

Being creative
makes you feel good



Mod-roc sculpture
by Linda T



OUT OF THE BLUE
Quarterly Report
QUARTER 4 / JAN- MAR 2026

Summary

We have used this quarter to reflect on programming successes, challenges and participant feedback and use this intelligence to decide what to build on moving forwards into the new financial year.

Our Out of Hours sessions have been well attended and we feel like we have hit a solid rhythm around delivery location, time and artforms. The [Arabic calligraphy workshops](#) in Ravensthorpe library were very popular and we were delighted to work with people who had never accessed **hoot** before.

Our Saturday morning singing sessions in Cleckheaton are becoming a staple of the local community calendar. Participant feedback consistently contains requests for more sessions and footfall is high suggesting that this place-based work is hitting a delivery sweet spot.

Social media channels saw a slight dip in traffic but our engagement rates were a lot higher than the expected average for Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn. This means that of those who see **hoot** posts a higher proportion than average actively comments, like and share.



I like being shown and guided in trying new things with sound, patient instruction. Being immersed in creating, trying to achieve a satisfactory piece of work, even if it's simple.



Challenges

As a team we had reflection time this quarter to look at all our groups and feedback and review what is working well and what could be changed. We piloted a short run of evening online creative writing sessions in the new year and the turnout and engagement was strong so we made the decision to pause our online singing sessions – where turnout was dwindling – and move that resource into weekly online creative writing sessions. Whilst some online singers were disappointed they did feel positive about trying online creative writing instead.

We approach the new financial year with regular online Tuesday evening creative writing sessions – and a complementary '**hoot** from home' online platform for people to continue posting their work after sessions – and hope that uptake will continue to build from the pilot sessions earlier this year.

Highlights

hoot at International Women's Day

Artist Sally Barker led a group creating beautiful fabric artworks using calico, carbon paper and watercolours and we enjoyed celebrating this event amongst partners.



The Calico Dress

Following on from the of the international art piece The Red Dress, Woven has launched the Calico Dress and **hoot** is a part of it! This inspiring project invites communities to adorn a specially made Calico Dress with their embroidered stories in the form of a patch and the dress will be exhibited at Woven 2027.



Scultures of Film Exhibition at Huddersfield University

The film **hoot** made with the National Centre for Creative Health was featured in the Stories in Motion exhibition at The Bath House Gallery and we attended the launch night of this wonderful exhibition celebrating the cultural life of Kirklees through short films.



“

I really like that I know
I am safe here and I
can see other people to
feel a bit less isolated.

”

Occupational Therapy Student Placement

BLOG

We published a blog highlighting our recent pilot placement for Occupational Therapy students. Over six weeks at **hoot**, students gained hands on experience in creative health and shared reflections on how the placement will influence their future studies and careers.

hoot Whatsapp Channel

Social media is not for everyone so we set up a Whatsapp channel to give participants and interested stakeholders an alternative way of keeping up to date with **hoot** news, updates and session dates.



“

I used to write a lot and really got out of the habit but find it super therapeutic so thank you for helping me get back in the swing of it!

”

MUSIC

Our Dewsbury music group had a varied run of sessions which started with open songwriting. The group are a solid community who know each other well artistically and welcome new members very quickly. This means that giving them a more open remit to create music in is viable and the results were fantastic with songs about dogs, trees and stars and galaxies being created!

In Huddersfield the group worked with guest artist Katie Mallard of Valley Beats. Katie focussed the first run of sessions on Samba drumming with people able to choose from a wide variety of instruments from large surdo drums to whistles and bells. In the second run of sessions the group moved onto African drumming using djembe drums.

The Digital Music group worked with Rob Crisp to write and record a song from scratch. The piece was written by the group and recorded on live instruments. They recorded drums one week, demonstrating the complexity of drum mic setup, bass and guitars the next week showing both mic'ing and DJ-ing techniques

SINGING

Singing led by Jade Harris focussed on songs that acknowledged the darkness of winter whilst looking forward to the light of Spring. The group enjoy working with Jade and sang some impressive 3 piece harmonies.

Online singing sessions were led by Jess Baker and her loop pedal with the group enjoying the endless possibilities that brings. As mentioned above we are pausing this group in late March and group members expressed interest in trying out the new Creative Writing online instead.

VISUAL ARTS

Mod-roc sculpture was the focus of the visual arts group run by resident artist Sally Barker. Across Dewsbury and the 2 Huddersfield groups, participants created wonderful sculptures which started by bending wire armatures and attaching these to a base. The sculptural form was then built up with newspaper and masking tape. This was covered in layers of mod-roc to give a strong, plaster finish which they then painted.

The Dewsbury group followed the success of their exhibition of The Big Blue Denim Jacket by working on patches for the Calico Dress exhibition run by Woven in 2027. They worked with artists Alison Morrish and Kim Searle to begin creating beautiful patches telling their own local stories.



Mod-roc sculpture
by Maria

CREATIVE WRITING

We welcomed back popular poet Rose Condo this quarter who worked with the group on 'inspiration'. Exploring where people draw inspiration from and what makes something inspiring the group swapped tips and insight around motivation and muses.

Sammy Weaver delivered online poetry sessions inspired by themes of place. The group wrote about their experiences of home, writing about place through different senses, from different points of view and writing about places inspired by looking at artworks. The group make their own creative writing at home and shared their work online.



I enjoy coming to the group and learning new things, it keeps me mentally well.

OUT OF HOURS

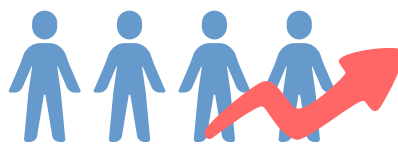
We returned to Cleckheaton library where the ever-popular Jess Baker delivered harmony singing in the beautiful and bustling surroundings of this community hub library.

We also ran a Saturday afternoon session in the Greenwood Centre at Ravensthorpe library working with Hafifa Ahmed. Hafifa led the group in exploring the beauty of abstract Arabic calligraphy in a fun, beginner-friendly way. This group of participants have now formed their own social group to stay in touch.



We have learnt that evening turnout can be low in the winter months so we moved our offer online. Tuesday evenings hosted creative writing sessions with Rose Condo followed by Sammy Weaver. Attendance was strong for a new group and people reported enjoying the ease of being in a creative community but from the comfort of their own home.

The numbers

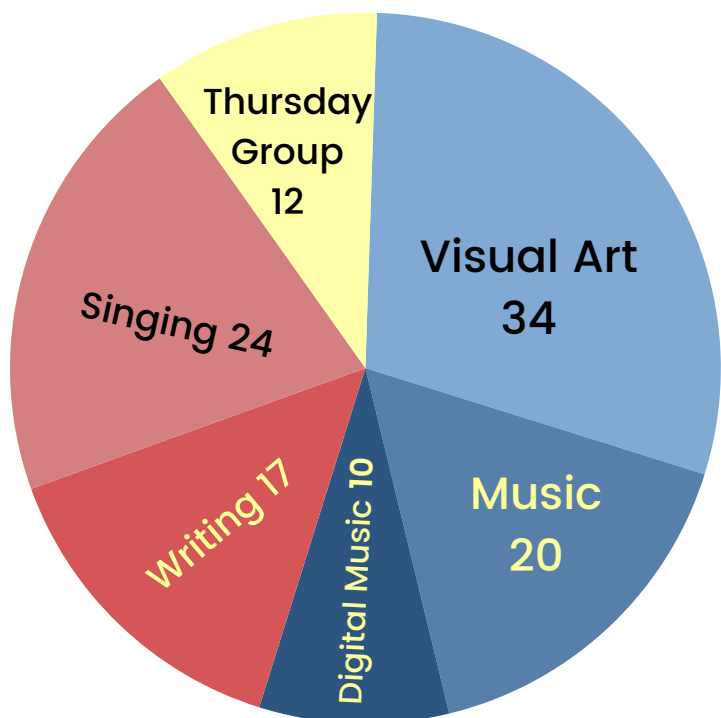


218 people using the service

111 referrals to sessions 

88 in-person sessions 

34 individuals at **WELCOME!** sessions



8  weekend sessions in-person

17  evening sessions

3263 hours of contact with participants 
including Outreach & Awareness Raising

Online sessions

71 new posts to **hoot** from home 

17 online creative sessions 

8 hours spent offline continuing being creative average per person 

People



64 people with autism, dementia, or a disability 

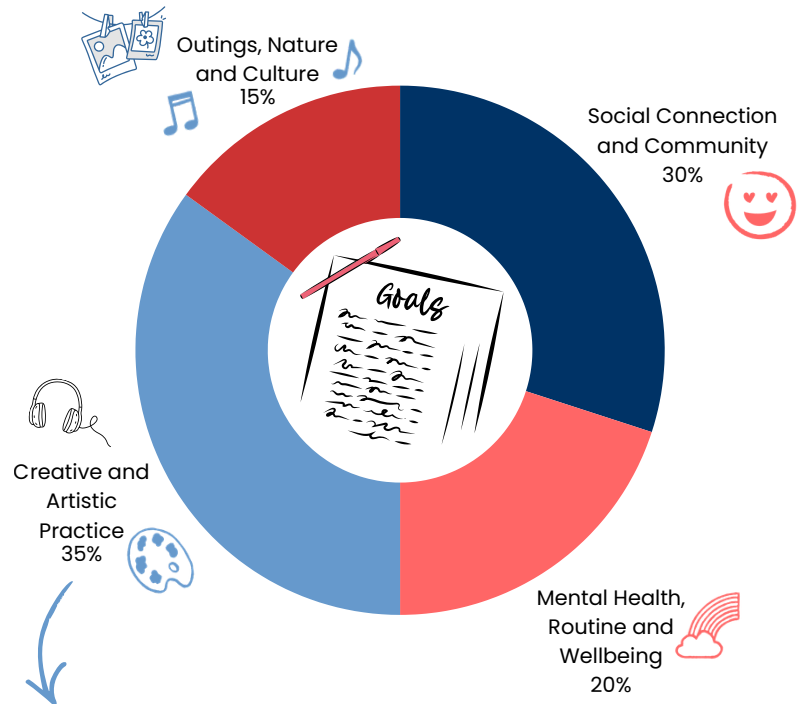
133 people over 35 
22 people under 35

34% Male **65%** Female **1%** Non-binary

Outcomes & Evaluation

We continued to collect a variety of data to give us a solid body of information to triangulate and assess the impact of attendance at **hoot** on wellbeing.

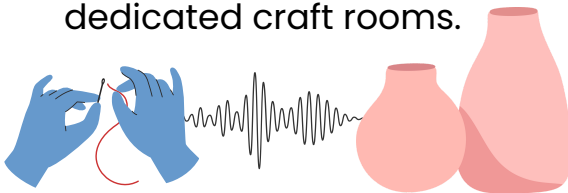
We continued to carry out Wellbeing Plans with participants. These are one to one conversations where we encourage people to set goals, to look at the skills they already have and to think about any areas they might like to progress in.



As expected creative practice was the area that most people set goals in but social connection was also significant. We know that at **hoot** the art is a vehicle to the other benefits such as community, connection and wellbeing and the pie chart above would seem to mirror this.

Creative & Artistic Practice

Ceramics, music tech (Ableton), textiles, painting, and setting up dedicated craft rooms.



Social Connection & Community

Maintaining a routine to stay well with regular attendance at **hoot** sessions, managing "unwell" days, and library relaxation.



Mental Health, Routine & Wellbeing

Building friendships, supporting others, learning BSL, and collaborative art discussions.



Outings, Nature & Culture

Trips to Hebden Bridge, galleries, herb gardens, and purposeful nature walks with pets.

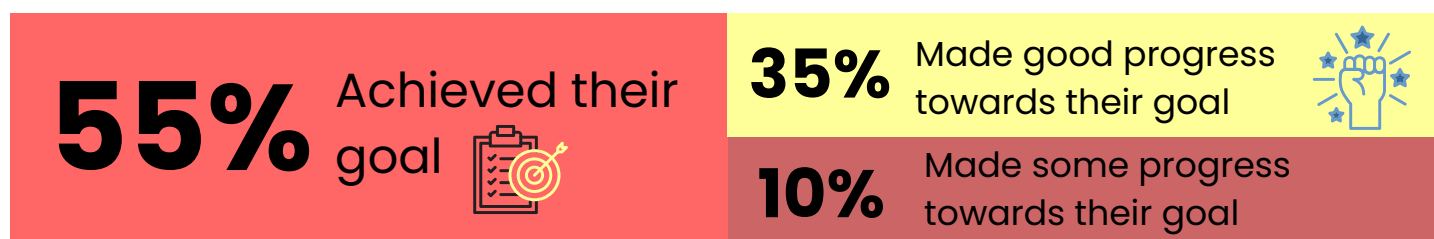


Progress towards goals

This quarter we can look at distance travelled: checking in with the cohort of people who first set their goals in summer 2025 and now were able to review those goals 6 months later. We asked participants to respond to a 4-point scale rating their progress from “I’m a bit stuck” to “I’ve completed it”.

Some people set goals that were aimed to be relatively achievable within 6 months, some set goals that were longer term but we helped them break them down into smaller steps.

Short term goals



Long term goals



The creative goals that people moved towards included turning a spare room into an art studio (started to clear the room as a first step) and doing some creative work at home – using ceramic eggs to decorate for easter as a motivator.



Other goals set included visiting a particular stately home and herb garden. The participant had moved towards this by checking bus times and timing it with a particular stall being open. Somebody else was keen to visit Salts Mill to see the Hockney exhibition and had moved closer towards this by securing a companion to go with and making a plan to go when the weather is warmer.

“ I love the people, they are so friendly and supportive. ”

“ Inspiring. What a luxury to come and dedicate 2 hours a week to creativity. ”

We continue to ask the KPI questions quarterly with a concise version being asked at our out of hours sessions too:

97% feel their health and wellbeing has improved because of attending **hoot** activities.

88% feel that being a part of **hoot** helps them to be a part of the community and to reduce social isolation.

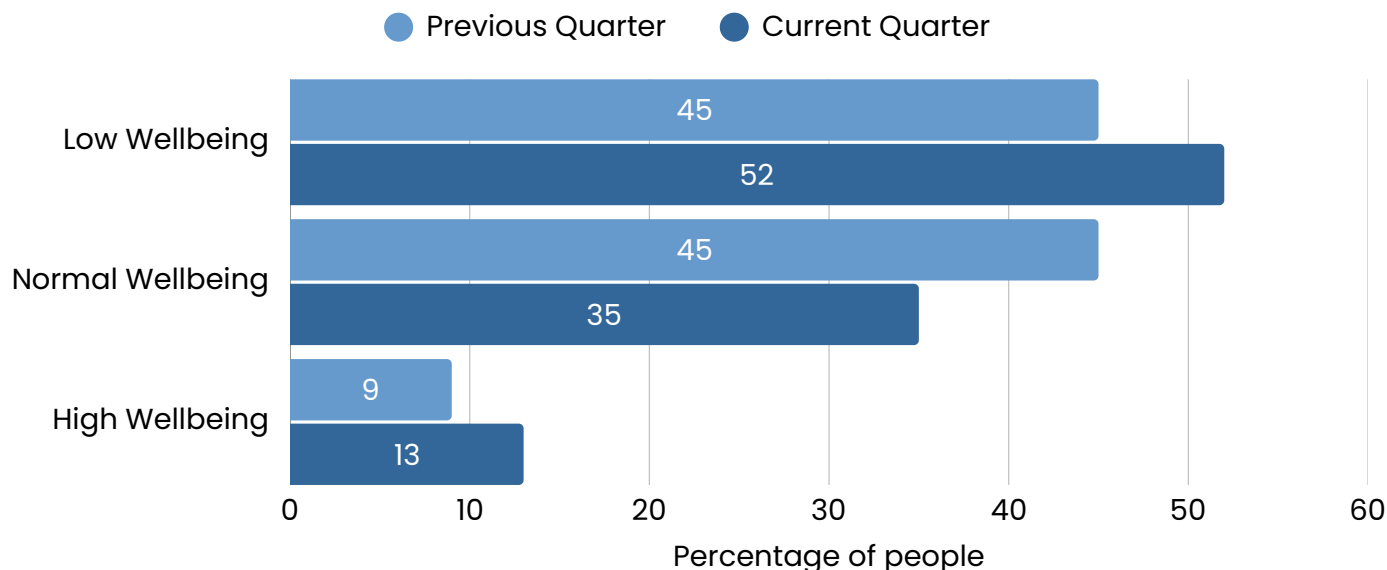
93% feel that they have been listened to and involved in planning the support they receive and any goals they have set at **hoot**.

“

I enjoy trying new things and the instruction and support from the staff helps me to do things I thought I couldn't.

”

We also collected SWEMWBS data (using 7 standardised questions about wellbeing) and the results are in the data excel. The headline figures are:



We have been continuously reviewing and adjusting all our outcomes tools and mechanisms for collecting data and in quarter 4 we had our highest yield of replies to our KPI and SWEMWBS survey. We surmise that people who do digital surveys prefer less reminders not more and many others attending **hoot** have a preference for paper surveys.

Volunteering with hoot

This quarter a number of our volunteers left their roles to move onto paid work opportunities showing how important volunteering is as a stepping stone to building confidence, gaining experience and progressing into employment.

Our partnership with the Third Sector Leaders Creative Steps programme yielded a new volunteering opportunity outside our usual roles. Working with the Communications Team, we have developed an opportunity for a Graphic Design volunteer to work with **hoot** for a short period. Diversifying our volunteering opportunities means more people can benefit from experience in our sector.

Finally, we opened up recruitment for five Group Support Volunteer roles supporting our regular programme of weekly activities. We have already recruited to one role with four more to go. Though the Creative Steps programme has now ended, our strong ties with the Third Sector Leaders team means we are confident that these new opportunities will reach a wide audience.



45 hours
volunteering



18 sessions
supported



I love meeting new people and chatting with others. I especially like hearing others reading their creative writing.



Breathing Space / Thursday Group



The group continues to thrive. Chair yoga sessions from Umbrella Yoga work towards building strength and co-ordination; the volunteers and group members run social activities, conversation and games plus this quarter featured an extended music project with **hoot** artist Rob Crisp.

Across four music sessions, participants were introduced to the ukulele, with every group member having an opportunity to play their own instrument. First sessions were spent building core instrumental skills, tapping out rhythms, strumming skills, learning the difference between notes and chords and practicing two key notes. The group then composed lyrics and wrote a song together about sunshine and rain.



The session was very interesting as it was completely different from other sessions and it was learning something new and enjoyable.



They sang the song together and layered up accompanying parts using hand percussion and a digital keyboard. The last session culminated in a recording which is being mixed professionally by Rob Crisp and the group will listen to this next term.



Projects that complement and add value

Creative Pathways continued to deliver creative sessions across Kirklees to people with learning disabilities. OOB works in a complementary parallel with this programme to ensure that people are in a group that best matches their style and independence. This quarter they delivered 26 sessions with 215 attendances equalling 430 contact hours.



26 sessions



215 attendances



430 contact hours

Visions



Building partnerships

We have continued our strong relationship with Kirklees Libraries where Cleckheaton Library in particular has struck a chord. Attendees to these sessions have said that having delivery in Cleckheaton – rather than travelling to Dewsbury or Huddersfield – is a big draw for accessibility.

We have also worked in partnership with Woven Festival, Oakwell Hall (part of Kirklees Museums), Proper Job Theatre, Culture Collective, University of Huddersfield, Kirklees Third Sector Leaders, Kirklees Town Halls and Cultures of Film. We've worked with the Woven Festival to document **hoot's** contribution to the Calico Dress project, taking videos and photos of participant's work and the idea development process. We've refined our consent process so that participants can have the option to see their work being celebrated as part of a Kirklees-wide project.

Ten **hoot** participants also had the opportunity to see the longest running female singing group in history The Three Degrees, with tickets donated for free by Huddersfield Town Hall patrons worth over £300 which participants thoroughly enjoyed.

New exhibition opportunities

Programme Manager Kath Shackleton has been working hard behind the scenes to make connections and maximise opportunities for our groups. Kath has been working with Woven Festival to secure an exhibition opportunity in Woven 2027 with the visual art group in Dewsbury contributing to the shared exhibit of the Calico Dress.

hoot also had our National Centre for Creative Health film featured in the Stories in Motion exhibition at the Toast House gallery at the University of Huddersfield with Kath and artist Rob Crisp representing **hoot** at the launch event.

Piloting new Outcomes tools

The Outcomes section in this report shows that the variety and depth of data gathered builds together to demonstrate impact of attendance at **hoot** in a number of ways: from self reported wellbeing, to assessing the impact of **hoot** on wellbeing to reflecting on goal setting.

This quarter we had the first batch of comparison data where we can begin to see distance travelled in terms of people moving towards their goals and we were pleased to see participants recognising the steps they are making towards achieving their goals.

hoot creative arts

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