, punk and much more. In the spirit of revisiting, re-using and upcycling, the groups listened back to our greatest hits and reimagined them for 2025, bringing lyrics up to date, repurposing melodies and reflecting on the achievements of the past and how they can inspire our future.

The digital music group worked firstly with Eddie Dobson – invited back to **hoot** after such a successful first run of sessions – and focussed on the detail of a wide variety of recording techniques and sound effects. Sophie Russell from Yorkshire Sound Women then delivered sessions exploring samples, synths and how to use drum patterns and grooves.



SINGING

Singing was firstly led by popular singing leader Jess Baker. Jess led on songs that welcomed in the spring and light. Jess was followed by Jade Harris who focussed on season, folk songs and delicate harmonies.

Online singing came direct from Africa! Our singing artist Ali Bullivent is currently living in Gambia and because the time difference is only an hour and the internet connection is strong, Ali was able to lead the group in beautiful harmonies and rhythms across the miles.



CREATIVE WRITING

The group spent the first part of the quarter working with Winston Plowes on the 'Yorkshire Bazaar'. The writers' pens drifted off to faraway lands as they took the vibrant colours and excitement of shopping in a Turkish bazaar and blended that with the delights of a traditional English market. They then worked with Rose Condo focussing on the theme of Spring and season change taking inspiration from many different poets.

VISUAL ARTS

Sally Barker led the visual arts groups in creating beautiful 3D landscapes in small cardboard boxes. People layered their landscapes adding figures and trees and some people even added tiny lights to the finished box scene.

The groups then moved onto willow sculptures – they used willow and twigs to make low relief shapes that can be displayed on the wall like a picture. These shapes were then embellished with tissue paper, jewels, macrame and other adornments to let people express themselves in their own way.

We also welcomed visual artist Lianne who led the group in making delightful lanterns by drawing and painting city scenes onto plastic. These were wrapped into cylindrical forms with battery tea lights inside, lighting up the night scene and making them glow.

OUT OF HOURS CREATIVITY

We delivered in Cleckheaton library, Ten Queen St at the Lawrence Batley Theatre and 2 online settings to offer **hoot** groups to those who might not be able to attend during weekdays.

The four singing sessions in Cleckheaton with Jess Baker were our most successful yet with an average attendance of 17 over the 4 weeks and a peak of 21 people singing in harmony!

Evening sessions at Ten Queen St also proved popular with people giving feedback that they liked the 6pm – 7.30pm time slot and the central venue, as well as the beautiful songs. This group managed some challenging repertoire and quickly bonded as a small community over the 4 weeks.

Online we offered 'Making Together' sessions on Wednesday evenings where our resident visual artist Sally focussed on reusing things around the house – particularly wrapping waste after Christmas – to create new and meaningful art.

Finally, we offered online music in a partnership with Huddersfield Contemporary Music Festival. Being part of their prestigious programme was great for widening reach and enjoying the benefits of working in partnership. Rob Crisp led these sessions looking at composition and improvisation. Participants are still sending their pieces to Rob who will mix them into a final joint piece.



Breathing Space / Thursday Group



Visual Arts with Lianne

The group embraced learning new creative skills this quarter. They discussed what they valued about the group and the things that they felt this group represented for them. These were used to inspire artwork that were turned into felted squares. Everyone enjoyed using the natural felt material and exploring its features and the wet felting technique. The group were pleasantly surprised by what they achieved. Everyone ended up with perfectly felted squares that had a symbol or a pattern and felt very proud of their work. These will be sewn into a banner to celebrate the group and will be hung in the room each time they meet. People commented that it was relaxing and therapeutic.

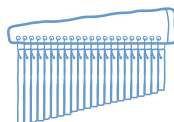


Music with Rob



The group worked together to create a song about the delights of Spring – sitting in the park, going for walks and the good vibes caused by the Spring. The group explored the sounds of different instruments. Singing together brought so much joy. The song was recorded which the group listened to together over a cup of tea.

Yoga with Umbrella Yoga



The group said they felt very relaxed and enjoyed the chimes and breathing practice at the end. The session in March included some new physical postures to build leg strength. The session included a mix of new and familiar meditations helping participants relax quickly. The group adapted and learned well, drawing on their previous practice and experience.

Social & Trips



The group had a range of other social offers. Lancashire Community Rail offered a train trip to Bradford where the group enjoyed a very educational visit to the National Science and Media Museum.

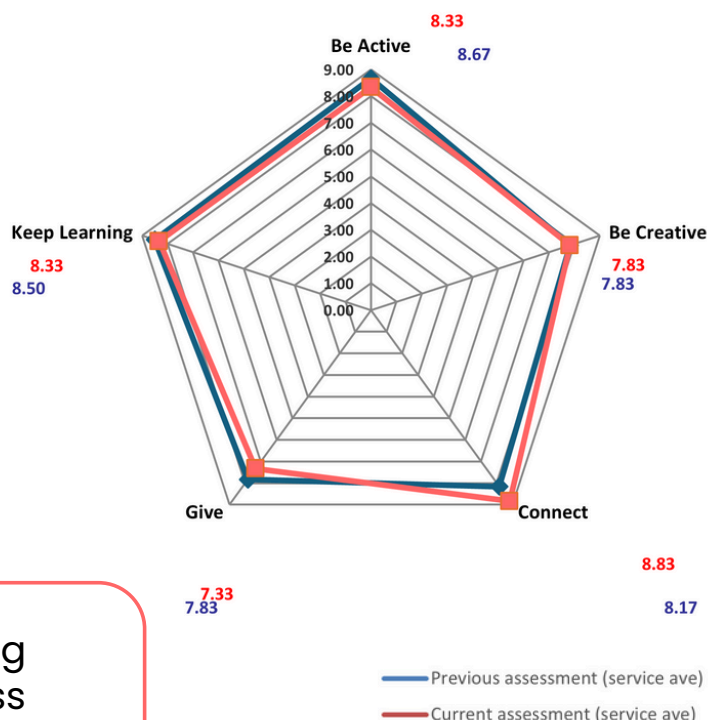
They welcomed Andy Booth from Huddersfield Town Football Club who shared some tales from his footballing past. Some of the members are super fans of HTFC and this was an absolute highlight.



Outcomes & Evaluation

Quarter 4 has seen the CAP indices broadly stay the same with a small increase in Connect.

Participants have reported they are making small positive changes such as walking part of the way to sessions, learning new songs and speaking to others during the group.



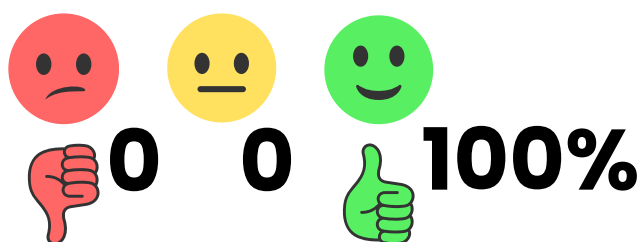
“ [I] enjoy interacting, encouraging others and socialising. [I am] less isolated and [I am] making friends. ”

Thursday Group

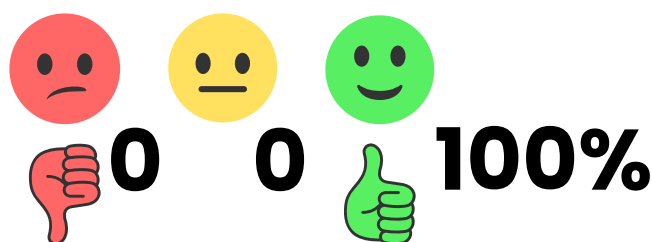
We have devised a 'How's it going?' poster to help us prompt an accessible evaluation. The poster uses a simple smiley and thumbs up/down traffic light system. At the beginning of the session, we check-in as to how we are feeling and tally the thumbs and we check-in at the end with a tally which helps us track how the session went, and that people are feeling more positive.

Music with Rob this quarter

Start of the Session



End of Session



Challenges

We continue to review the 'overbooking' model to ensure that group numbers are optimal and are not overcrowded. Due to health conditions and other variables, attendance can vary.

Numbers have increased this quarter in some groups but that comes with challenges about complex mental health issues and working with people whose broader support needs are not being met currently by external services.

Our visual arts groups are so popular that in order to reduce our waiting list we are sometimes having to place people in Progress groups who might otherwise be in Connect. It now seems sensible to consider opening up access by having both groups open to all but within each group looking at ways we can ensure progression opportunities.

Volunteering with hoot

Volunteers continued to support our regular programme of activities and are flexibly supporting our evening and weekend sessions when they can.

We saw a couple of volunteers leave **hoot** this quarter to move into paid work and have since welcomed a previous regular volunteer back to support one of our long-running groups.



65 hours
volunteering



26 sessions
supported

“I have enjoyed hearing other people's creative pieces.”

Projects that complement and add value

Creative Pathways continued to deliver creative sessions for people with learning disabilities. Out of the Blue works in parallel with this programme to ensure that people are in a group that best matches their style and independence. The project works in Batley Mencap, **hoot** in Huddersfield and Laurel Court residential setting in South Kirklees.



31 sessions



209 attendances



418 contact hours

What next?



Visions:

Pilot partnership working with Libraries

The partnership is going from strength to strength with the singing in Cleckheaton libraries representing a real success this quarter and enabling us to reach people we might not have before: people who live in that area and struggle to travel and people who can't attend during weekdays. We have continued our conversation with Kirklees Libraries who – after submitting a **hoot** report to their senior managers – have confirmed that they are keen to work with us again this new financial year which is positive for all involved.

Out of hours sessions

This quarter we delivered multiple out of hours sessions and are using all the intelligence gathered around locations, timings, attendance etc to plan for more delivery in Year 2.

Closer working with Social Prescribing Link Workers

hoot continues to host 2 Social Prescribing Link Workers who meet with staff for focussed project information and also take part in some of our team meetings.

User-led groups

Online the Visual Art group work in a user-led way posting work, encouraging each other and suggesting creative ideas. It is great to know that the **hoot** from home resource developed during the Covid lockdown is robust enough to hold ongoing peer support opportunities.

hoot creative arts

Bates Mill, Milford Street, Huddersfield, HD1 3DX
01484 516224 | www.hootcreativearts.co.uk



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