

Being creative
makes you feel good



OUT OF THE BLUE
Quarterly Report
QUARTER 1/ APR - JUN 2025

Work by Peter
hoot participant

Summary

This quarter we were out and about publicising **hoot** as well as Out of the Blue groups participating in cultural trips. **hoot** was present at the Lawrence Batley Theatre, Kirklees and Calderdale Care Association's staff wellbeing day, Elmwood Practice staff wellbeing day and at the Compassionate Cultures Conference 2025.

We continued to deliver our regular programme alongside sessions in Kirklees Libraries with popular workshops in North Kirklees on Saturday mornings.

As in previous quarters, the proportion of referrals that were interested in our out of hours offer was high: 51 out of a total of 80 referrals were for our evening or weekend sessions.

Social media numbers were steady with Instagram and Blue Sky seeing the greatest increase in engagement. We actively participated in several key campaigns and events, including Mental Health Awareness Week, Creativity and Wellbeing Week, Volunteer Week, and Learning Disability Week. We published 4 pieces of video content that performed really well across our social media:

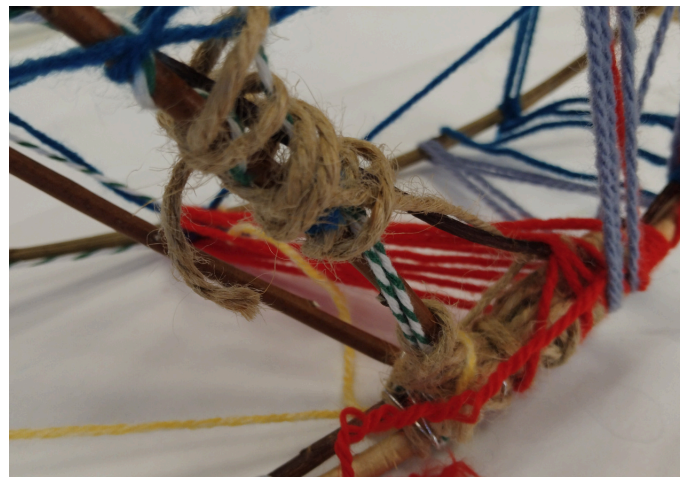
- [Welcome to **hoot** with Huddersfield BID](#)
- [Commissioning Creative Health with National Centre for Creative Health](#)
- [Out of the Blue Quarter 1 data](#)
- [Behind the scenes with the events team](#)



“It's good to grow and be challenged; learning new skills and techniques”



Work by James S



Work by P.N. Hodgson

Highlights

Carer's Week

We came together with our Working Together Better partnership colleagues to offer a day of activity and information in Crow Nest Park. Our artist Rob led a music workshop that had people engaged, interested in **hoot** and most importantly, having fun!



Woven's Red Dress

Our Dewsbury Visual Art group enjoyed a cultural afternoon at Oakwell Hall seeing the Woven project The Red Dress.

The group loved seeing this stunning dress that has toured the world and it inspired them to create their own version – The Blue Denim Jacket.



Compassionate Cultures Conference

hoot had a presence both on and off stage at this large event in Huddersfield in June. Our artist Rob led the audience in an en masse quick fire songwriting exercise, resulting in a three part acapella song inspired by the events themes of compassion and creativity.



Saturday Spring Sing

Thanks to the overwhelming success of the first run of sessions in Cleckheaton Library we ran them again. Singing with Jess Baker on Saturday mornings again attracted up to 20 people per session!



“

It was amazing. I felt relaxed and far away from my problems

”

MUSIC

We had music inspired by poems inspired by art! Linking in with the Huddersfield Visual Art groups' visit to Heritage Quay Archive the music group explored the idea of using other artforms to build into music making. The group generated a diverse range of songs, from ballads based on poems to rock and roll songs inspired by denim jackets to jazz improvisations inspired by nature sculptures.

Digital Music enjoyed sessions with Jo Kennedy creating soundscapes using new techniques and recordings. The group enjoyed showcasing their very varied works to each other through our hi-spec studio speakers. The group also worked with new artist to **hoot**, Noah Burton from Watershed Arts, to create new songs and remixes from a dance and groove approach.

SINGING

Artist Sam Hodgson brought his bouzouki to **hoot** – this is a Greek 8 stringed instrument that the group loved using as their cornerstone for songs. Sam uploads recordings, lyrics and other resources to the **hoot** from home website so group members can continue to sing at home.

Online singing was Rob writing songs inspired by Constellations and we also welcomed Ali Bullivent – back from Gambia where she previously delivered our online singing – in person to lead on beautiful harmony singing.



CREATIVE WRITING

Marianne Matusz worked with the group to create 'zines: using old magazines and print sources the group created new words and poetry which was compiled into individual zines.

Winston Plowes returned in June with the theme 'Are we a nation of shopkeepers?' developing poems based on fantasy shops that the group would like to visit. Winston noted how cohesive and community-focussed the group seem as the numbers have risen and people are more comfortable with each other.



Work by Laura

VISUAL ARTS

We now have 3 visual arts groups due to demand. The two Huddersfield groups visited Heritage Quay – the archives section of the University of Huddersfield. The groups saw sketches and artworks by Leonard Baskin and then worked on their own artworks inspired by these mythical creatures which in turn provided inspiration for the music group to write songs about.

In Dewsbury the group created The Blue Denim Jacket – a collaborative piece that involved the group members making individual patches that they each added to a jacket that all can try on. The results were beautiful with the group expressing real pride in this collaborative creation.



OUT AND ABOUT

This quarter **hoot** was out at events letting people in Kirklees know about our offer as well as organising trips for participants to engage in cultural events.

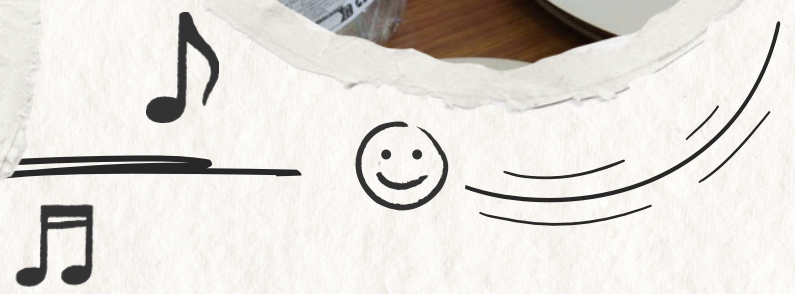
Huddersfield Visual Arts groups visited Heritage Quay at the University of Huddersfield for a guided tour of the rare and valuable works by Leonard Baskin, an American artist whose illustrations accompanied poems by Ted Hughes. Seeing the original artworks close up in a private viewing session with archive staff was a privilege and one that the participants enjoyed and found inspiring.

In Dewsbury we worked with Woven Festival on a group visit to the Red Dress exhibition at Oakwell Hall. The group loved seeing this intricate piece and it inspired them to work on their own shared Denim Jacket artwork. Staff at Oakwell Hall were keen to see the jacket and we are hoping to have a standalone exhibition of our work there.

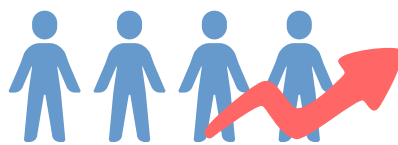
We hosted a relaxing visual arts Wellbeing Session for Huddersfield Students Union staff members to make nature inspired drawings with natural inks. These staff work directly with students so were keen to take **hoot** information back to share.



hoot attended the Kirklees and Calderdale Care Association Roadshow, meeting around 40 social care sector staff interested to find out more about **hoot**. We also attended the showing of 'Toxic' at Lawrence Batley Theatre with a **hoot** stall.



The numbers



308 people using the service

80 referrals to sessions

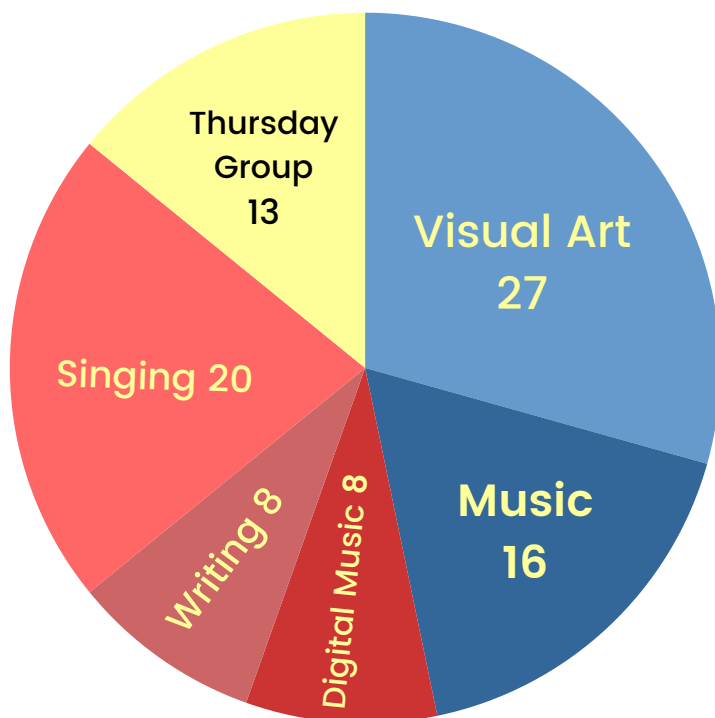


84 in-person sessions 

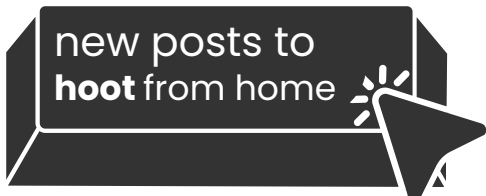
32 individuals at **WELCOME!** sessions

7  weekend sessions in-person


2378  hours of contact with participants



Online sessions

19  new posts to **hoot** from home

8 online creative sessions 

6  hours spent offline continuing being creative average per person

People



79 people with autism, dementia, or a disability



244 people over 35
52 people under 35 

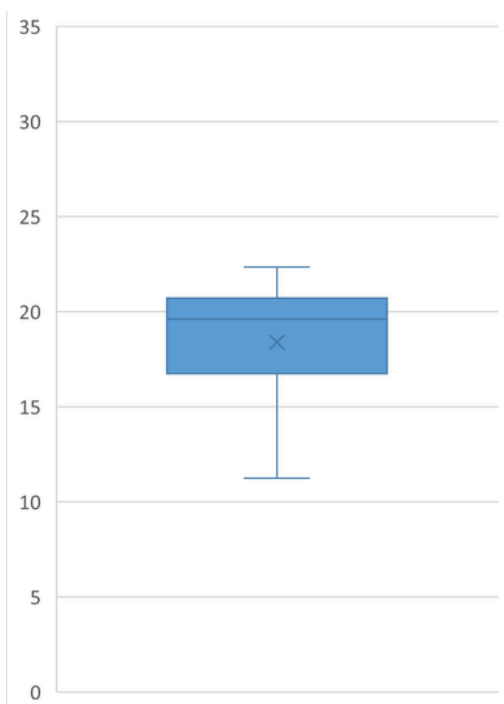
37% Male **61%** Female **2%** Non-binary

Outcomes & Evaluation

This quarter we debuted our new Outcomes tool, The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale (SWEMWBS). SWEMWBS gives an overall objective measure of a person's wellbeing; the KPI questions are people self-reporting the impact of the **hoot** service. We are collecting these data sets quarterly. The SWEMWBS results are in the diagram below.

Of note the average wellbeing score in the UK is around 23 (which correlates to 'normal wellbeing'), at **hoot** our average score was around 19 although the diagram does show that one person reported very low wellbeing which will skew the average somewhat.

However even in the face of overall lower wellbeing than the national average, 100% of people have said in the KPIs that being involved with **hoot** has had a positive impact on wellbeing and 82% said that being at **hoot** has helped them feel part of a community.



Breathing Space / Thursday Group



The Kirklees Dementia Hub Early Onset Dementia Group (also known as Thursday Group) continues to meet at Brian Jackson House as well as out and about in the community. **hoot** continues to offer core support to keep this group running and volunteers contributed 110 hours in total.

The group have taken part in ballroom dancing with Dave and Kim, Animal therapy with Animal Encounters, Chair yoga, a trip to the new entertainment venue The Light during Dementia Action Week and the venues first dementia friendly screening plus a leaving party for Tina whose final day was 29th May. Also, quizzes, sports activities, board games, what's in the box and show and tell (Kendrick brought in his cars).



A new partnership agreement has been signed, and a new programme of **hoot** activities including chair yoga, music and visual art is being developed in close consultation with the group, which includes regular and new **hoot** artists.

Challenges

Moving to a new Outcomes tool has been an exhaustive and thorough process that is still bedding in and we feel hopeful that in the long run the new Outcomes tools and Wellbeing Plans will be a good fit for Out of the Blue participants.

One delivery staff member broke her arm this quarter which meant an extended absence but the support and willingness of other team members to help out meant that delivery was continuous with no impact on sessions.

Volunteering with hoot

Volunteers continued to support our regular programme of activities in both North and South Kirklees. They have been involved in the process of updating our policies and procedures that support their roles and will be supporting us in our Kirklees Volunteering Quality Award assessment in Quarter 2.



54 hours
volunteering



18 sessions
supported

“

It's nice meeting up with other volunteers in meetings and chatting about how things are going.

”

Projects that complement and add value

Creative Pathways continued to deliver creative sessions across Kirklees to people with learning disabilities. Out of the Blue works in a complementary parallel with this programme to ensure that people are in a group that best matches their style and independence. Due to demand the project has just offered an additional session at our Huddersfield base.



29 sessions



265 attendances



512 contact hours

Visions



Strengthening the partnership with Kirklees libraries

The pilot year of this partnership was a proven success. Both **hoot** and Kirklees libraries decided that it is mutually beneficial to continue working together so this relationship will continue through 25-26. Delivering in libraries means we are able to be place-based and reach people we might otherwise not as well as capitalising on contacts and communities the libraries already have strong relationships with.

Linking with Cultural Offers

Participants benefited from a trip to Oakwell Hall in Dewsbury with many reporting that they hadn't been since childhood and that transport can be a real barrier to engagement. With **hoot** providing transport and support we hope that this can be a first step to people accessing local offers with a bit more confidence. In Huddersfield we took a trip to Heritage Quay and feedback suggested how much people enjoy engaging in cultural community offers.

Piloting new Outcomes tools

During Quarter 1 we piloted and finessed new Outcomes tools that are in line with the Service Specification whilst also being relevant and accessible to **hoot** participants. SWEMWBS gives an overall objective measure of a person's wellbeing; the KPI questions are people self-reporting the impact of the **hoot** service. One of the advantages of using a validated tool like this is that we can compare the average wellbeing of **hoot** participants with national averages.

hoot creative arts

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