

Evaluation Report

Back to Ours Phase 2 Final Report

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About this report

This is an evaluation report covering Phase 2 of Back to Ours, the Creative People and Places (CPP) project for Hull.

Phase 2 ran for three years - from January 2020 to December 2022 with a bridging extension to March 2023, following which Back to Ours became an Arts Council England National Portfolio Organisation. This evaluation covers the whole of Phase 2 with particular focus on 2022.

It uses data collected using an action research approach, in keeping with national CPP approaches. Thus, much of the learning has fed directly into the programming through regular feedback to the Director and the Team.

The report addresses Arts Council England's three National CPP Research Questions:

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
2. To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?
3. Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

The answers are threaded throughout the sections of the report summarised in the conclusion.

The report has five sections:

- The Summary covers our findings and recommendations.
- Section 1 offers an introduction to Back to Ours and their programme.
- Section 2 explores how the project has reached and inspired audiences least likely to engage with the arts.
- Section 3 considers the Hubs, Back to Ours' route to ensure community voice in programming and decision making.
- Section 4 examines how the project works with artists to ensure the excellence of the art on offer.
- Section 5 concludes and shares recommendations for next steps.
- The Case Studies section presents four examples of Back to Ours' work that provide further insight and learning.

A set of Appendices provides additional information and analysis.

Credits

This Evaluation was produced by RMR, embedded evaluation and strategic development specialists.

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RMR would like to thank Back to Ours for their help in compiling this report, in particular Louise Yates, Christie Parkin and Nesta Sheehan.

More about the whole Creative People and Places programme can be found at <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/creativepeopleandplaces>



1. Back to Ours programme and model

In this section, we set out the context for Back to Ours including the Creative People and Places programme, the city of Hull, Back to Ours programming and the programming model.

1.1. Creative People and Places and Back to Ours

Engaging new people with the arts

Creative People and Places (CPP) is an Arts Council England (ACE) funding programme which aims to engage new people in the arts through commissioning projects in areas of low arts engagement. CPPs focus on engaging new audiences with an offer which is excellent in terms of process and product, through building new and unusual partnerships beyond the arts.

The programme started nationally in 2012 and initially funded 21 places (in three rounds in 2012, 2013 and 2014). Due to its success at reaching those who don't usually engage in ACE funded programmes, from 2019 a whole new round of (new) CPPs were commissioned with 10 more places funded. In November 2021, ACE announced another £38.3m to be invested into the programme nationally for 2022-25, meaning extension for 28 Places, and eleven new projects. The name of the programme was changed to CPP National Portfolio Organisations.

Back to Ours was not eligible for this extension as levels of arts engagement in Hull had risen above the threshold for CPP eligibility. As a result, Back to Ours adapted its business model and successfully applied for core National Portfolio¹ funding for the period 2023-2026.

Phase 2 of the CPP programme ran until March 2023. CPP funding ran alongside two other funding streams: National Lottery Community Fund (NLCF) funding for work specifically on Bransholme Estate (2019-2022) and Esmée Fairbairn funding for work with the Hubs.

With funding secured until March 2026, the Team is now:

- Creating a sustainable organisation to deliver and embed the work locally.
- Sharing its learning, and delivery, nationally through a funding model that has National Portfolio Organisation investment at its core.
- Exploring a range of other funds to support ongoing activities.

¹ <https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/npo>

1.2. About Hull

City of Culture, city of challenges

City of Culture: Hull is a city of 267,100 people² situated on the Humber Estuary. In 2017, it became the UK City of Culture, challenging long-held stereotypes of the city, attracting millions in investment and bringing in 6+ million visitors³. Since then, there have been various approaches taken to build on the benefits of the year, with HEY Creative - Hull and East Yorkshire's Cultural Compact⁴ - currently holding responsibility for strategically developing a cultural offer in the city and region.

Economy and employment: The city's 6,335 businesses generate 120,000 jobs, although unemployment is at 5.9%⁵, having risen recently to one and a half times the national level⁶. Average pay for full and part time workers, and the numbers of those with a degree, are lower than national figures⁷.

Health and welfare: Hull is the fourth most deprived local authority in England according to the 2019 Index of Deprivation. The areas of Hull that fall within the most deprived 10% of areas nationally make up 45% of the city⁸, with rates of homelessness almost twice the national average⁹. In 2019, 31% of dependent children in Hull were living in poverty, compared to 18% nationally¹⁰, and there were high levels of childhood obesity. 32.5% of the population identify as Equality Act core or work-limiting disabled¹¹.

Arts engagement: The Active Lives Survey in 2018 reported arts engagement was 55%, lower than the national average for England as a whole (60%)¹², but not in the lowest third of local authorities. This may well be skewed by Hull City of Culture in 2017 which led to very high levels of engagement for that year. The City of Culture evaluation confirmed high attendance with "nearly all residents (over 95%) attending at least one cultural activity during the year."¹³

Arts ecosystem: The city has a rich arts and culture heritage including several nationally significant cultural destinations. There was a big shift in the NPO (National Portfolio Organisation) announcements for 2023-2026. Hull now has eight NPOs (including Back to Ours) and has retained the MPM (Major Partner Museum) in receipt of Arts Council funding. This is in line with other small cities and large towns in the North of England. All Arts Council funded organisations and projects must commit to engaging people in areas of low arts engagement.

² Kingston upon Hull, ONS, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/Eo6000010/>

³ <https://www.marketingweek.com/hull-brand/>

⁴ <https://www.hey-creative.co.uk/about-us>

⁵ Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Economy and Employment, https://data.hull.gov.uk/economy-and-employment/#/view-report/9e93e3faae4c449084e459fcd86e88do/___iaFirstFeature/G3

⁶ Kingston upon Hull, ONS, <https://www.ons.gov.uk/employmentandlabourmarket/peoplenotinwork/unemployment/timeseries/mgsx/lms>

⁷ Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Economy and Employment, https://data.hull.gov.uk/economy-and-employment/#/view-report/9e93e3faae4c449084e459fcd86e88do/___iaFirstFeature/G3

⁸ Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Deprivation, https://data.hull.gov.uk/deprivation/#/view-report/b41787867bad4ebb83of3a24faa36991/___iaFirstFeature

⁹ Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Deprivation, https://data.hull.gov.uk/deprivation/#/view-report/b41787867bad4ebb83of3a24faa36991/___iaFirstFeature

¹⁰ Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Deprivation, https://data.hull.gov.uk/deprivation/#/view-report/b41787867bad4ebb83of3a24faa36991/___iaFirstFeature

¹¹ Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Economy and Employment, https://data.hull.gov.uk/economy-and-employment/#/view-report/741f6f758c7e455ea748ee5d2a846db6/___iaFirstFeature

¹² Arts Council England's Active Lives Survey 2015-17, % that attended an arts event OR spent time doing an arts activity

¹³ The Impacts Of Hull 2017 Preliminary Outcomes Evaluation – March 2018, <https://www.hull.ac.uk/work-with-us/research/institutes/culture-place-and-policy-institute/cultural-transformations/preliminary-outcomes-evaluation>

There have been high levels of non-arts investment for working with communities over the last 15 years meaning communities in Hull have been used to short-term programming with external groups coming in to 'fix and leave'. This has meant Back to Ours' commitment to long term relationships – based on work they trial in the community – has been well received. The gaps in the existing cultural offer have made Hull a great place to try things out, and it has been a fertile breeding ground for more flexible approaches like outdoor festivals.

There is a growing artist-led grassroots art sector in the city at present. Hull City Council are a key organisation in helping to set up new arts initiatives. For example, they run the Literature Festival and Dance Competition, and were the instigators of the Hull 2017 bid. Thus they are instrumental in the arts sector locally.

1.3. Programming through the Phase

Dynamic and appealing events that adapted to the pandemic.

Back to Ours presents its programming as falling into two broad programming strands – Right on Your Doorstep and Right on Your Sofa – with each strand made up of shows either produced by the project itself or commissioned from others.

In addition to this, the programming includes work undertaken in partnership with other organisations, ongoing events at the Bransholme Chat Shop and activities for Hub Members.

There was interaction and cross-over between all these activities at various levels, making clear definitions difficult but producing a dynamic programme. There is often a rhythm to Back to Ours programming which, although interrupted by Covid 19, is starting to be re-established.

1.3.1. Two strands

Right on Your Doorstep is about bringing exciting events into the communities and neighbourhoods where the project works, so a show can literally be happening outside your home.

For instance, Adventures of Bo Peep. Hub members saw the show at last year's Edinburgh Fringe and chose to bring it to Hull. The shows were held at Edinburgh Street Community Centre and featured puppets, original music and sheep-themed silliness. It offered families with young children an interactive story and sensory learning through touch and playing with water.

Right on Your Sofa is the online programming, bringing shows onto people's screens or into their homes. It came into its own during the many Covid lockdowns, offering safe alternatives for people to continue to (virtually) socialise and be entertained. It aimed to mix familiar content with the unfamiliar, to entertain and challenge.

For example, in 2021 Back to Ours ran Shindig on Your Sofa which looked to help tackle social isolation by delivering directly into people's homes. Each show came in a box containing everything needed to have a "Shindig on Your Sofa", including a DVD of Back to Ours performers. The Back to Ours Team and performers delivered two hundred boxes, engaging people on their doorsteps and generating a buzz about what was in the box.

1.3.2. Hybrids and cross-over

There is a strong cross-over between these two strands. An event that happens "in real life" may have a counterpart online – and vice versa – and there is interplay between the two. Even as the issues of Covid 19 receded in 2021 and 2022, this hybrid model of on- and offline work continued to be pursued. In addition, shows have longevity; they have morphed and developed over the Phase.

An example of this is the spoken word performer Dean Wilson. He featured in the Hub Bus Tour 'Sharrabang' and has appeared at other Back to Ours events. His "digital presence" is his Film Club – a series of short films and poetry performances made with collaborator Dave Lee and available primarily through YouTube. Sitting somewhere between the two, the Cinema Shack is "a sit-in experience where passers-by can watch all of Dean

and Dave Lee's classic short films, plus six brand new ones¹⁴ – and has appeared at Bransholme Chat and Freedom Festival. In 2022, Dean Wilson returned for a second year with his unique brand of poetry, and local performer Jess Morley went out onto the streets of Hull "looking for Dean", sharing his poems and films with passers-by as part of Yorkshire Day.

Dean also appeared on the Hologram Jukebox which was co-produced with Back to Ours and is a world first. In 2021, Back to Ours commissioned award-winning mixed reality artists Davy and Kristin McGuire¹⁵. This featured a number of Back to Ours artists – Dean, Chiedu Oraka (Black Kings Upon Hull), Casus Circus, etc. – in 'virtual performances' and was first shown at the Bransholme Chat Shop.

1.3.3. Running through the Phase

In addition to the shows already mentioned, below are examples of shows that developed across the Phase:

- **Black Kings Upon Hull:** Artists Bacary Mundoba and Chiedu Oraka produced episodes of their documentary series exploring issues of race, class, colour and power in Hull throughout the Phase. Although initially a response to Black Lives Matter, these became about the artists' individual experiences as well as local and national issues. For example, Episode 5 explored issues of race and football after Euro 2020¹⁶. In 2022, episodes were produced in partnership with Humberside Police.
- **Bedtime Stories:** A children's story regularly read by a local performer (or key figure in a particular neighbourhood), these were pre-recorded and shared via Facebook Premiere¹⁷. They were aimed at families with young children, as well as a hyperlocal audience. Having started in 2020, these developed throughout the Phase – for example, linking to a live event (*High Horse*, see [below](#)) and having stories for Children's Book Week read by high profile opera singer and performer Le Gateau Chocolat¹⁸.
- **Sharrabang:** This started as the Hub Bus Tour in September 2021 and took a host of performers out into four communities to put on a show in public spaces. For Back to Ours, it was an opportunity to get back 'on the ground' as the impact of Covid 19 reduced¹⁹. Using an open-top bus attracted attention, played on a recurring "bus" theme²⁰ and allowed the shows to be hyperlocal. This grew and evolved in 2022 with the Sharrabang – see case study [below](#).
- **Christmas Card Parade:** This was an outdoor winter celebration, Victorian-themed and made up of a large-scale parade and a static site with food and drink. It was developed from an initial idea from a Hub Member about an event where characters stepped out of a magical Christmas Card. The Hub Members felt that people in Hull deserved something special after Covid. They discussed the audience experience of being invited to step inside a Christmas card. It took place across four nights²¹ in four different neighbourhoods. Originally planned for 2020, it first took place in 2021 and then again in 2022. See case study [below](#) for more details.
- **Shindig on Your Doorstep:** Shindig was a pre-lockdown staple of Back to Ours. During the pandemic, it was developed into Shindig on Your Sofa (funded by ACE and involving care packages being delivered to those more at risk of loneliness during the pandemic, this was targeted at those over 65). Back to Ours were conscious that they did not have time to stay and chat with those who received a care package so trialled a visit to a small number of people (on their doorstep) with entertainers and allowing time to have

¹⁴ <https://hullisthis.news/back-to-ours-co-commissions-the-dean-wilson-cinema-shack-and-deanworld-premiere-gala> - Dave Lee is the director of Dean's short films

¹⁵ For more details, see <https://www.studiomcguire.com/hologramjukebox>

¹⁶ Black Kings Upon Hull, Episode 5 <https://youtu.be/N7hitFpfCXo>

¹⁷ Live performances had been a feature in 2020 but these were discontinued

¹⁸ For example, Le Gateau Chocolat reads Barbara Throws A Wobbler by Nadia Shireen <https://youtu.be/YfucTDwXojY>

¹⁹ The narrative explaining the tour was that the performers had been locked up in a social club during the pandemic and were now escaping.

²⁰ The theme of buses recurs throughout Back to Ours work – for example, a bus was used for its launch event and features prominently in key photography; buses were part of the Christmas Card Parade in 2021; the Bus Stop Portals project took place in 2022; the Hub Bus Tour (renamed Sharrabang) took place in 2022 and is planned to continue going forward.

²¹ 6th to 9th December 2021 inclusive

a chat. This has been developed further in 2022 in partnership with community centres, and now offers events at specific venues. A Christmas Shindig was held at Edinburgh Street Community Centre in December 2022.

1.3.4. Other activities

Bransholme Chat Shop is located in The Living Room at North Point Shopping Centre in Bransholme. Set up on the premise that 'everything feels better after a good chat', it offers a space where local people come and talk. During lockdown it pivoted to offer phone support to the most vulnerable, particularly those unable to get online or experiencing isolation. The shop was also a venue, hosting events such as We Are Bransholme, an exhibition of photographs capturing everyday people and places in Bransholme.

Across the Phase, activities for Hub Members included Quiz Nights, Go Sees, Socials, Showcases and check-ins. The Go Sees included a visit to the Edinburgh Festival where Hub members then chose the programming for Hull based on what they had seen and experienced, and a visit by Chat to Ours to RUSH in Blackpool, a LeftCoast CPP event which gave them a chance to share their evaluation practice and also check out what other CPPs do.

For more about the Hubs and their activities, see Section 3.

1.3.5. Impact of Covid 19

For an organisation that works so closely with people, the pandemic had a massive impact on Phase 2 programming. It prompted a swift strategic response to ensure the continuation of the engagement – through a screen rather than face-to-face – and ensured the importance of Right on Your Sofa.

2020 saw shows cancelled including Two. This was a show by Hull Truck, aiming to engage new audiences in pubs and social clubs across the city which opened on the day lockdown was first announced²². The audience engagement elements were co-produced with Back to Ours.

The graphs below show a returning appetite for in-person events post-Covid and a tailing off of digital engagements as in-person events became core to the programming once again.

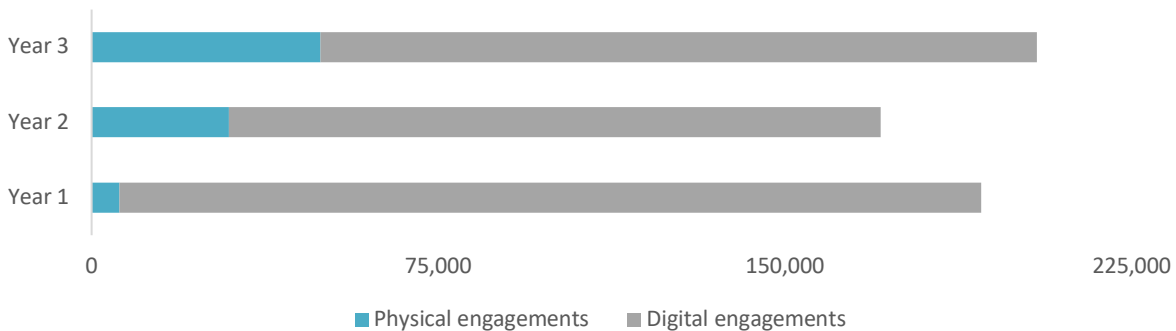


Figure 1 growth of in-person engagement numbers (as well as overall engagement) over the Phase showing post-Covid recovery.

²² <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2020/mar/23/boris-johnsons-address-to-the-nation-in-full>

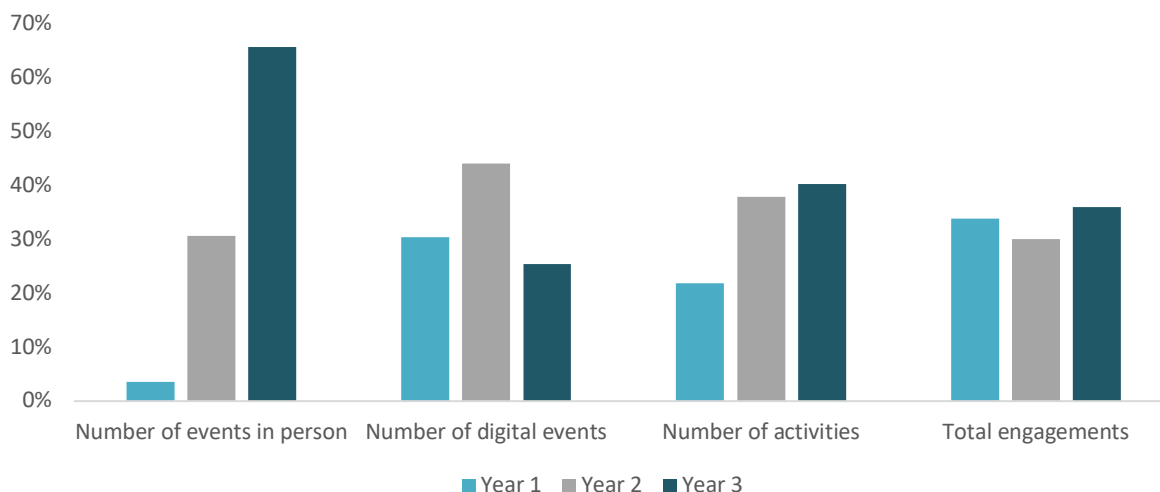


Figure 2 Comparison of key metrics across Phase 2 drawn from monitoring and engagement figures for Years 1, 2 and 3.

For more details about the impact of Covid, please see Year 1 and Year 2 reports.

1.4. The Back to Ours programming model

Over the course of Phase 2, Back to Ours has developed and refined its unique programming model built on five 'ingredients'.

Back to Ours has developed a unique programming model which has been discussed as it developed through previous evaluation reports. It was heavily tested during lockdown with a need to shift delivery method completely, and it is a sign of the strength and broad applicability of the model that its core 'ingredients' have not needed to fundamentally change - this despite having to go online and then return to 'your doorstep' again over this phase.

In 2021 and 2022 this model formed the basis for the programme, as Back to Ours' Director Louise Yates shifted to a mixed on- and offline delivery mode from 2021 onwards, retaining the best elements of the online time while moving to live programming as appropriate. This has been extremely successful with audiences still following the online options – and artists enjoying the challenge of cross-programming – while allowing for a coming together of the community through the in-person programming around the city. As 2022 progressed and into the start of 2023, the in person 'on your doorstep' elements have strengthened and increased, without losing the 'on your sofa' online offer for those for whom this works better.

This approach continues within the new model of Back to Ours as a permanent organisation, with ACE National Portfolio funding to 2026 and hopefully beyond. The five 'programming ingredients' remain as a guide to developing future recipes and flavours:

- Strategically and consciously thinking about the offer;
- Driven by the core values at the heart of the Back to Ours brand;
- The importance of a mix of the familiar and unfamiliar;
- A willingness to take steps into the 'unknown';
- Listening, learning and adapting.

Strategically and consciously thinking about the offer

This remains central to the way that Louise Yates as Artistic Director programmes. Nothing at Back to Ours happens by chance or without considerable thought. Each element of the programme in 2022 had roots that can be traced back into lockdown and before.

The obvious example is the Christmas Card Parade which in 2022 built further on the 2021 Parade, with additional work to tweak routes to ensure it worked for as many residents as possible while being effective in terms of road closure needs. It also introduced 'static sites' in partnership with others rather than placing a huge strain on the core team. This gave opportunities for Hub Members and local partners (e.g. a care home) to step up further and into a supporting role. A digital illustrated version of the story of the card was created with an original soundtrack which cemented the story and is an example of what the Hub Members can produce while also demonstrating the implementation of learning from Back to Bransholme, where people were working alongside a creative team. Looking backward, this built on the evolution of the idea from a discussion with Hub Members in summer 2020 followed by development through 'teasers' and 'trails' throughout 2021, into the first Parade in December 2021 and the second in 2022. Looking forward, the decision to keep the routes the same gives some sense of permanence and build-up of excitement knowing that it will be coming – and knowing where. It also frees up the Team to develop the artistic side of the event, improving the Parade and building on the work at the static sites – increasingly supporting these to be fully community-led without sacrificing quality.

It is also true for every aspect of the programme that the decisions made to work with certain artists come about from careful consideration both of what might work and what the gaps are in terms of the local offer. The shift from online to in-person and retention of a blended approach was done slowly, carefully and deliberately, ensuring that audiences were able to follow the process through.

A further development of the model which has consciously been developed through the course of 2022 in particular is the long, slow approach of work in some areas which needed it. This can be seen as growing from the experience of the long-term commitment to Bransholme which has grown into the Chat Shop and has been used in Thornton where the team had intended to work for many years. The sense of permanence of having a long-term presence was used in this location, working initially through a project around the local bus stops, and has afforded a new way into the community.

The importance of giving a sense of permanence – without stagnation – came to the fore in a very strategic way during 2022 with the build-up to thinking about what difference being an NPO (an organisation rather than a programme such as a CPP) would make. This is now part of the way Louise thinks and talks about programming – using the knowledge that Back to Ours is around (and will be following the same principles if not doing exactly the same things, for many years to come) to give reassurance for those involved, particularly the Hub Members, to stretch their wings and take risks.

Driven by the core values at the heart of the Back to Ours brand.

Although Back to Ours are happy to follow opportunity, how and why things are done matters, so everything needs to fit with their core values and the 'brand' – which is what the trust of the community is built on. Shindig on Your Sofa in 2021 was a good example of how Back to Ours responded to a time-limited opportunity (and pressure) to deliver work to overcome isolation. It needed to be developed and delivered very fast, but Back to Ours ensured it fully built on the Back to Ours 'feel' by delivering the Shindig – a Back to Ours staple pre-lockdown – into the homes of those who were most likely to be isolating and also were least likely to have internet access. Over six days the team delivered 213 boxes to vulnerable adults across Hull who were previous attendees of the Shindigs or had been nominated by friends, neighbours and family as deserving of a treat. The box included a DVD of previous Back to Ours shows and entertainment to be watched at any time, along with party props such as a feather boa and an afternoon tea from Betty's.

The brand itself still works well as a lynchpin and defining feature – for example the use of the bus within both the Sharrabang and the Christmas Card Parade, as well as bus stops in the Bus Stops project allowed a nod back to the Back to Ours feel within other events and will form the basis for future projects (see case studies [below](#) for more information on all of these). Over the course of 2022 thinking about the brand has further refined and shaped into being about the people - the passengers, as well as the bus itself: where they are, who they are,

what they need. This is particularly true at crisis points – Covid 19 lockdown, cost of living crisis, the growing sense of uncertainty about the future which has increased over the course of 2022.

In particular this comes to the fore through the work of Bransholme Chat at the Living Room, which offers a place where you are always welcome to come in and have a chat and feel better. It was explicitly designed not to be an advice centre, or to have any explicit health purpose, but simply to recognise the therapeutic value of human contact. As it operated over the lockdown period, it needed to pivot to providing signposting for isolated people. Holding to the core values of being there, having a chat, sharing and enjoying were important, but the Team also recognised that they had become an essential contact point, a reliable location people could turn to. Obligations arose from this, both to ensure that staff and volunteers didn't step beyond their capabilities and role, but also in finding ways to fill those gaps identified, for example getting a social worker in when the level of need became clear.

We are people they can come to and lean on – we are very available. We offer a sense of safety, but we also understand where our expertise lies and know when to bring others in.

Louise Yates, Director Back to Ours, Interview, 2023

Overall, the shared core values are of ownership – that is what Back to Ours is about, and it belongs to its communities: the Hub Members, the volunteers and its audiences.

The importance of a mix of the familiar and unfamiliar

This continues to be the central motif in programming meaning that audiences are gently introduced to new things. For example, Secret gig on your sofa included the familiar (of your sofa, and the 'gig' format) with the unfamiliar of the digital sharing – new for many of the people targeted – as well as the mix of acts included, or the inclusion of an 'unfamiliar' face like nationally recognised drag artist Le Gateau Chocolat reading the familiar bedtime stories with huge feeling and love. The use of 'familiar' locations was particularly important in 2021 as people were only just feeling safe to venture into their formerly familiar spaces of their streets and communities, rather than venturing into town. By the end of 2022 Back to Ours had come back to what they are great at - being visible, building trust, having 'intimate convos' – being in the community, listening and responding to the community, welcoming people in to something which is happening IN the community.

The importance of this is really clear in the response to Sharrabang and The Christmas Card Parade, where everyone commented on the value of the activity being near where they live.

[Christmas Card] 'felt jolly' and reminded people we are a community ... bring something special to people's doorsteps...

Really important the event came to them (the local community) – especially post-Covid.

Interviews with local Councillors from the areas where the Christmas Card parades took place, 2021

The traction of mixing some unfamiliar content and programming into a familiar (and trusted) setting is shown by the growing affection for Dean Wilson – originally seen as a bit strange, and with the added issue that poetry wasn't seen as accessible – among Hub Members. Over 2021 they began to promote his work to friends and family, and in 2022 this grew into hub members working directly with Dean and film maker Dave on a shared project. Hub members are beginning to be a key driver for increase in ambition and quality in the programme – and within arts and culture in Hull generally.

Further evolution of every element of the programme into 2023 onwards will build on this mix of familiar and unfamiliar – for example, within Sharrabang the 'familiar' of the local locations were initially paired with the 'unfamiliar' of some of the acts arriving on the bus. As confidence grows in the local communities around the Back to Ours offer, the Hub Members organising the static sites will increasingly push the ambition at the stops they organise – reaching further into their communities, offering an increasingly unfamiliar set of events or suggesting new stops in communities unfamiliar with Sharrabang, for whom the bus alone is the most 'unfamiliar' they can manage.

A willingness to take steps into the 'unknown'

Back to Ours continue to show a **willingness to take steps into the 'unknown'**, taking risks and conducting experiments, offering the audience the chance to embark on a journey. In 2020-21 this was most strongly evidenced in the Black Kings Upon Hull piece which was among the more challenging pieces being put on in Hull around Black Lives Matter and was remarked upon as a risk particularly given the Back to Ours audience. The work had traction due to the quality of the work itself, but also the trust which the audience had in Back to Ours programming. The success in really reaching and connecting with people over this difficult subject matter was shown both by the positive relationship with the police which came out of the process, and also the depth of engagement apparent in the audience feedback.

This is such important stuff! And Chiedu's mum is one heck of a woman - that fiercely proud speech had me in tears. Well done for commissioning this, guys - this stuff needs saying.

Audience member, via Black Kings upon Hull Facebook

This process of taking new steps is essential to the creativity and quality of Back to Ours. It partners well with the theme of permanence which runs through the messaging around the new NPO model – it is permanent, but ever changing and growing.

In particular, Back to Ours recognises the importance of individuals within the projects taking their own steps – trying the unfamiliar but going further – Hub Members increasingly taking a lead on commissioning, producing and running productions, taking on paid roles within the organisation and elsewhere in the cultural sector.

The risk-taking which was a great strength of CPP can stand Back to Ours in good stead in planning a secure future in a difficult funding climate, trialling new models of delivery, marketing their services and looking at sponsorship or other approaches to funding around the central NPO money which acts as the core.

Everything's got to be moving forward, the programme, the model, everything. That's what the Hub Members are saying: they are ready for that.

Louise Yates, Director Back to Ours, Interview 2023

Listening, learning and adapting

Back to Ours has embodied its responsibility as an action research project for the five years of CPP, understanding the importance of monitoring and evaluation – **listening, learning and adapting** in response to audiences, partners and the Team itself. This has proved even more important during a phase of three years of unexpected global pandemic, lockdown, slow lifting (and reintroduction) of lockdown and opening up into a cost-of-living crisis. The Team itself has had to stop, listen and adapt to a huge number of changes, with only the Director and Bransholme Chat co-ordinator remaining full time in post over the whole period, with some on breaks for maternity leave and others leaving and arriving. The non-wavering in the direction of travel of the programme is testimony to the central artistic leadership of Louise Yates as the Director, meaning that the core ingredients haven't shifted – even if additional 'flavours' may change.

This commitment is evidenced by the high respect in which the external evaluation has been held throughout the relationship, with extremely high engagement with the evaluators and recommendations regularly discussed and acted upon. For example, the ten recommendations in the 2022 report have either been fully acted on – at times going further, for example bringing in a full access audit and training after some access issues were raised in 2021 – or are part of the strategic plan going forward. This level of listening – and not treating evaluation as something to be put on a shelf – is unfortunately still unusual and shows how well the Team have embedded reflective thinking based on evidence into all their approaches from senior level down.

With the organisation moving to being an NPO and not a CPP, the obligation to be an action research project is removed, but the value of that approach remains clear and valued. The Team intends to continue the regular reflection and particularly the learning from experience – coupled with extremely involved listening to audiences and the wider community at every point – in adapting and designing the programme.

This listening and learning, the knowing what people want, hinges on having the right attitude and the right team. The Team is on the ground at the events all the time; they don't watch from afar. They come from the

communities or live in them. The Hub Members are part of the team. The huge amount of change and turnover during this Phase has helped Back to Ours recognise what a good Team member looks like, and also some of the limitations of the ways they've worked in the past. They will recruit new staff based on their attitudes and willingness to go out, listen and respond, rather than simply a job skillset. But also, they'll recognise that not everyone needs to be at every event – there's a value in sharing out tasks, promoting and centralising the role of volunteers to lead key areas where they have developed the knowledge and skills (for example Hub Members as event producers or volunteer co-ordinators, Chat to Ours members leading the data gathering) and having at least some of the Team able to look at events with a little distance to add in a critical reflection to the process.

Relationships with partners are also adapting and building trust, despite regular challenges arising from changes in leadership and funding landscapes across the partners. The role of Back to Ours within the city's cultural ecosystem remains strong and valued, with the Director in particular playing a strong role in the city. The introduction of the role of Company Manager for Nesta Sheehan will allow even more input from Back to Ours into the city eco-system with a different set of skills but a shared set of principles and more time to share practice. In addition, it will give space and impetus for Back to Ours to share their learning further – regionally, nationally and internationally. This element of the work is key for the 2023-26 period, both in fulfilling Back to Ours' obligations to the sector to share its extremely successful approaches, and also to use this sharing to get new work and finance opportunities through selling services, events and models to other cities in England and internationally.

1.4.1. The Big Top – Back to Ours programming model in action:

The Big Top which took place over May half-term 2022 in Heartlands Park in Bransholme can be seen as a case study in the Back to Ours programming model in action, reflecting all the ingredients of the approach.

Conceived years before through conversations with Hub members and partners, and developed through **strategically and consciously thinking about the offer**, The Big Top offered a **mix of the familiar and unfamiliar**. For example, Hogwallops by Lost in Translation felt very European and potentially unfamiliar, but at the same time was locally cast and contained had the sort of family characters and dynamics which were very familiar to people in Bransholme, and taking place in the familiar setting of a circus tent – which itself was subverted by the range and variety of programming shown.

In keeping with the **core values at the heart of the Back to Ours brand**, the whole Team spent a lot of time onsite – with the Director front of house and having hundreds of conversations over the course of the week The Big Top ran. This allowed for a real reconnection with people post-Covid and for the Team to get a sense of how people were. For example, people talked about young people's screen time and how their concentration had suffered during lockdown.

There was also **listening, learning and adaption**: the team discovered that making this a paid for event didn't discourage people from coming along – with some becoming keen to see every show. There was even annoyance when tickets weren't available. Further learning and adaptation lay in how The Big Top was marketed. People assumed that it was going to be like a traditional circus with one show repeated through the week. It took time to get the message through that there were different shows being held in the tent. Though when people realised, this made them even more determined their family should see everything.

The **willingness to take steps into the 'unknown'** on the part of Back to Ours definitely generated an echoing willingness on the part of the community. The Team observed that even the circus tent being put up generated excitement in the community. People were immediately intrigued – something was happening in their neighbourhood. This feel of "the circus coming to town" is something Back to Ours are looking at developing for future Big Top shows.



2. Engaging and inspiring new audiences

This section explores who attended Back to Ours events – whether they were new to the arts, how they were reached and whether they were inspired by what they experienced.

This section largely answers Arts Council England's CPP National Research *Question 1*: Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?

For Year 3 and the Phase as a whole, we consider the geographic spread of the audience, their diversity and their previous arts engagement, and how well it represents the population of Hull²³. We look at how Back to Ours are approaching the challenge of engaging and inspiring new audiences, and how engagement with Back to Ours makes a difference to communities with a view to assessing the likelihood of longer-term and sustainable impacts in these areas.

We find that:

- Back to Ours is reaching a diverse group of people from Hull and beyond through their physical and digital offer.
- Over half of their audience are new to the arts²⁴ in Year 3, which is in line with the average across the Phase.
- Employing hyperlocal marketing for hyperlocal events is working well, with digital marketing successfully reaching the audiences for the family-friendly Half Term shows.
- Events are praised for being inclusive, family-friendly and affordable. This is particularly relevant with the cost-of-living crisis.
- Audiences are inspired and feel confident to engage further with Back to Ours and the arts in general.

It was wonderful to see everyone coming together, those in the LGBTQ community and those who support the community. Happy, colourful, family friendly and safe. Just perfect.

Audience member, Pride in Hull, via audience survey.

2.1. Who were the Back to Ours audiences?²⁵

Back to Ours reaches a diverse cross-section of Hull and beyond.

Year 3

In Year 3, audience feedback was gathered through audience surveys for the Goldilocks pantomime, Circus on Your Doorstep, the Pride in Hull Parade, the October Half Term events, including High Horse, the Giant Balloon Show and Aladdin, and at the Christmas Card Parade, with 673 responses in all.²⁶

Looking at attendance, the majority, 64%, of Half Term events survey respondents went to the Aladdin show, and 21% of audience members had been to more than one Half Term show. Attendance between survey

²³ Note of caution in all this data as it is likely that those most comfortable in engaging with the arts will also be most comfortable with filling in online surveys or in engaging with data collection at events – however sensitively handled. Despite all efforts, this will always be something to be borne in mind.

²⁴ Self-reported data at Back to Ours events from monitoring data, base = 2,175

²⁵ Demographic data was gathered at events from an audience survey, with 7678 responses being analysed, 6538 postcodes were used for the postcode analysis of geographic, socio-economic and arts engagement reach.

²⁶ Response numbers for each survey are recorded in the methodology in Appendix 1: Methodology

respondents was split fairly evenly between the four Christmas Card Parade locations of Southcoates, Marfleet, Orchard Park and Derringham, with 6% attending more than one parade.

96% attended the Half Term events with others under 16 years of age, with numbers ranging between one and six children, whereas only 74% did for the Christmas Parade. 64% attended Half Term shows with others aged 16+, compared to 76% at the Christmas Parade. Only one person (2%) attended the Half Term show alone, whereas eight (10%) attended the Christmas Parade alone. On average, 82% of audience members attended events with others aged under 16, 72% with others aged 16+ and 7% alone.

Whole Phase

Here we discuss a number of core aspects about the Back to Ours audiences, comparing Year 3 with the whole of Phase 2.

2.1.1. Where did they live?

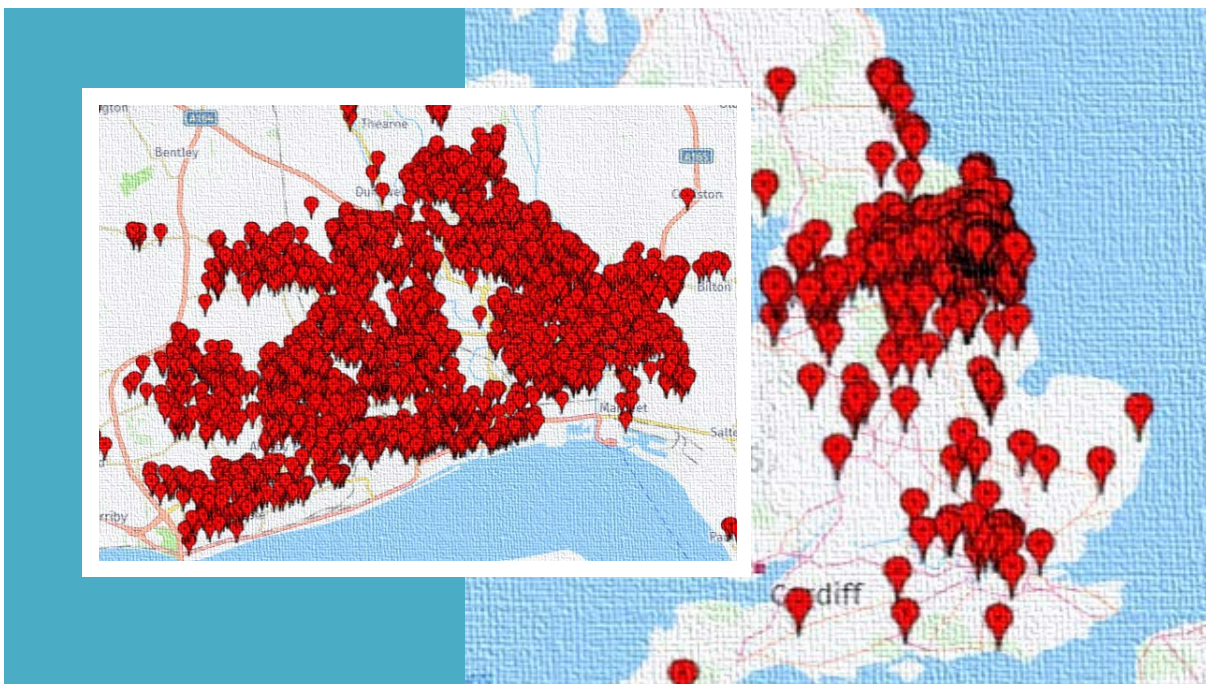


Figure 3 maps of audience engagement in Year 3 from valid postcodes provided at events. Base = 17,031

While audiences in Year 3 can be seen to come from the length and breadth of the country from the maps, 97% of all audience members came from Hull.²⁷

²⁷ 97% of valid postcodes provided at events in Year 3. Base = 17,031

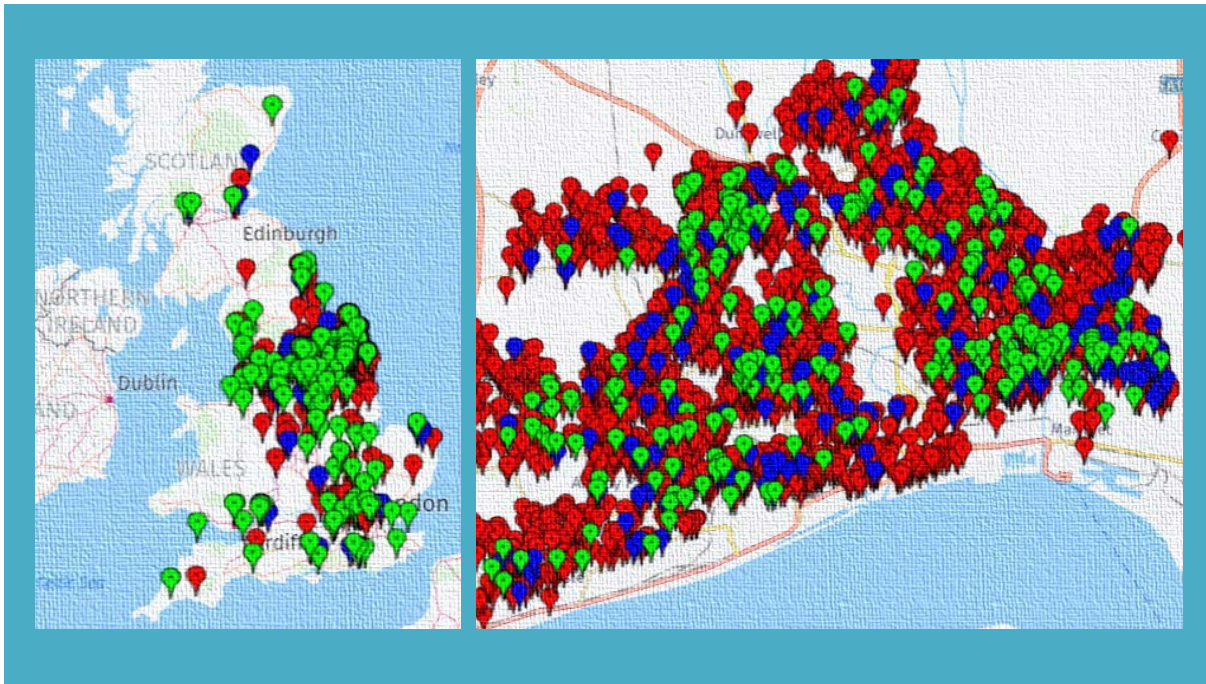


Figure 4 maps of audience engagement from valid postcodes in Phase 2. Green is Year 1, blue is Year 2, red is Year 3. Base = 27,081

As with previous years, the spread of Hull-based postcodes across the whole Phase remains focused on a few key areas, with a third of engagements for the entire Phase coming from HU9 alone, and high proportions also coming from HU5²⁸, HU6, and HU7.

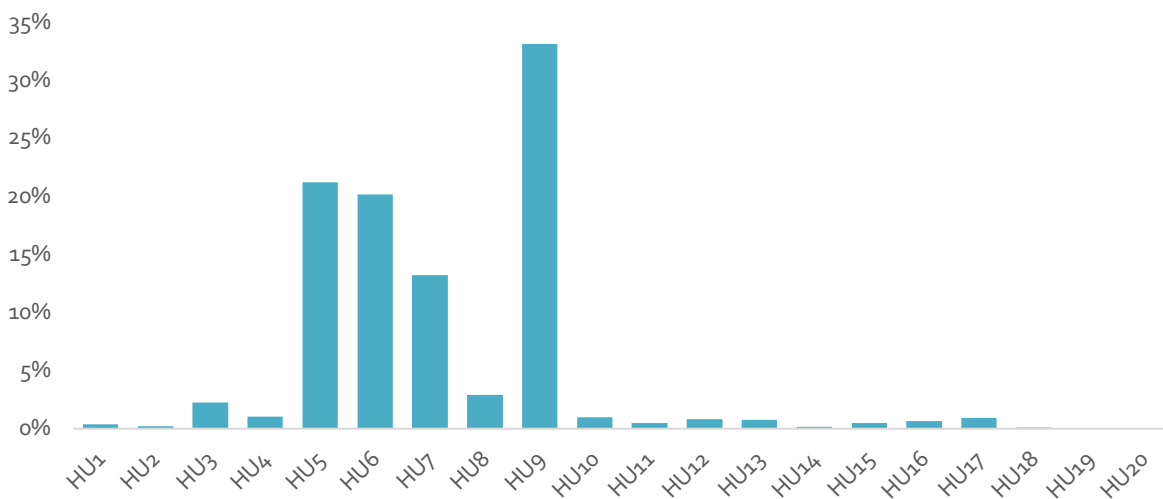
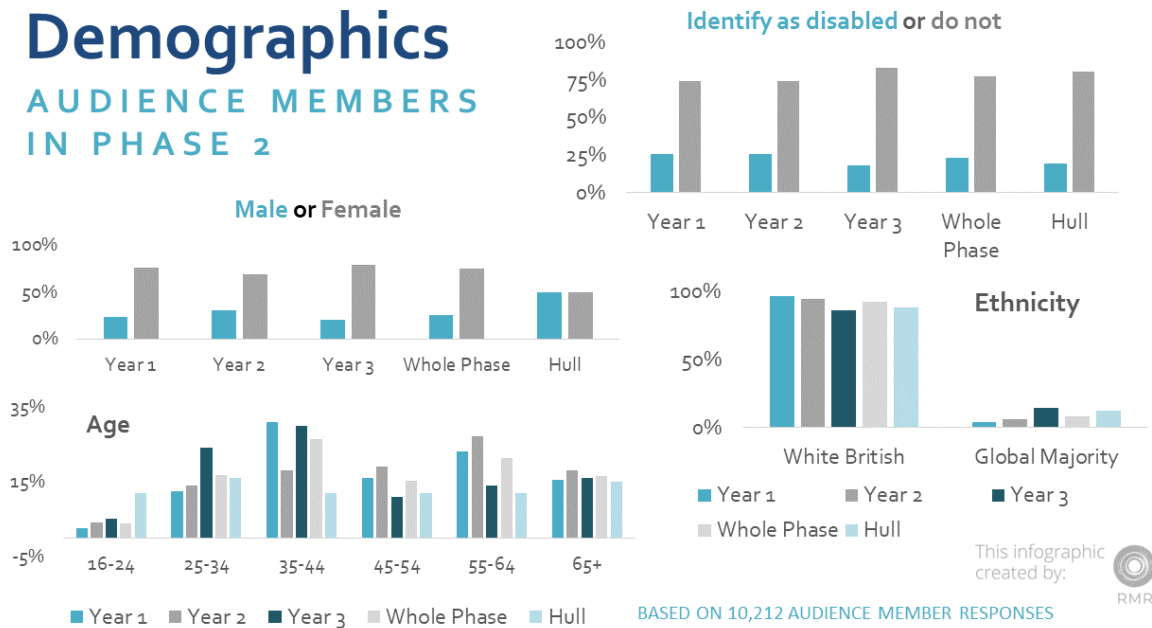


Figure 5 spread of Hull-based postcodes across Phase 2. Base = 25,854

²⁸ Majority of HU5 postcodes come from Derringham ward

2.1.2. What were their demographic groups?

Here we present a review of audience demographics for Year 3 in the context of Phase 2 and provide a comparison to Hull population where appropriate. Results are collated in the infographic²⁹.



Back to Ours are still reaching an audience older on average than for Hull, but this is dialled back in Year 3 to some extent, with particular gains in the 25-34 age group this last year.

We also find that Back to Ours are continuing to engage more people who identify as female than male, although this may be due in part to bias as to who is more likely to fill in surveys, as highlighted in previous reports.

When considering ethnicity, while the average for Phase 2 shows less global majority than for Hull in general, far more people from global majority groups engaged in Year 3 (over double Year 2's figures), which shows a great improvement in reach in this area.

Slightly less people identified as disabled in Year 3 at 18% compared to the 23% for the whole of Phase 2, but this average across all years is still higher than the 20% for Hull in general and mirrors the survey findings that show that inclusion strategies are working to engage and support accessibility of events.

Some events had a higher than average proportion of some key demographic groups, such as those who participated in the Pride in Hull event in Year 3. Back to Ours may want to consider collecting bespoke data on particular audiences when needed or appropriate.

²⁹ Infographic based on demographic information from 10,212 responses at Back to Ours events in Phase 2. Age comparison to Hull from Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory, Population, <https://data.hull.gov.uk/population/#/view-report/fo67fa9f6ad840008507427e844d538f/...iaFirstFeature>. Base ranges from 8,334 to 10,212 per question.

2.1.3. What was their socio-economic status?

Year 3

The comparison of levels of deprivation³⁰ for Back to Ours engagements in Year 3 with those of the local Hull population as a whole are shown in Figure 6.

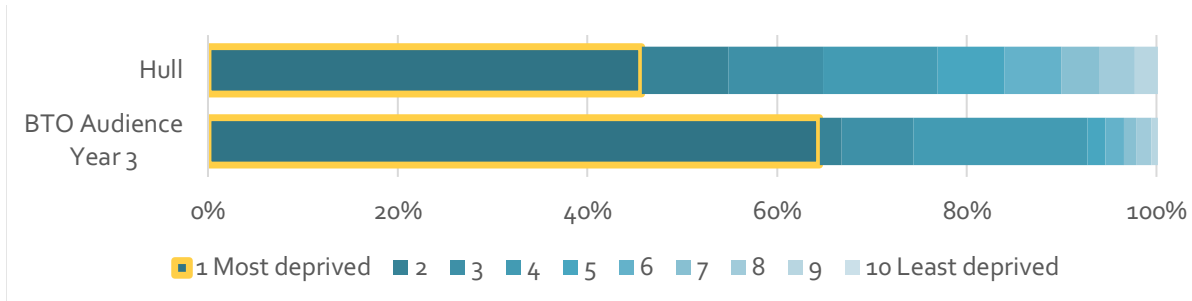


Figure 6 Indices of Multiple Deprivation comparing local Hull population to Audiences in Year 3. Base = 15,182

64.5% of Back to Ours engagements in Year 3 come from the 10% most deprived areas of England, highlighted by the gold box. This is a lot higher than the 45.7% for the Hull population in general, and shows that Back to Ours are effectively reaching people from the most deprived areas. In total **92.7% of all engagements come from the top 40% most deprived areas of England,** which is substantially higher than the 76.8% from the Hull population in general and a fantastic result.

Some of the success here is down to the hyperlocal events such as the Christmas Card Parade, where residents come out to view the spectacle in their local area. Given that these events draw a local crowd, further reach can be obtained into the most deprived communities by continuing to programme these hyperlocal events in targeted areas as Back to Ours moves into its next Phase.

Whole Phase

From Figure 7 it's clear that Back to Ours have been consistently reaching the most deprived areas of Hull notably more than the population of Hull in general. This is shown by the gold boxes below.

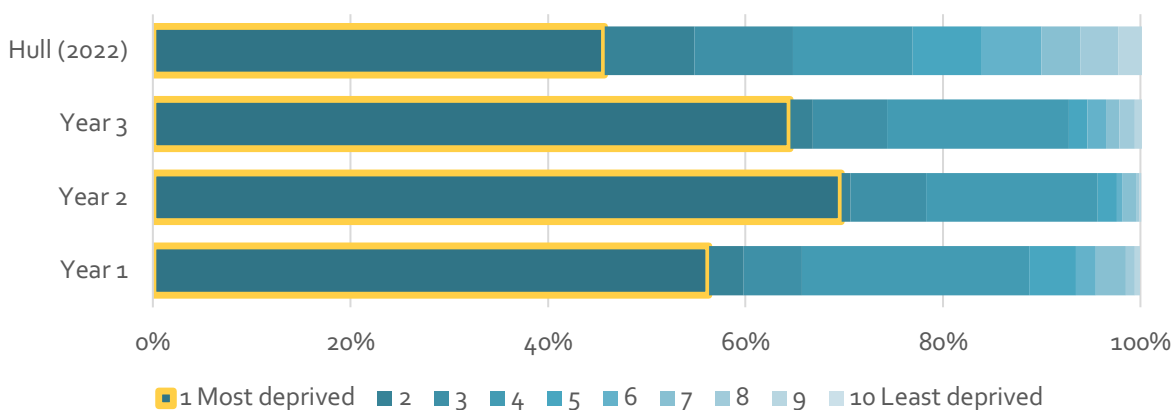


Figure 7 Indices of Multiple Deprivation comparing local Hull population (2022)³¹ to Audiences for Years 1, 2 and 3. Base = 23,950.

³⁰ 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 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>

³¹ IMD figures for Hull population provided here as a comparator. Rates of IMD for Hull population across the Phase were not found to differ by more than 1%, so the latest figures represent an accurate comparison.

There has been some decrease in reach into the 10% most deprived areas of England between Years 2 and 3, but the levels are still up from Year 1 – and above Hull. The difference from Year 1 is that there was no Parade so there were mainly self-given postcodes. This creates a bias as those in lower IMD are less likely to complete forms whereas for the Parade, Back to Ours record a postcode for every house where there is a person outside / at a window.

As stated above, continuing to programme hyperlocal events into these most deprived areas will naturally maintain or increase these figures, and keep Back to Ours reaching those who need them most. Their core approach of offering free or low-cost events is popular with a wider demographic and will influence who they engage with.

It could also be partly due to those in the middle being squeezed by the cost-of-living crisis and possibly more inclined to attend free or low-cost cultural events and activities. The affordability and quality of activities delivered by Back to Ours mean that it is appealing to those who are feeling the pressure on outgoings.

2.2. Were they new to the arts?

Back to Ours consistently draws in and engages audiences new to the arts.

Year 3

49% of audience members in Year 3 are new to the arts³², having not engaged in arts and culture events in the last 12 months. This is slightly lower although in line with the average of 51% for Phase 2. An average of 29% of audience members at the Christmas Card Parade and the Goldilocks pantomime had not been to a Back to Ours event before and this shows that new audiences are consistently being engaged by the programme. 52% of Goldilocks attendees said they had never been to an event like it before.³³

It was such an amazing experience to be a part of and I loved seeing my partner's face light up at his first Pride.

Audience member, Pride in Hull, via audience survey

Following this up using Audience Spectrum analysis³⁴, we find that Back to Ours reached a huge number of people who live in areas least likely to engage in the arts during Year 3.

- **79% of engagements were people least likely to engage in the arts.**
- In addition, **97% of all Back to Ours Year 3 engagements were from people less likely to engage in the arts**, compared to 92% for the Hull population in general.

Specific segmentation analysis shows that in Year 3 Back to Ours reached one core group of those least likely to engage in a highly successful way, at nearly twice the average for the Hull population: Frontline Families.³⁵

Frontline Families tend to be young families with financial concerns such as unemployment and caring responsibilities. Some of the great reach into this group this year is likely due to the hyperlocal events such as the Christmas Card Parade, as well as the ever-popular Half Term shows such as High Horse that hold huge appeal with this group and naturally fit the schedules of those with children. Reaching them through promotion at Play Days and through schools and churches could also account for Back to Ours success.

In addition, the range of online offer such as the Bedtime Stories mitigates any barriers this group faces in terms of access, especially given the current cost of living crisis where many may be less able to travel for cultural events. However, consideration does still need to be given to digital poverty as it is as relevant now as it was

³² Self-reported data at Back to Ours events from monitoring data, base = 2,175

³³ Pantomime in a venue outside a city centre

³⁴ Provided by The Audience Agency. For more information, please see Appendix 3: Reach into audiences least likely to engage in the arts

³⁵ A brief description is provided here to illustrate, but for more in-depth information please see the Audience Agency website <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-finder-data-tools/audience-spectrum>

during Covid. These findings are consistent with the target audiences of the events and show great reach into target groups.

Whole Phase

Exploring the results of the Audience Spectrum analysis across the whole Phase has yielded an interesting pattern of results about the shift in Back to Ours audiences over Phase 2. Percentages for reach into groups least likely to engage in the arts and less likely to engage are shown below, with a comparison to the general Hull population.

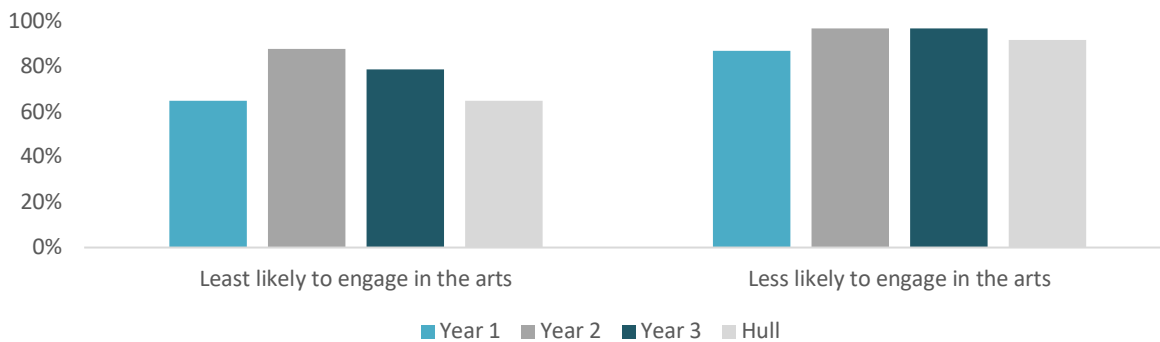


Figure 8 Audience Spectrum analysis results, showing percentages of those least and less likely to engage in the arts for Years 1, 2 and 3, with a comparison to Hull population. Base = 26,066

These results highlight that Back to Ours are maintaining their 97% reach into groups less likely to engage from Year 2, although there has been a drop in those least likely to engage, due in part to a small rise in two of the medium engagement groups. For more in-depth analysis on this, please see Appendix 3: Reach into audiences least likely to engage in the arts.

2.3. How were audiences and participants reached?

A targeted approach to advertising events is helping Back to Ours hone their reach and engagement.

Year 3

Hyperlocal events are successfully being advertised with hyperlocal marketing, while more mainstream events are discovered far more through digital means. 75% of audience members at Pride in Hull found out about the event via the Pride in Hull website or on social media. Likewise, over half of survey respondents heard about the Half Term shows or Goldilocks panto via social media.

Of those who heard from social media about the Half Term shows, 81% heard through Facebook and 19% saw it on Instagram. For Goldilocks these figures were 95% for Facebook and 5% for Instagram. No one reported seeing information for either of these events on Twitter. 92% of the Goldilocks audience say they use Facebook regularly, 44% use Instagram, 21% use YouTube and just 14% use Twitter. These findings are mirrored in the monitoring figures for social media engagement where Facebook figures vastly outweigh engagement from the other platform.

Conversely, for the Christmas Card Parade events, far more people heard about the event from Back to Ours

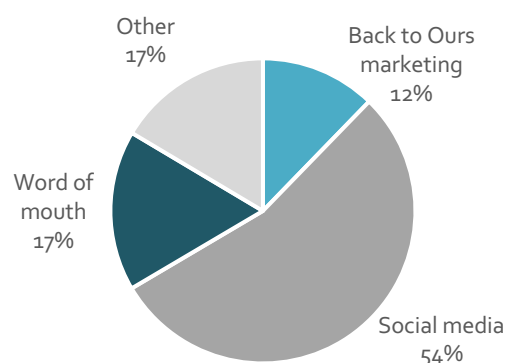


Figure 9: How people heard about the Goldilocks and October Half Term events. Base = 132

marketing with the majority receiving information through their door or seeing a poster, although here social media did account for a quarter of all respondents. There was a similar pattern of platform preference seen as above, although slightly less for Instagram with 7% instead finding out through Twitter:

This targeted approach of utilising digital and physical methods at their disposal, and tactically matching these to the event, is helping Back to Ours to reach specific audiences.

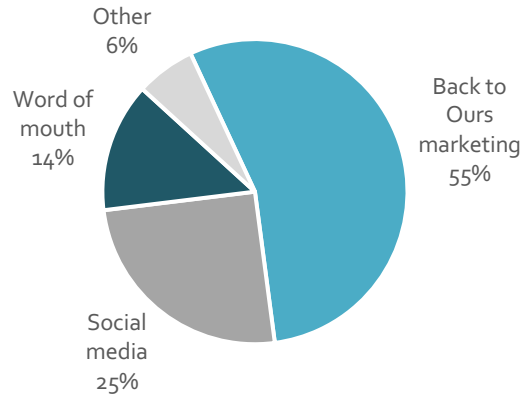


Figure 10: How people heard about the Christmas card parade events. Base = 88

Whole Phase

Digital reach has been a core aspect of Back to Ours, especially since the Covid 19 pandemic.

There has been key learning for marketing that the language and images need to be clear so they create a curiosity while also allowing people to know what the event is.

The chart below looks at the trend in increases of followers or subscribers for Phase 2 across four main social media platforms: Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube. When we consider absolute values in terms of increases of numbers, Facebook is the clear frontrunner, mirroring our findings above for Year 3.

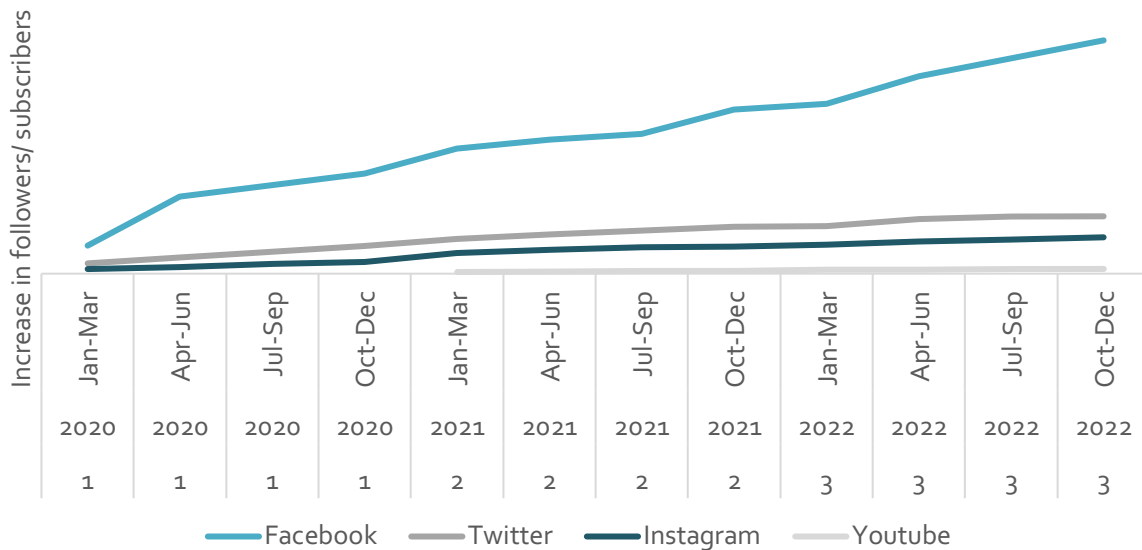


Figure 11 Trends in absolute increases of followers or subscribers across Facebook, Twitter, Instagram and YouTube for Years 1, 2 and 3³⁶

Given the vast difference between the numbers of followers and subscribers, it is useful to also plot the relative growth of each platform, as seen in the chart below:

³⁶ Figures for YouTube start in Jan-Mar 21

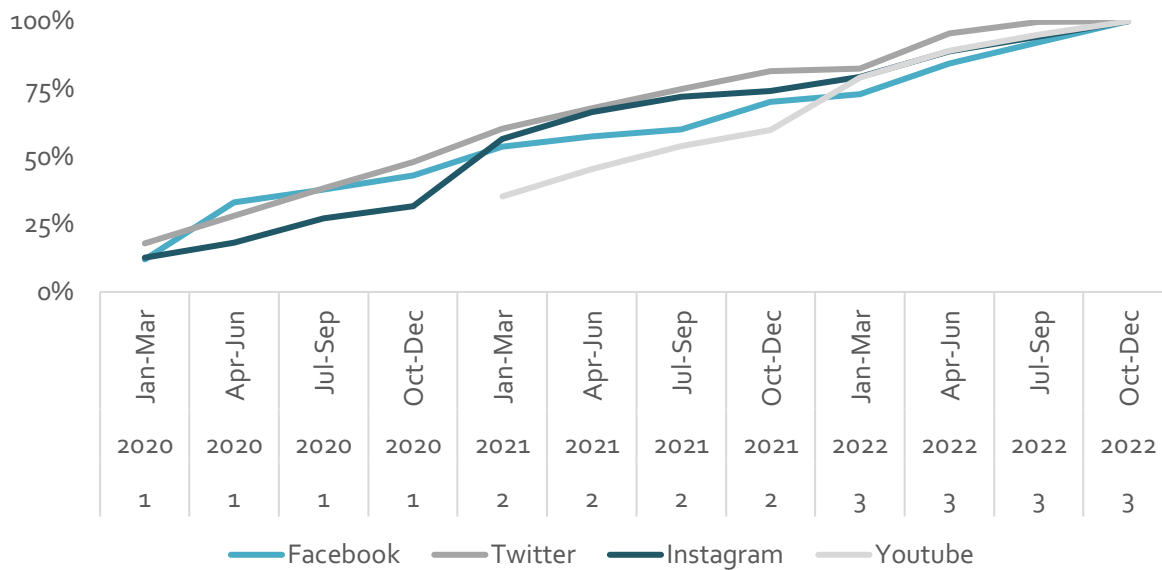


Figure 12 Relative growth of social media followers/ subscribers as a proportion of their overall growth during Phase 2

This chart looks at the pattern of growth between the four main platforms, using figures at the beginning of the Phase (or for YouTube from Jan-Mar 21) and tracking the growth to the latest figures as a percentage of growth over the Phase. The chart shows that Twitter has been the fastest growing social media following for Back to Ours in Phase 2. This is interesting, as there is clearly huge reach via this platform, although this does not seem to translate as well to advertising events given that so few people report finding out about Back to Ours events in this way. Facebook is overall the slowest growing, although all platforms are maintaining steady growth over the Phase which is promising for future digital engagement and advertising. Other platforms such as TikTok could represent a new avenue for Back to Ours to explore to engage new audiences for their next phase.

2.4. Were they inspired to engage further?

Hull needs, wants and loves Back to Ours.

As for the whole Phase, results show an overwhelmingly positive response to Back to Ours’ offer in Year 3. 100% of Half Term show audiences are likely to recommend Back to Ours events to friends, family or colleagues, with 94% extremely likely to do so. Similar results are found for the Goldilocks panto, with 100% likely to recommend and 84% of these being extremely likely. Likewise, 95% of Christmas Card Parade attendees are likely to recommend Back to Ours events, 76% extremely so.

Attendees at the Pride in Hull parade rate the event 4 out of 5 stars. 96% of audience members at the Half Term shows and Circus on Your Doorstep felt the performance had a positive impact on them or those around them, and so did 93% of the Goldilocks audience and 86% of attendees at the Christmas Card Parade.

The chart below shows audience members opinions of the outcomes of Back to Ours shows in Year 3, which are consistent with findings in these areas across Phase 2.

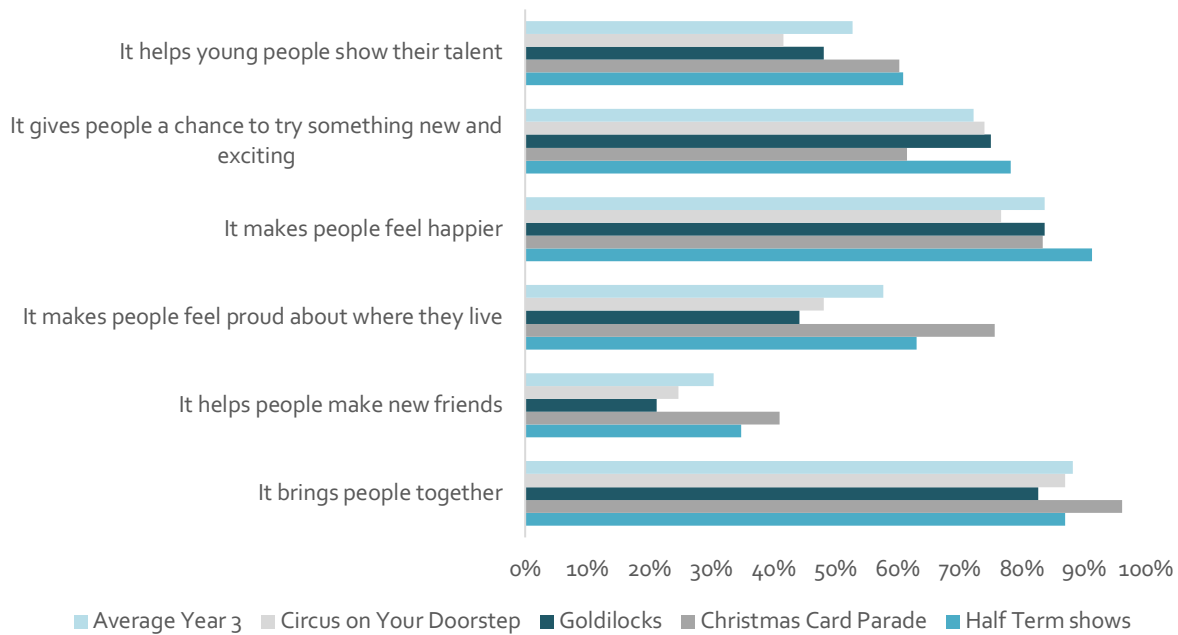


Figure 13 Outcomes of Back to Ours shows in Year 3. Base = 305

Audiences report enjoying both the large-scale outdoor events and the smaller, intimate shows. The large events are enjoyed for their “atmosphere and community spirit”. Smaller events are praised for their intimate feel and inclusivity, giving people a chance to interact with the artists. Several say the scale and feel of the events depends on the performance, and several felt that the smaller events were better for their children.

It’s great - gets kids who wouldn’t normally go to theatre seeing things like this.

Audience member, Half Term show, via audience survey

It’s lovely having somewhere walking distance where we can meet family to watch.

Audience member, Christmas Card Parade, via audience survey

At the Christmas Card Parade people liked the “community feel” and the “atmosphere and enthusiasm of the participants” (audience survey). Most said there wasn’t anything they’d change except more “would be brilliant for it to come towards Calvert Road area next year”, “was over too quickly” and “just wish it could be longer (but TOTALLY understand why it isn’t!)” (audience survey quotes).

The word cloud below shows audience members response to the question **What three words would you use to talk about the show?** Responses were from children, young people and adults, in-person and via a survey.



Figure 14 What three words audience members use to describe the Christmas Card Parade. Base = 42

People also really loved the Half Term shows. They liked that they were “interactive” and “family orientated” and said “I also enjoy the atmosphere, it’s always so positive and welcoming” (audience survey responses). People also mention the friendly staff and that the show is very professional and a good price.

Back to Ours always bring such a variety of shows, you never know what you’re going to get!

Audience member, Half Term shows, via audience survey

The Half Term shows were praised for being incredibly inclusive and accessible – people mentioned how the small venue worked well for those with sensory needs and the Makaton sign language interpreter:

I thought high horse was well written and engaging. My little boy is autistic and has SPD. It was really inclusive. Loved the small, intimate setting.

The smaller venue was more accessible to us as my daughter is autistic.

It’s the first show I’ve been to that has had someone doing sign language. Myself and my children found that really interesting and interacting and excellent that it promotes inclusivity.

Audience members, Half Term shows, via audience survey

Like so many shows throughout the Phase, people liked them being local and easy to get to, and many families commented on how affordable the events were.

In the current climate access to cheap family entertainment is invaluable.

I liked that the ice cream price was affordable and in line with the ticket price, so you didn’t have an awkward moment wondering if you had enough money to buy everyone one or make your kids share.

Audience members, Half Term shows, via audience survey

The word cloud below shows audience members' responses to the question **What three words would you use to talk about the show?**



Figure 15 What three words audience members used for the Half Term shows. Base = 53

Well-deserving actors are being paid for their work and our child is growing up surrounded by art and culture.

Audience member, Half Term shows, via audience survey

Naturally, there were a couple of areas highlighted that could be different next time. Some attendees at the Pride in Hull event found tickets and refreshments expensive. Others raised issues with the organisation – for example, being unable to return to the venue having previously been told this would be allowed. Reviewing issues that arise such as these will ensure future events continue to run smoothly and the fact that they arose in a partner-led event shows the importance for Back to Ours in checking that all partners have commitment to the Back to Ours values.

These findings are consistent with audience response for the whole of Phase 2, with audiences reliably and consistently enjoying the Back to Ours offer and being inspired to engage further. On average, 95% of audience members across the whole of Phase 2 would recommend Back to Ours events, peaking this year at 98% on average, the highest across the Phase. Likewise, audiences consistently felt that Back to Ours events have a positive impact, with 85% reporting this on average across the Phase and again peaking in Year 3 at 92%.

These figures show not only are Back to Ours maintaining high standards, but that they are continuing to push themselves and striving for the highest standard and impact possible. The words from audience feedback used in the word clouds are mirrored in sentiment across all three years of Phase 2, reflecting positive experiences for audiences at events, with words such as 'funny', 'amazing' and 'enjoyable' being mentioned repeatedly and showing both audience enjoyment as well as quality of the events.

[The actors] knew exactly how to react to the audience, provoke reactions and keep us all laughing. A fantastic production with every aspect in perfect balance.

Audience member, Goldilocks pantomime, via audience survey

2.4.1. The Back to Ours audience feels inspired to do more and see more

We find plenty of evidence that attending Back to Ours events inspires audiences to engage further. **88% are more likely to attend other Back to Ours events in future**, with a further 11% saying they already attend loads of their events.

Would 100% go again! Amazing atmosphere.

Audience member, Pride in Hull, via audience survey

Fitting with their move to becoming a National Portfolio Organisation, Back to Ours were aiming to develop existing audiences as well as bring in new ones in 2022. The audience survey shows them achieving their aspirations in **gaining new audiences as well as retaining existing audiences through the Parade and bringing people back in with the shows** by inspiring further engagement with the Back to Ours brand.

Just under half of people at the 2022 Christmas Card Parade hadn't been to the 2021 Parade. 30% hadn't been to any Back to Ours events before and represented a sizable new audience gained at these events, compared to just 9% of Half Term show attendees. 62% of Half Term attendees had been to a previous Back to Ours pantomime, and 36% had been to a National Play Day over the last few years.

Back to Ours have been consistently visible within some communities and this has enabled them to build their audiences. This has supported people's experience on their journey of engagement; for example, someone who has attended the Christmas Parade and then progressing to a ticketed show and/or becoming a volunteer.

In addition, the inclusivity of events, particularly the Half Term shows, is raved about by parents who feel welcomed and included, with accessibility inspiring further engagement not only with Back to Ours but with the arts in general:

One of my children has sensory needs (auditory) and this small-scale show helped her anxiety and has even left her able to try the cinema later in the week.

Audience member, Half Term shows, via audience survey



3. The Hubs

This section explores the role of the Hubs, how co-creation effects confidence and agency, and the growth of personal and social outcomes for the Hub Members.

The four Hubs are integral to engaging audiences at a hyperlocal level. Members are local people who meet regularly to plan events and activities and socialise at cultural events. The Hubs are key to Back to Ours' programming in three ways:

- In providing a sounding board for ideas
- As promoters and encouragers of other people in their area to attend
- As the voice of the community in co-developing the programme

We find that:

- Digital engagement throughout the Phase allowed Back to Ours to reach new Members who might not have otherwise engaged with in-person activity. This digital engagement reduced in Year 3 in favour of in-person social and events.
- Access allowed by digital engagement continues to enable wider attendance by Hub Members - especially those who can't easily attend in-person and/or as a first step for others.
- Building on previous work, Back to Ours were able to strengthen their relationship with Hub Members through increased one-to-one and in-person engagement - enabling greater personal and social outcomes to be achieved for Hub Members.
- The cross-over of programming and opportunities between the Bransholme Chat Shop and the Hub Members has resulted in a greater strategic alignment of the Back to Ours offer for communities with the potential for wider roll out.
- Hub Members:
 - See themselves as valued and listened to by the Back to Ours Team.
 - Feel strong ownership of the programme, particularly where they co-designed and delivered events in their own neighbourhoods (e.g., Sharrabang, Christmas Card Parade) or had the opportunity to directly select and programme professional theatre (from go-sees members attended and identified at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival as something for their communities).
 - Have experienced different types of art and attended arts events they wouldn't previously identify as 'being for them' both as a Hub member and independently.
 - Think being involved with Back to Ours has made a big difference to their confidence levels and wellbeing.
 - Have a strong desire to make improvements in their community and feel particularly eager to expand the Back to Ours programme to new areas.
 - Identify an increase in the number and diversity of Hub Members as a key element of this growth.
 - Identify a need for the type of services and welcoming community space the Bransholme Chat Shop at The Living Room provides in more areas of Hull.

I now have a much more open mind to trying new things; I would previously have been wary to get involved, but now I have more of a 'why not' sort of attitude.

Hub Member, via Hub Member survey 2021

3.1. The Hubs in 2022

Building on four years of engagement

The final year of this phase of activity has seen the Team continue to adapt and respond to the needs of their Hub Members. The Hub network undergoes a continuous process of iterative development overseen by the core Hub Members and the Engagement Co-ordinator. In 2020, lockdown increased the value of Hub Members to Back to Ours and of Back to Ours to the Hub Members. This mutually beneficial relationship enhanced the quality of community engagement in programming, particularly during a time of digital skills development and digital programming that led to reaching new audiences. 2021 was a year of change and transition for many of the Hub Members. They shifted from only being able to attend the Right on Your Sofa online programme, to attending and volunteering at live events again, due to the lifting of Covid restrictions in July 2021. Attending live shows and events was always the bedrock of the relationship between Back to Ours and the Hub Members. 2022 was a year that realised the culmination of the different ways the Hub Members and Back to Ours had adapted and worked together to bring authentic and locally relevant cultural programming to the residents of Hull.

Established in 2019, the Hubs are an integral part of how Back to Ours reaches and engages audiences at a hyperlocal level³⁷. The Back to Ours Hubs network currently operates across four geographical areas of Hull. The Hub areas include the following wards³⁸:

- 1) North Hull Hub (includes the 3 wards of Orchard Park, University and Beverley & Newland)
- 2) East Hull Hub (includes the 6 wards of Sutton, Ings, Longhill & Bilton, Holderness, Southcoates and Marfleet)
- 3) Bransholme Hub (includes the 3 wards of North Carr, Kingswood and West Carr)
- 4) Derringham Hub (1 ward)

The North Hull, East Hull and Bransholme areas of the city contain many of Hull's ten most deprived wards. These include Orchard Park, Marfleet, Southcoates, Longhill, North Carr and West Carr.³⁹

The four Hubs meet regularly to plan events and activities, and Members socialise together at Back to Ours and other cultural events. Over the years they have gained new skills and experiences.

Collectively, the Hubs have around 70 Members, with 20-30 being particularly active in 2022 because of the increased number of in-person events. People who join the Hubs come from different backgrounds, they have different life experiences, and they are not the "usual art crowd". Invariably they live and work in the areas of Hull that they represent as Hub Members.

The Hubs are a core part of the Back to Ours approach, Louise Yates explains the intention and value as follows:

I look at the Hub Member journey very much like the audience member journey: for me it's linear and full of experiences. I don't see the journey as having stages but I can see how useful it is to look at it in that way. The journey will explore arts and culture in lots of different forms and in lots of different places. This is what our brand is built on, 'a mix of ingredients' that bring the familiar with unfamiliar together. This could be a familiar act in an unfamiliar place or vice versa. This past year Hub Members have focused on Sharrabang and Christmas Parade, the programme element of these 2 events is starting to feel very familiar to Hub Members, this can change and be more reflective of the rest of the programme. The Big Top was the opposite, the acts were all very unfamiliar.

³⁷ For Back to Ours own description of the role of Hubs and Hub Members, see <https://www.backtoours.co.uk/about/hub-Members%e2%80%8b/>

³⁸ <https://maps.hull.gov.uk/myhull.aspx> file path is my hull/my maps/council and democracy/area committees [accessed on 3/3/21]

³⁹ Hull is currently 4th in the English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019. For further information, the demographic and statistical breakdown of the Hull wards can be found within the Kingston upon Hull Data Observatory website http://109.228.11.121/IAS_Live/ [accessed on 3/3/21]

There's always new audiences to engage but for me Back to Ours isn't about engagement being done once someone's super engaged, I want audiences and Hub Members to enjoy a mixed programme and be open to anything.

A total of seven Hub Members were interviewed with additional Members consulted during their Gather meeting in Autumn 2022. All indicated their appreciation of the unique opportunities offered by Back to Ours. They were passionate about the importance of the events and activities they deliver for their communities.

- 2022 has continued to be a year of change and transition for many of the Hub Members. New Members who joined during pandemic lockdowns were shaping and planning activity for the first time, whilst others needed to be reconnected with.
- Hub participation is on the understanding that you can dip in and out to suit your own capacity to get involved without any pressure to engage. This understanding remains at the core of recruitment to the Hubs. Thus, it results in variations in the numbers of Members actively engaged at any one time.
- Attending live shows and events is the bedrock of the relationship between Back to Ours and the Hub Members. This year saw the return of Go Sees⁴⁰ nationally, alongside regular socials and planning meetings. Hub Members attended 'All About Us' as part of Unboxed in Paisley⁴¹ in February, a learning exchange with LeftCoast CPP in Blackpool and a visit to Edinburgh Fringe.
- 2022 was the second year in post for the Engagement Coordinator Laura Cox. Having one-to-ones with Hub Members has been crucial for her in several ways:
 - Maintaining the trust of Hub Members
 - Identifying participation levels
 - Ensuring Members feel respected as individuals and valued for their time and opinions.
 - These conversations have allowed Laura to supporting and nurturing the Hub Members and their skills and interests.

3.2. The impact on Hub Members

Developing creative confidence and involvement in programming

Two key events and a project commission were driven and influenced by the Hub Members. The Sharrabang in July and the Christmas Card Parade in December created new opportunities for the Hub Members to develop their creative confidence and involvement in programming new, community-focused events. See the case studies [below](#) for more about both projects.

These projects represent very tangible ways for members to become involved. However, we need to recognise that each Member has differing levels of confidence and experience. In thinking about this, we suggest a "ladder of engagement" or rather the journey of engagement that identifies steps in the Hub Members' engagement and the different mechanisms in which they contribute to wider programming.

3.2.1. The journey of engagement

The three main reasons people join the Hubs:

⁴⁰ Hub Members attended the following events to increase their cultural confidence and knowledge and experience of different artforms; in 2022 they attended Edinburgh International Festival, LeftCoast CPP in Blackpool, 'About Us' as part of Unboxed in Paisley, The Awakening, Redcoat and Comfort Chronicles, Backbone, The Queen's Knickers, Pride in Hull Parade and Freedom Festival.

⁴¹ 'About Us' as part of Unboxed in Paisley was a free open-air event exploring 13.8 billion years of history. This event was a touring event due to be presented in Hull. Attendance at this event created advocacy locally to encourage interest and attendance upon its arrival. Unboxed was a free UK wide programme of events and activities exploring the possibilities of the future with cross sector collaborations between culture, science, and technology. <https://unboxed2022.uk/about-us-opens-in-paisley>

- Community
- Friendship
- Creativity and culture

The Hubs have served their Members and their communities as safe, welcoming and supportive spaces that enable people to commit and engage at their own pace. Through organising non-threatening cultural experiences across their communities, the Hubs fulfil social and emotional outcomes for Hub Members, whilst developing their skills and creative confidence levels.

Brought me out of me shell a lot more; I'm a quiet person, I'm not that active unless I have to be. I think it's bought out more of my knowledge of theatre and variety. I've gone into more how to put a production together, marketing and business side as well now.

Hub Member interview 2022

There is a clear journey of engagement that enables Hub Members to dip in and out as their life or interests alter; there are no expectations of participation. The Back to Ours welcome enables Members to become more actively engaged in shaping Back to Ours' offer as and when they feel able and willing to.

Hub member journey of engagement

Stage 1: Being welcomed and made to feel important

In the relaxed atmosphere of a Back to Ours event, people chat with a Hub Member or member of the Team, seemingly in passing. As part of this chat, they are informally invited to get involved in the Hubs and find out more.

Our Producer helped a Mum who had brought tickets for the wrong performance at October half term. Her tickets were switched with no fuss and Ellie was able to meet the Mum at the show who was grateful for the personal approach and problem solving. She was very enthusiastic about Back to Ours and so it was suggested that she might want to become a Hub Member. More on this next time!

Back to Ours, via Arts Council England quarterly return

We were at a panto, a lady spoke to us and asked us questions, asked how often we attend – we said we come to nearly all of them and [she] said would you like to be a Hub Member.

Hub Member interview 2022

Stage 2: Confidence building

Attending a (Hub) meeting can be daunting, especially sharing your opinions in front of new people, never mind getting involved in planning activities or an event. So, this step includes:

- Confidence building around trying new cultural experiences
- Making someone feel safe and able to publicly share opinions on their experiences
- Developing social skills and the confidence to meet new people or make new friends
- Knowing people's strengths and personal challenges to allow them to thrive and flourish

I think when I first signed up, [we] went into lockdown really quickly so some of the online things [Back to Ours] did really helped me...being locked in wasn't nice, and they gave us loads of things to do and [we had] other people to talk to. My daughter absolutely loved it and doing the things as well and [it gave] us something to do as a family.

Hub Member interview 2022

I've tried to get involved in things and it's not my cup of tea. The train at Christmas was asking for people to go to rehearsal and that; went but didn't feel comfortable, not one to push me self forward, I'm more in the background and get involved that way.

Hub Member interview 2023

Stage 3: Shaping and influencing

Back to Ours has different mechanisms for Hub Members to influence and shape decision-making – from sharing opinions on performer promos, attending Go Sees or sharing their knowledge and opinions.

For example, the Christmas Card Parade was established after a Hub Member thought it would be wonderful if people in Hull could be invited to step inside a Christmas card. They wanted to create a warm, cosy feeling and enable escapism. The conversation took place during lockdown and focussed on giving something lovely back to the people ~~you~~.

Laura will call and say, 'Show this to your daughter, ask her what she thinks,' ...to ask her opinion is so big for a 16-year-old, and she'll say if her and her friends will like something.

Hub Member interview 2022

Lou listens to what people say. I told her about a theatre group doing Calendar Girls and she said she'll go and see it. Some ideas aren't realistic, and they'll always be honest. I feel really listened to.

Hub Member interview 2022

Stage 4: Co-designing and leading

Stepping up and saying 'I'll help do this' or 'I can organise this' can feel like a big ask. Co-designing and leading isn't just about making decisions on booking performers. Having Hub commissions and self-organised events enables Members to:

- Lead a project from start to finish, co-designing what it should be and setting briefs
- Shortlisting and choosing artists to deliver their agenda
- Identify how it should be delivered
- Being the lead on wrap-around community-driven events. For example, Sharrabang created an opportunity for Hub Members to programme their own community events as part of a supporting community offer to the main event. The scale of each of these offers differed based on the capacity, confidence and local support in each community.

Would be great to make Sharrabang longer than it was; that's hard as they have so many locations to get to. [In] our neighbourhood we want to do something else with it, to go along side. Last time we did a picnic and had a Zumba instructor and did a free demo; people in the neighbourhood could bring out a small business, someone from kids' football coaching on the estate, get all those sorts of people around.

A couple of the kids were gonna do a lemonade stand but it didn't happen; a sweet shop came out, [a] football coach, something to keep us all out for a bit longer. It would be nice to keep it going for the afternoon.

Hub Member interview 2022

This journey of engagement for Hub Members reflects an organic, authentic approach to supporting people at whatever stage they are at. Hub Members' commitment to their communities has seen one become a youth worker, another joined a community group board and another start employment with Back To Ours.

3.2.2. Extending the journey

This journey could be extended to include young audiences and how they organically influence programming. Children and teenagers are always welcomed at Hub events, with involvement making them Junior Hub Members. There are currently three Hub Members that fall within the 16-20 age bracket within the Derringham and East Hull Hub groups. Developing a specific youth Hub offer would broaden the journey of engagement as the youth Hub would feed into the existing Hubs. It would also increase the range of voices in programming decisions to enable it to be even more representative. Using this journey could be one way to map the growth of and change in Hub Members as they become more active and confident, documenting the impact being a Hub Member has made to their lives.

My teenage daughter is a junior Hub Member – I like that because when we started, she was 13 but now she’s 16 I see less of her, and I pin her down for Back to Ours and it’s something we do as a family. She does media at college, like she volunteers, is at the shows; her confidence has grown massively as well.

I think they would probably all have joined by default like my daughter did, but there is a whole bank of young people we’re not touching on, so her voice is welcomed.

Hub Member interview 2022

The 16–20-year-olds don’t get involved. Last year I mentioned the possibility of work experience and Lou’s said she’d look into it. I work at the college and the media students don’t know about it. Be lovely if we got that connection between the college and Back to Ours.

Hub Member interview 2022

Whilst we recognise that young people aren’t a target audience for Back to Ours, a lack of provision and opportunity being presented to this age group in the communities Back to Ours are working with creates a gap in their cultural confidence and engagement journeys. The difference that could be made by filling this gap and creating a pool of actively engaged citizens from an earlier age would help to build a more diverse and intersectional cultural workforce in Hull.

3.2.3. Hub Members embody the CPP action learning approach

Different Hub Members will undertake different opportunities as they arise. In June 2022, a subgroup of Members led an artist commission to generate visual art that could be exhibited in their estates during events. This commission needed to engage local people in the process and celebrate the neighbourhood. Back to Ours supported the Hub Members in their decision-making process and highlighted challenges with the proposal they selected.

Enabling Hub Members - to feel that their opinion is valued, to develop their knowledge of art forms and to commission - also means supporting the process regardless of timeframe and the Team’s opinions. Identifying learning and reflecting with the Hub Members and the artists involved in any project is part of the process. It provides the opportunity to apply that learning on another commission and develops Members’ skills. Back to Ours actively supports Hub Members’ decisions, even when they go against the Team’s views; this demonstrates how much the Hubs lead in decision making and programming.

The Sharrabang and Christmas Card Parade are two series of events that travel through different areas. These two events are both bus driven spectacles of performers to entice people to attend and engage with static sites for Hub Member curated activity and performances to take place. These enable Back to Ours to reach new audiences and provide an entry point for community members to connect with each other and become more willing to attend and engage with other paid for Back to Ours programming. As two core events for Back to Ours programming, please see the individual case studies [below](#) to find out more.

These core programming events and opportunities alongside programming touring shows into community venues create consistent ways for Back to Ours to be visible to their communities and have an offer that Hub Members can generate ownership and belonging over. Having events that can be flexible and create

opportunities for growth and staggered roll out into new areas of Hull has become a core feature of how Back to Ours works.

The challenge with having limited opportunities of direct commissioning means that those that have reached the stage four of our journey of engagement create space for the less engaged. They develop and take up opportunities and continue on their engagement journeys. The desire to grow the skills within the wider Hub membership means the Team are continually developing and upskilling Hub Members and don't have enough development opportunities for those Members to continue to apply their learning. In those instances, the Team have observed that those once actively engaged focus upon their own cultural engagement journeys, exploring, attending and participating in new creative experiences. Taking the time to invest in themselves means that they can bring more to offer in their role as a Hub Member as they develop their knowledge and experience of more art forms.

Hub Members actively need a framework and scaffold to be leading within their communities. Back to Ours have the ingredients to develop a more formal progression offer for Hub Members in which peer learning can take place and Members can transition to lower levels of Back to Ours support and become more autonomous community groups leading on activity locally.

3.2.4. Outcomes of Hub engagement – nurturing creative confidence

The increased creative confidence and experience of the Hub Members as they become more engaged and active in their roles has highlighted a desire for more diversity in the programming. Their creative confidence and role in shaping activities for their communities also means that they are aware of their own personal taste versus what might be of interest to the community.

Others saw the Bo-Peep and I went to different shows, but the crowd enjoyed that and brought it back to Hull. It's good to think 'would this work'; lots of acts I loved but wouldn't work in Hull like 'Tiger Lilies' – it's too adult, punky, like steam punk type dress with a lot of rich language. It's up my street cause its odd but don't think it would go down well here; they'd say, 'what the hell is this?' Others that saw it didn't like it. We've done things where we've had mixed feelings. Colourful language is more aimed at adult audiences than families. Gotta be careful on some of the estates; kids draw the adults in, we've had secret gigs that are for adults but if you just have adult-themed events on these estates would you get the initial interest to attend?

Kids have a more open mind and don't expect too much. Adults are harder to get there – they think 'nah, I'd rather watch the football on the telly'. To get an adult audience there is something like a secret gig - the mystery of it; and it involves alcohol, having a drink [means it] is easier to get them out of a chair. They may like it when they see it, but it's getting them there. It's a hard task to get them off the sofa - you can do it with a comedy act, but there are more pubs and clubs who are already doing that - do we want to compete in that market?!

I'd love to put something on for the adults, but there are lots of comedy stuff not well attended anyway...price is an issue – if we're gonna have a comedy act can we afford it? If its someone decent, you gotta pay and what price are people willing and able to?

Hub Member interview 2023

I like me music events...so we've not done a lot music-wise for a while and it's probably down to funds. I loved [the] Humber Street Sesh; that's probably something the adults would like a bit more.

Hub Member interview 2023

As Back to Ours nurtures more culturally ambitious audiences and supports Members to develop producing skills and to take on greater leadership roles, the Team need to consider at what point they transfer greater ownership of event organisation in that community to those members.

The Back to Ours brand vision is about 'bringing things together' in their event programming and is centred around the engagement and development of new audiences in Hull communities. Understanding when and identifying how a community has been successfully galvanised and needs support to transition and engage with new cultural offers would free the capacity of the Team to continue their successful delivery model in new areas of Hull.

Understanding and documenting the ingredients of those recipes and how they get tweaked with each year of being embedded and bringing culture to communities is important to document. This would help the Team remain audience focussed by identifying when the interests and motivation for attending Back to Ours current programming offers shifts. It could help evidence the difference they have made to the perceptions and value of culture in their communities. Auditing previous event programmes of performers would be a great way to reflect on how the Team programme and begin a process of consciously programming and mapping against audience feedback. It would help the Team to identify different art forms and creative experiences to try in their recipe of things.

Back to Ours should explore what partnerships could be developed and signpost services established with cultural peers to meet the changing needs and appetites of their communities, having successfully achieved their aims of reaching and inspiring new audiences to engage in cultural opportunities.

This shift is an acknowledgement of the Hub Members being at stage 4 on the journey of engagement, with a desire to seek and develop their own programming as a direct result of the experiences they've benefitted from thanks to Back to Ours. This demonstrates how Back to Ours increases the appetite for, and the ambition of, (local) programming. The confidence of Hub Members to share these opinions and think about programming in this way is a testament to the Team in authentically valuing and developing the Hub Members; making them feel listened to and showing them that their opinions are respected. Once Members reach an active level of co-designing and leading on activity their role as an advocate and lobbying Hub Member shifts. Back to Ours are already acknowledging these shifts in Members by creating more paid for opportunities, understanding how this extends to the need for changes in community perceptions of culture to be embedded within future evaluation activity.

I think it's good how it is, but some of the acts are a little bit old fashioned for my liking personally. But everyone comes out to see 'em, so they must be getting something right. I would like some more modern acts, but a lot are like the Dolly and Elvis. We did online stuff, so we did like a 'Britain's Got Talent' and voted for which ones were good, but they were fresher and modern, and they haven't used any.⁴²

Hub Member interview 2022

The Hub Members interviewed were asked to describe Back to Ours in three words (though many had much more to say). The uniqueness and difference of the Back to Ours offer was referenced by all interviewees, who used phrases like 'box of frogs' and 'unexpected'.

Democratising programming by consulting directly with Hub Members gives them greater agency to advocate and promote the work of Back to Ours as they feel accountable and responsible for what is presented to communities.

Nearly half of the Hub interviewees focussed on the 'fun' and 'community spirit', and a third highlighted the 'amazing' and 'professional' quality of programming. Singular descriptions all reflected the roots of the Back to Ours model with 'cheesy', 'pick and mix', 'inclusive and 'affordable' being vital to the success of their programming. The mix of cultural entertainment that is curated provides a family offer that is accessible for Hub Members to gain confidence in programming.

As Hub Members deepen their level of engagement, by participating in and leading on activity, the range of personal and social outcomes increases. The Hub offer becomes more enriched as new Hub Members grow in confidence. Following the journey of engagement, we see different outcomes emerging at each stage. We have

⁴² Acts referenced by the Hub Member were used for further online event programming as part of 'Right on Your Sofa', these acts haven't yet been included in current in-person programmed events.

aligned the wellbeing outcomes by the NHS '5 ways to wellbeing' against the steps on our journey of engagement to show at what stages the wellbeing outcomes are embedded:⁴³

Stage 1: Being welcomed and made to feel important – connecting with other people creates a sense of belonging and self worth, opportunity to have shared positive experiences, raising self esteem.

Stage 2: Confidence building – setting goals and achieving them, learning new skills and building a sense of purpose which increases connections to others.

Stage 3: Shaping and influencing – by representing their communities, Members are gaining a sense of reward and purpose, and deepening connections to other Hub Members, the Team and their community. This step builds upon acts of kindness.

Stage 4: Co-designing and leading – by spending more time embedded in their communities, volunteering and listening to what others want, Members extend the act of giving to others selflessly. The levels of success for what they achieve collectively, the reflection and celebration of their contributions enable Hub Members to be more present and mindful of the moment.

Hub Members are on an individual journey, and I've seen them start that journey by initially working one to one with us shaping an event for their community and they reach stage 5 before we start to see stage 2 is achieved. Everyone's working at their own pace and their engagement can fluctuate.

Louise Yates, Back to Ours Creative Director

Below we present some of the personal and social outcomes reported for Hub Members in Year 3:

Milestone moments: Through the Hub, local people are able to have "milestone moments" and memories they will cherish. The Go See experiences in 2022 saw one member stay in a hotel for the first time since 1974, and two people leave Hull for the very first time to travel to new cities. The support the Team and Hub Members provide to each other creates the circumstances for this to take place.

Confidence definitely! I work in a primary; there I have a 'Miss' head on. With that badge on I would stand up and say things, but as me I couldn't do that, but now I would. The experiences: I would never have gone to Edinburgh fringe, mix with different people, talk to audience members – with my Back to Ours jacket on, it's another persona when I volunteer.

Hub Member interview 2022

Personal growth: Both the Team and Hub Members highlighted the personal growth they saw in one Hub Member in particular. For this individual the experience had a profound effect:

I think it's helped me improve my confidence in meeting other people; I've got anxiety and PTSD so helped me mental health. Never got involved before, being a part of it and seeing all that's involved – it's more rewarding when you see stuff get put on. ... I think it's just being a part of a big family of all different backgrounds. It's a chance, I suppose, to make a difference in your community and all over Hull.

I think they've helped me find the old me again; I was so shut in, I've always hid it for everyone. With them I let loose!!

Hub Member interview 2022

Recognising the strength in growth: The depth of pride in their city, communities and each other's accomplishments is something celebrated and acknowledged by the Hub Members. The difference Hub

⁴³ 5 ways to well-being <https://www.nhs.uk/mental-health/self-help/guides-tools-and-activities/five-steps-to-mental-wellbeing/>

Members observe in each other reinforces the value they bring not just to programming for the communities of Hull but in their Hub group as well.

She has been on a massive journey; she came on board as she was a friend of a Hub Member so just came along to one thing. At first, she wouldn't speak. We met her online first of all which was probably really good for her – we did Zoom quizzes and she won one when it went to in-person but wouldn't say as she didn't want to speak.

This is something just for her. Now I'll see her and have a conversation with her whereas before she'd sit in the corner. I'm so proud of her now - her friend isn't active anymore, but she is. She's cut those strings and ties; she's all singing and dancing – she's got no-one to hide behind now and she's stepped up into it.

Hub Member interview 2022

Connecting and experiencing together: There is significance in simply having a consistent opportunity to get together, socialise and be connected to the Team.

We went to Paisley for their City of Culture bid and all the people they stood on either side, and they cheered for us, and I was dead embarrassed.

Then I went to Edinburgh and there was this gang of teenagers down the road, and they encouraged us to walk down the middle. This time I did a little twirl - maybe that's because I'm more comfortable in the Hub and the company of people.

Hub Member interview 2022

The experience of coming together to see an art event for the first time continues to be a galvanising experience for Hub Members, and they value it more when they begin to understand the levels of work behind the scenes to bring such events into their communities. When asked about what they get out of Back to Ours, one Hub Member said:

Meeting loads more people and making new friends and trying new things. I went to a poetry afternoon with a friend; the afternoon tea sold it to me, and we had such a nice time. It's monthly and so I've booked again. I already do try stuff but even more now!

Hub Member interview 2022

The family feeling: The majority of Hub Members felt that the best thing about being involved in Back to Ours was the family feeling. This creates a new support structure and system of care for their own personal wellbeing.

I have poor mental health, and this gets me out of the house. I never go anywhere on my own and this makes me more confident to do it.

Hub Member, gathering, 2022

I'm disabled; there aren't that many activities I can get involved with, but this gets me out of the house. It's like family.

Hub Member, gathering, 2022

Recognising their own accomplishments: The action research spirit of Creative People and Places Programmes means learning from activity, implementing changes and sharing that learning. Hub Members were taken on an exchange trip to LeftCoast CPP in Blackpool so that community members could learn more about other CPPs and share their experiences with different communities.

Wellbeing: The wider social outcomes of the Hub Members all aligned with the five steps to wellbeing. The programme for Hub Members creates opportunities for them to connect with new people. By influencing and

co-designing activity, they are giving to others and creating an opportunity for their communities to have positive experiences, increasing their own sense of purpose and reward.

As they continue to volunteer at events and previous Bransholme Chat initiatives such as Chat to Ours calls, they are more active and engaged in community life, learning new skills which all collectively contribute to a sense of purpose, boosting self-confidence. Most importantly the act of engaging in shows and reflecting upon whether they will work for their communities means they are paying attention to the present and thinking beyond themselves.

Creative Communities: In 2021, 93% of Hub Members interviewed were proud to live in Hull, with 50% agreeing strongly and 43% agreeing. This pride in place resonates throughout their commitment to making a difference in their communities. This has seen Hub Members increase their community leadership skills across the Phase and be vocal advocates for the communities they are passionate about. This influences where Back to Ours programme activity. One example of this is Back to Ours responding to a strong request to include Greatfield in the Sharrabang tour by working with the local community to move the tour from one part of East Hull to make sure Greatfield was included in this co-created work:

I come from Greatfield and had family still living there. Back to Ours are trying to get to people from estates where nothing is going on. That appeals to me cause it's the sort of thing I'd [have] loved when I was younger to have happening on my doorstep.

A lot of the shows you'd expect at a holiday resort, tribute acts and comedy acts and cabaret as they seem to go down well. There's not loads of things going on, so when you put something on it's a big event. It's made a difference to their sense of community, and you can see people coming to events and you wouldn't think they'd be interested. It's opening up people and you see them thinking it's not for the privileged, and they don't mind spending a few pounds if it entertains the kids for a couple of hours.

Hub Member interview 2023

The events that Back to Ours co-designs with Hub Members to entice and engage the communities least likely to engage balance professional productions with everyday creativity to present cultural opportunities through the lens of the accessible and traditional working men's club experience. The one-to-one approach in developing relationships, mixed with Go Sees and socials, has enabled the Team to authentically develop events inspired by the conversations they have with Hub Members. These events have been built upon each year, such as the bus tour becoming Sharrabang and the growth of the Christmas Parade.

Back to Ours is inclusive, and challenges perceptions. I love the randomness of the events.

Hub Member survey 2021

'I think my artistic vision is very much built on my experience of growing up in clubs, in the same way any other artistic director is influenced by their background. Beyond the programme it's the sense of belonging, feeling like you're with family and there's going to be some fun to be had.'

Louise Yates, Back to Ours Creative Director

Back to Ours' work with Hub Members throughout the last five years has empowered them to represent the diversity of the talents their communities offer and invite them to be a part of a quality cultural experience making them relevant for everybody.

Our Hub Member in Southcoates went out and organised elements for the static site of the Christmas Parade. She asked the Church to sing Christmas Carols for example. Empowering her to organise the event and bringing together other elements was a real highlight.

Laura Cox, Engagement Co-ordinator Back to Ours

Community agency: Continuing to support personal growth and opportunities for Hub Members remains a key development area for Back to Ours into the future. How you invite more people into nurturing a permanent space for their communities is something the Team are already undertaking. Hub Member Emma Sarjo has been supported and mentored by Jen Halliwell, Bransholme Chat Engagement Co-ordinator, to take up an active role within the team at the Bransholme Chat Shop to support the delivery of services within the space.

We want them to get a glimpse behind the scenes. One of our Chatters, who's a Hub Member, has done brilliantly at chatting. Her main talent is engaging with people. Emma hasn't got any experience working behind the scenes so has a tendency to say yes to everything. I have to say no – legally, practically, financially. We're going to start doing an extra hour or two a week training up in basic I.T. and get her looking at assessments, looking at budgets, so that she has an idea of why you can't say yes to everything. This will help her in the future – she runs a playing out group – she'll be able to transfer those organisation skills.

Bransholme Chat Engagement Co-ordinator

3.2.5. The future of the Hubs

Across this Phase the alignment of values and outcomes between the Hubs and Bransholme Chat has generated an increased programme of social support and creative activities, from the Bransholme Chat calls to isolated and vulnerable residents in lockdowns, to quizzes and artist selection for future programming. This has enhanced a wider understanding between different Hull communities.

I have experienced an increase of friends in my community. My time spent in the Chat Room has enhanced my understanding of North Point whilst providing an opportunity to converse during Covid.

Hub Member survey 2021

The cross-over of Hub Members supporting and accessing Bransholme Chat programming, initiatives and engagement across the Phase has highlighted a desire and need to integrate these two programmes, with a Hub Member desire for roll out of such Chat Shop venues into other communities. This desire for more community infrastructure could create the scaffolding for the retention and deployment of the skilled and engaged Hub Members within the Back to Ours programming offer.

**To have a community space for the Derringham area.
A community centre independent of the Church, school or public house.
Some sort of community centre is lacking in our area.
Community Centre for teenagers.**

Hub Member survey 2021 responses

The logistics and resources for such an undertaking are bigger than the Team at its current capacity. Having delivered Bransholme Chat since 2019, the Team understand what it is required to provide this service. Their work in upskilling a Hub Member at Bransholme Chat is already sowing the seeds of a model of upskilling Hub and community members to run and manage such spaces, once established, to free the Team up to establish a second site.

As Back to Ours moves into a new phase for their organisation, exploring the roll out of more Chat Shops in their communities with the most engaged Hub Member would create a consistent, visible, and creative offer to meet a local need. Supporting local Hub Members to take on more active leadership and paid for roles within a Chat Shop sees the Team testing the viability of this a long-term objective, one that is evolving at a pace that can be achievable and sustainable for the organisation.

As Bransholme Chat at the Living Room serves as both a community space, micro cultural venue and ticket agent for their events, having these in other communities would create an equitable offer across the estates that Hubs are established in whilst rolling out their tried-and-tested engagement approaches in new areas of Hull.

The cost-of-living crisis has seen an increased demand of the Chat Shop and a need for pastoral and social care. Back to Ours is a trusted voice and organisation in communities. This has seen a demand of potential partners wanting to operate services or deliver activities through that space. The potential is for Back to Ours to be a strategic partner of communities, collaborating and presenting other organisations to increase the cultural offer in their areas, as well as social support. This is currently happening organically and in a reactionary way based on approaches and community need. The Team are actively seeking local authority support for the social care of communities in this space.

The shop is incredibly busy; across the year numbers have doubled down to the cost of living crisis. My work has changed from 50/50 with the shop downstairs and support up here to 80/20 upstairs. We're treated like a crisis centre at the minute. Bransholme has been particularly hard hit by petty crime; everything has ramped up. Once people knew had another 3 years - they were able to enjoy it – knew going to be around a lot longer and are willing to invest time.

Now we're using the shop as more of a window to showcase for Back to Ours as well.

Jen Halliwell, Bransholme Chat Engagement Co-Ordinator

Bransholme Chat, as a model rolled out, could become a home for Hub Members to self-organise and grow within their communities as well as being a key community provider for social prescribing within the city. Hub Members' desire for increased Members' and public consultation on programming would be possible through this roll out.

The model presents an opportunity to fulfil community outcomes and diversify income and programming. The Team is mindful and realistic about their capacity, alongside the length and depth of engagement required to establish more sites. The current mentoring taking place could be explored with the local college for apprenticeship potential, if this makes sense and is fundable for the community members identified. This would help support some of the costs to develop basic skills formally and contribute to wages.

Approximately 30% of signed-up Hub Members are active collaborators. This means that the remaining 70% are a mix of those who were previously active but have stepped aside for newer members to take up opportunities, and those that are happy to stay at the early stages in the journey. The Team have invested time and energy to nurture and appropriately support their Hub Member volunteers across the last five years, mapping programming and delivery opportunities to create a 360 degree offer of development and progression that could increase community capacity to deliver cultural activity.

Back to Ours would require more resources to enable this to grow long term or a scaffolding framework and investment by seasoned Hub Members to lead on its growth in their areas and fully realise the step four potential in the journey of engagement.



4. Developing artists to deliver to Back to Ours' audiences

In this section, we examine how Back to Ours works with local and national artists to support engagement with local communities and maintain the artistic quality of that work.

Across this Phase, the Team have continued to work with local, national and international artists to support them to work more effectively with Hull's communities. Through this approach, communities across Hull have more opportunities to engage in a wider range of arts and culture which resonates with them.

We find that:

- Across the phase, Back to Ours has remained a positive partner for artists from Hull and beyond – consistent in their approach to working with those artists and cultural partners.
- Communities are safeguarded to ensure they have the most positive cultural experiences – on their terms – in order to increase their cultural agency and attendance.
- The success across the whole Phase of Bransholme Chat – which reaches directly into communities – has positioned Back to Ours as a “connector” that other cultural organisations want to collaborate with.
- Across the whole Phase, taking a culturally democratic approach to commissioning and testing artists – *with* communities *for* communities – ensures the delivery of an offer local people want to engage with.
- Empowering Hub Members to commission, curate and experience the programmed artists and their work allows those artists to provide positive experiences for the communities of Hull. This remains consistent across the Phase.
- The Team predominantly relied upon trusted artists to realise their core programming. This was in a year when audiences were both eager to return to live events but also anxious about crowds and re-engaging in pre-pandemic activities.
- Back to Ours supported new and riskier artist-led work that aligned with their principles. This was achieved through commissions such as Comfort Chronicles and Hit Parade, and the Hub Members' participation in these events.
- By continuing to champion trusted local artists, the Team can feel confident that their audiences' needs are met whilst also helping to develop artists' skills in co-designing participatory experiences for Hull's communities.
- Getting national and international artists to work with local communities ensures those communities have increased high-quality cultural opportunities and confidence in engaging with those opportunities.
- Through partnership with Back to Ours, artists have:
 - Created and represented new artwork relevant to the communities of Hull.
 - Developed their practice in reaching new audiences.
 - Presented their work in new community settings and thus to a wider audience.

Back to Ours have a real feel for a community. They aren't in and out. They let the community know they are there. Without them Hull would be a different place. They've bought ideas, events and make it for people to engage with and then they slip in the fine art or the harder things to engage and make it more normal. Next time people attend they expect something odd. They have given people a way into art and the volunteers are people they pick up along the way.

Back to Ours artist interview

4.1. Developing and supporting artists' practice

Programming a mix of digital and in-person opportunities for consistent employment.

Across this Phase, Back to Ours has worked with 324 artists from Hull and beyond – 58% from Hull, 37% from elsewhere in the UK and 5% from outside the UK.

When the national lockdown came into effect in 2020, the negative impacts on freelance artists were severe and immediate, with one report estimating that 96% of freelancers had a reduction in income because of Covid 19⁴⁴. The artists⁴⁵ interviewed that year for the evaluation reported similar experiences, finding that the lockdown had impacted on their ability to perform live as all arts venues, clubs and public spaces were shut down from the 20 March 2020 and a full national lockdown was introduced from the 23 March 2020.

The relationship between Back to Ours and artists is constantly changing and developing, and this was particularly the case in 2021 as Back to Ours transitioned from an online programme (Right on Your Sofa) to an 'in real life' programme (Right on Your Doorstep).

The start of 2022 remained in lockdown; however, the year saw the country open-up fully to live events local and national again. This meant in some instances artists were overbooked, and for others the opportunity to work more locally was welcomed, due to the impact and changes the pandemic had made to their lives.

The initial show started as a one man show with Back to Ours volunteers involved – they all dressed up in circus gear; I did workshops with them to work up what characters they'd be, and they did the pre-performance engagement stuff. It was a one-off thing. From my perspective it wasn't going to go on and do loads of things. I struggle with going and re-doing things I've already done. When they bought it back during the pandemic, I was extremely relieved – pandemic hit all performers really hard. Was good to have work and work I could slip into quite easily.

Artist interview 2023

The appetite for activities from Back to Ours communities had increased and ensuring their continued trust meant continuing to programme a mix of regular Back to Ours artists and new faces.

All artists involved in the delivery of the 2022 programme were invited to complete an annual artists' online survey (with two responses). An additional three artists were interviewed where Back to Ours were seeking to reach new audiences on projects. A high proportion of Back to Ours commissioned artists are delivering tested sets and established routines that have been carefully selected in consultation with the Hub Members.

All of the artists commissioned already had an established creative practice mostly in performing arts, such as music, circus, dance, performance poetry, and theatre, and are well known within Hull and outside of the city. Despite having established professional practices and experiences, this isn't always aligned with experience in working with communities in the spaces they feel most comfortable, whether it's on the street, on a bus, in a playing field or in a care home.

⁴⁴ Covid Impact Study, April 2020, a-n (Artists Information Company) and BOP Consulting, <https://www.a-n.co.uk/research/covid-19-impact-survey/> - sample of 4,000 freelance artists indicating a reduction in income already by March 2020.

⁴⁵ For this report we interviewed 14 freelance artists who had been part of the *Right on Your Sofa* online programme during 2020. Using semi-structured interviews via Zoom or phone we conducted 16 interviews across 3 periods, 2 of the 14 interviewees were interviewed twice as a consistency comparator. All were asked to reflect on their experiences of working with Back to Ours during 2020.

4.2. Supporting and developing artists' engagement with communities

Commissioning and funding new ways to co-create and deliver inclusive performance work.

Back to Ours has minimised the risks to their reputation within communities and has supported artists in developing their own practice to develop new work and skills.

This year Back to Ours regulars Tamar and Jo, who have performed at Play Days and Shindig activities, were developing a new approach to inclusive community-driven dance work. Whilst testing and developing this approach through the funding they secured, they had identified an issue and their relationship with Back to Ours meant they were able to bring them in as a partner to deliver the community performance pilot 'Hit Parade'. As a more expensive ticketed event than the standard Back to Ours production, working in this way enables the artists to create without operating at a loss and without compromising the Back to Ours approach.

Holly Gibbs worked with Back to Ours to develop the Comfort Chronicles, a contemporary piece of live theatre with spoken word, dance and illustration. The piece looks at the chats you have in the kitchen at home with your mam, with a mixture of good tunes thrown in. This piece also combined both a professional and participant cast to create a new piece of theatre.

The mixing of professionals and participants worked very well within the context of the show, as it made the subjects more personal, and this translated to the audience creating an authentic performance. It also led me to create new types of choreography in order to show case everyone's talents.

Artist survey 2022

Community performers have been included by Back to Ours in the Christmas Parade. As some Hub Members have expressed a desire for increased performance opportunities and with the potential engagement for wider community participation, developing more cross-art form shows would continue to challenge and push their already engaged communities to deepen their engagement from audience member to participation.

Tickets for this performance were 'pay what you like'. This is a model that Back to Ours hasn't implemented to date, as audience feedback at their own activity has highlighted that they want to know the price and that it's affordable, with current pricing levels fixed at £3 for family shows, £5 for circus and £7.50 for bands. The 'pay what you feel' model could be implemented with these suggested pricing levels with the nudge to give more if you can and pay less if you can't afford to. The change from CPP to National Portfolio Organisation means that Back to Ours could engage more affluent communities, which could offset and support the ticketing costs in more deprived areas of the city. As the cost-of-living crisis continues to squeeze middle income earners on top of those already deprived communities, this model could be something to test and explore further.

As a new freelance artist, the support the Team has provided has enabled Holly to feel more confident and ambitious in achieving her desire to increase and improve the dance scene in Hull. The philosophy and approach of Back to Ours, as well as the value they place on artists time and development enables artists to in turn be altruistic in working with communities independently.

One of the refugees I met on the project has set up a basketball team and has asked me to do something for them. I'm a sucker for a nice face / something for nowt – it's important to give back after Back to Ours have paid me properly to do the first job.

Artist interview 2022

In order to bring professional shows to communities least likely to engage, Back to Ours creates and converts community spaces into venues, from the erection of a big top to performing in a shop front or Church hall. The professional management and conversion of these spaces aids in the experience of artists to deliver to professional standards but also for audiences to feel like they are having a quality artistic experience.

This being our fourth project with Back to Ours, we have seen a confidence in the audience in terms of engaging with the performance whether that be shouting out or clapping. All shows had sold out and lots of smiling faces and great comments during photos with the cast after the show. The big top experience was amazing for the audience. It was very professional.

Artist survey 2022

This remains a consistent factor of the support and development Back to Ours provide to local artists. The logistical and event planning skills are assets they could capitalise on in the city in support of other organisations and artists' own productions. The biggest impact the Team make in supporting artists to work with their communities is a change in mindset to position audience perspective within artists' own vision when creating work to be seen and experienced by local communities.

They make me think about things from different angles. I'm a different artist now than I was before I worked with them. Seeing the scale of production that they achieve within the limitations that they have themselves, making sure they tick all the boxes. They have a good balance between knowing where to tick and where to be flexible and roll with whatever chaos comes at them.

I've learned a lot from that. Not only about limitations and scale of things and practicalities and event management and learning that side of stuff but the value of audience perspective. It's very easy to be like 'this is my vision this is how I want to do it' and that's great, but if it doesn't tick the box for an audience, it's worthless. I was that person; I had all these ideas but didn't consider what value it brings to an audience – Back to Ours have made me think about audience value – what will they get from it? Is it gonna be educational? what will they learn? how will it change the effect of the production?

Artist survey 2023

4.3. How has the quality of work been maintained?

Back to Ours take a strategic and planned approach when commissioning artists and curating experiences. This approach remains audience focussed.

The principles of this approach are based upon the following questions:

- Is the work of quality?
- Is it ambitious?
- Will it excite people?
- Is it risky?
- Does it develop existing audiences?
- Can people resonate with the work?
- Why programme this work?
- Will people want more?
- Can the work be delivered to a high standard?
- Does it present any barriers? If so, how can they be overcome?
- Is this something new for people?

The quality of the programme overall is ensured through a balance, making sure audiences feel welcome and have a fun experience whilst experiencing something new amongst the familiar.

This year new performers such as musicians and comedians were included alongside seasoned artists and entertainers on the Sharrabang, Play Days and Shindig events.

This limits the risks taken in programming if they aren't able to engage and connect with communities. This approach has enabled the Team to identify artists for development and their strengths and weaknesses.

It helps me improve and hone my skills in high quality engagement with people. As it's this sort of walk about it engagement, it's not a fixed performance and you have to find people.

Learning when and how to strike up a miniature sort of performance - it's a skill in knowing when people are actually going to be engaged or when people really don't get what you're doing, want to be avoided or when people will be very pleased. Working with Back to Ours in these different settings has helped me develop this further for my new character and offer.

Artist interview 2023

The curation of artists at new events has seen them increase their repertoire in order to meet the theme and planning of the event by the Hub Members. It's also highlighted the challenges of different performance types in the extremes of inclement weather experienced across 2022 from the heat to the cold. These sets of principles help the Team identify artist combinations and the missing ingredients to elevate a project.

Back to Ours made this a bigger thing. They turned the bus stops into portals that could take you anywhere. They weren't just public murals. Lou brings the imagination.

Artist interview 2022

Back to Ours continue to ensure they deliver a high-quality experience for audiences, by curating shows direct from Edinburgh Fringe festival with the decision making of Hub Members. This ensures local voice determines the direction of programming.

Programming fun, family-orientated activity ensures that work is not divisive within their communities. The quality of the presentation and production of work is maintained at the same professional quality as any touring company visiting Hull would require of a city centre venue. These standards see the Team work closely with the technical team to ensure no compromises are made, even at outdoor experiences such as the Big Top for the Shindig. Matching the right artist for the intention of the event enables quality to be maintained.

So lucky to being given the opportunity and power have an audience outdoors and to test, test, test. This is one of the first few times I've taken the one-man band into more like a sort of mini festival environment where it seemed to fit the surroundings, so to speak.

Artist interview 2023

The artists interviewed and surveyed did not report anything that didn't work, praised the continual stretch to their creative practice by working with Back to Ours and highlighted how programming remains to be a bold choice for participants.

The Team always feels balanced in having people with the creative mind to think outside the box with people that have the practical mind to say, 'that's amazing, but how can we actually do that as it's not simple'.

One thing they do well is thinking about the grand scheme of the project and how they can make it the grandest project that will grab the attention of the most people whilst doing it in the limitations of space, budget and time. They do it very, very well.

My experience of the Back to Ours Team is that they have a way of doing things. I've had many disagreements with the Team and sometimes I'm proven right and other times I've been proven wrong. What they always have is the end goal in sight. To make it as WOWEE as possible. They push the boundaries of what is capable, and I have a lot of respect for that. We have a lot of 'yes people' in the arts and they manage expectation and will tell people when something isn't feasible.

Artist interview 2023

All artists interviewed had an extremely positive view of working with Back to Ours and what they offer to Hull. The Team provided a challenge to artists to make and deliver professional work that can be delivered in unusual and community-based settings. This means having difficult conversations and managing expectations whilst delivering an inspiring and exciting experience for audiences. Having freelance artists universally understand

the vision and mission of the company is a testament to how their principle driven practice is embedded in how they develop their programme.

4.3.1. The quality of the welcome

Making communities feel safe with established artists.

The quality of welcome has always been a crucial part of how they connect with communities whilst also often being instinctual and based upon local knowledge and relationships building. It is extended from the Chat Shop to engagement sessions to big performances.

The Team have identified a key component to reaching new audiences through a quality of welcome and this is through the inclusion of Hub Members in directly engaging and nurturing audiences through that welcome. The increased confidence of the Hub Members through repeated volunteering at performances, their support of the chat calls and through their own leading of events has seen them take on a greater engagement role in support of the Team. This has enabled more back-office members of the Team to feel supported when developing these skills and it enables less confident artists and performers to focus on their artform over the connection with communities.

That Hub Member was honestly a Godsend on this project; she can talk to anyone. Having her was a huge weight off my shoulders, and she developed the relationship which saved the final bus stop photo exhibition. I'm gonna have her be a chatter on everything we do!

Bus Stop Portal project sheet

Whilst working with Back to Ours, these artists have created artworks within new contexts for their practice, or presented their work in new community settings, and have been able to reach new audiences. Back to Ours places audience experience at the heart of their decision making; supporting artists to do the same continues to be a driving force of those relationships.

4.3.2. Pushing boundaries

Cross collaboration and issue-led activity

The diversity of the artists and artforms supported this year, as Back to Ours continued to take managed risks, has highlighted a need and desire for more cross collaboration between different artists and artists with third sector support agencies and organisations.

The Black Kings Upon Hull documentary series started in 2020 and has continued with new episodes throughout the Phase. It takes an honest look at what it's like growing up Mixed Race and Black on two different council estates in Hull, discussing music, education, football, and the role of the police. Developing a programming strand for this type of commission and exploring issues through the stories and representation of marginalised communities in Hull would strengthen and diversify the unique in-house content and production potential.

I think one of the big things that Back to Ours do is provide is real cultural enrichment and education and horizon-expanding work, to people that can't afford that stuff. Their target audience is the people that can't afford to go out and see the theatrical productions - all these amazing things that are going on and unfortunately those are the people that really need it the most. Best project I've ever worked on was the 'Back to Bransholme project' – it incorporated so much amazing artistic diversity and took it to a place that before Back to Ours was one of the most artistically and culturally deprived places in the region, and it was amazing.

Artist interview 2023

The success of artists and activity that connects participants and audiences to the stories of the people in their communities was a device also used on the Bus Stop Portals project and could become a feature of their work. It could challenge local artists to create site-specific collaborative work to reflect local people and places.

Back to Ours are a trusted resource by communities; this puts them in a unique position to begin producing more challenging work alongside their fun and enjoyment led productions. The balance between the two is something the artists they work with believe they are more than capable of achieving.

I'm an ally to everyone who isn't a cis white male and all the privilege that comes with me, and I think Back to Ours are trying their best to educate and expand the horizons of people who are not as culturally and sub-culturally aware as I am. They do a good job but would love to see more of it – more educating people on trans issues and LGBTQIA+ issues and racial diversity – they do a hell of a lot, especially on racial diversity. I would like to see more of it and it's hard to gauge; I'm very aware people get stuck in their ways. Hull was the main place in Britain that voted for Brexit. People just don't know any better.

Loved to see more of the more delicate issues pushed out there - if anyone could find a way to explain equality and understanding to groups of people who haven't had those experiences with this stuff, and a lot of people in certain communities are very insular and tend to just repeat what's around them. If someone says something racist and bigoted, they see it as normal, and it's an echo chamber. It's good that Back to Ours are going out and pushing these boundaries with the communities that need them the most; they are able to do that delicately – genuinely changing how people perceive stuff.

Artist interview 2023



5. Conclusions and recommendations

In this final section, we present our conclusions about Phase 2, answer the Arts Council England Research Questions and share our recommendations for the future. It is clear that Back to Ours continues to offer a unique, ground-breaking approach to arts and engagement in communities.

5.1. Conclusions

The final year of the Phase has allowed Back to Ours to let the disruptions of Covid 19 settle, enabling them to refine their offer and focus on what works. This has laid a sound foundation for the transition to being an NPO with a clear and unique offer for communities locally, nationally and internationally.

Considering the Arts Council England CPP Research Questions⁴⁶, we find:

Q1: Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?

Back to Ours **continue to reach audiences in communities least likely to engage with the arts**. Year-on-year it is increasingly reaching into those groups most difficult to engage – for example older, more isolated communities and families least likely to engage across the city.

The consistency of this makes us confident the organisation will continue to extend its reach over the long term. Their model of offering free (or low cost) events enhances their reach – especially in the context of the ongoing cost of living crisis.

Q2: To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?

The **work inspires and excites audiences to engage further**. Community members sign up and become more involved in planning and promoting the work. Hub Members are increasingly at the forefront of promoting the work to others and requesting more challenging and unfamiliar work as their confidence rises.

This is testament to **excellent art coupled with excellent engagement** through the strategic programming of work. This mixes the familiar with the unfamiliar, alongside a wraparound approach where every aspect of the programme is considered – from the invitation to the 'welcome' on arrival to the follow-up afterwards. As a result, audiences see and enjoy work they might not have considered attending otherwise.

Returning audiences in Year 3 are a key sign that those who engage with Back to Ours are being encouraged to engage further with the arts. Well-loved events and a varied offer earlier in the Phase left people wanting more and built a strong relationship with audiences. This enables Back to Ours to carry these audiences with them into the new NPO phase.

Back to Ours continues to **ensure the community voice is increasingly strong within their programme**. Drawing on local knowledge and expertise by working with, and through, the Hubs has been particularly successful in programming the big events this year. This is demonstrated by the audience figures and the universally positive responses to the Sharrabang and the Christmas Card Parade.

⁴⁶ ACE Research Questions are: 1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?; 2. To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved? And 3. Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

Q3: Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

Back to Ours know **what works**. Over the last five years they have developed a clear model with a set of core 'ingredients' – enabling them to make a diverse programme into a trusted brand. This confident core to the programming will allow them to continue to explore new opportunities. In particular, it will allow them to stand alone as a company, rather than a project, and to break down more barriers to the arts and stretch the boundaries of what they can achieve.

5.2. 2023-26 recommendations

As Back to Ours move to being one of the Arts Council England's National Portfolio Organisations, we recommend they keep the strengths of their work and experience as a Creative People and Places project. At the same time, they should develop sustainability approaches needed to continue to deliver excellent work which resonates with the people of Hull (and beyond) in the longer term.

To support this, we recommend they:

1. **Extend their social media presence:** Exploring new social media platforms, such as TikTok, could allow Back to Ours to engage with new audiences in their next phase. This would require more time and investment, although could reap rewards in terms of reach, particularly into younger family audiences.
2. **Explore further high visibility opportunities in the winter months:** To compliment the Christmas Card Parade in December, providing highly visible activities during winter could issue audiences with much needed cultural activities when less is typically on offer, but when people most need it.
3. **Continue to invest in engaging with volunteers:** Back to Ours have already benefitted in their investment in volunteers in terms of the energy and expertise developed in the Hub Members, Chat to Ours and other groups. Further prioritising engagement with the volunteers and developing them into co-ordinating roles will both support individual confidence and opportunity, and also demonstrate to the volunteers how important they are to Back to Ours.
4. **Develop a specific youth Hub offer:** Growing their successful Hub model to include a youth offer would broaden the journey of engagement and the range of voices heard in programming decisions – making it more representative. As families with younger children are a key audience, this would need to support up to 16s rather than the older youth group but links with schools and other community organisations could – via their children - allow reach into families where English is a second language. Whilst Back To Ours audiences are families and older people, when embedding within communities it is important to consider how to fit into the cultural pathways in which people have access to cultural opportunities from the earliest stages of life to the latest. As a need for a targeted youth cultural offer has been voiced by Members, it presents an opportunity for accessing youth specific funding to deliver such work or to work in partnership with youth organisations or emerging creatives to fill this gap in cultural engagement. We recommend that Back to Ours identify their capacity and desire to broaden their target audiences or be more explicit on who they focus upon and why with communities and Hub Members.
5. **Look for funding to develop more Chat Shops:** Back to Ours should explore the roll out of more Chat Shops in communities where the need for such a resource is high. The alignment of Hub and chat activity strategically has created a consistent, visible and creative offer to meet a local need. New Chat Shops would also provide a rolling base and 'front door' for the Team. The team at Bransholme Chat could become the leads for this roll out, training new people to take over in Bransholme and going to develop the model elsewhere. Longer term Chat Shops could become a home for Hub Members to self-organise and grow within their communities, as well as being a key community provider for social prescribing within the city.
6. **Consider scheduling in gaps in delivery:** These would provide the Team with time to reflect and review learning and take stock. Building on strategic thinking and embedding learning, this will provide protected time to highlight key lessons that can be incorporated into future programming. It also reinforces Back to Ours' commitment to learning.

7. **Continue and further develop their action research approach:** Back to Ours has benefitted hugely from the reflective practice and learning arising from the action research and embedded evaluation approach taken in Phases 1 & 2 and also has an extremely effective data gathering approach to live events developed over the period. Although this isn't compulsory for NPO, this should continue as a key ingredient of Back to Ours' success. It could also be enhanced for specific events to further explore particular audiences or reach, for example building on the data collection for Pride in Hull which added in collection on sexuality and gender diversity.

5.3. Potential income generation opportunities

In researching this report, we have identified a number of potential income generation opportunities for Back to Ours to consider. These could be developed as part of the NPO business plan.

- **Exploring the 'pay what you feel' model:** Taking the learning from Comfort Chronicles, and with the move to an NPO, Back to Ours have more freedom around who they deliver to. Therefore, the organisation could engage more affluent communities and use the 'pay what you feel' model. This could offset and support the ticketing costs in more deprived areas of the city.
- **Looking for opportunities to market Back to Ours expertise in a wide range of areas:** Back to Ours could explore whether by using their extensive knowledge, experience and learning, they could help other cultural organisations with events, volunteer and community co-creation and strategic embedding in communities. This would both share good practice and also generate income to allow the development of new work. It would also offer opportunities for growth among Team members, volunteers and Hub Members.
- **Product development and delivery of events:** Using their own unique content, Back to Ours could develop "products" as a way of income generation. For example, creating a book of the High Horse stories which they could sell, or delivering Sharrabang or Christmas Card Parade in other cities – ideally while mentoring local communities to slowly take it on themselves.
- **Maximising funds to deliver meaningful art:** To build on the success of the Bus Stop Portals by exploring other opportunities to bring partners and pots of funding together, maximising the potential for delivering meaningful art.



Case Studies

Case study 1: Sharrabang 2022

Case study 2: Christmas Card Parade

Case Study 3: High Horse

Case Study 4: Bus Stop Portals

Case study 1: Sharrabang 2022

Building on the successes of the Hubs Bus Tour in 2021.

What took place?

Sharrabang 2022 built on the success of the Hubs Bus Tour in 2021. The central premise is that the Back to Our bus takes a host of performers out into four communities to put on a show in public spaces. Filled with Back to Ours fun, they create a moving spectacle as they arrive at key sites and the bus and performers are welcomed by members of the local Hubs, who have gathered their friends and neighbours around to see a series of performances and activities.

The 2022 edition was developed by the Hubs and explored through discussion with Back to Ours, testing outdoor events and getting hyperlocal audiences into streets and green spaces on estates close to doorsteps. More community-led activity at the static sites took place and an increased number of estates taking part. These were:

- Derringham
- Greatfield
- Orchard Park
- Southcoates
- Spring Bank West
- Thornton Estate

We're working in locations where our Hub Members live. Bringing it right to their doorstep is the most important part; we hear it from their friends and neighbours when we're there that they 'never get anything round here' and how much they love it. Using areas where our Hub Members and their families live enables us to access groups of people who can sometimes be overlooked.

Laura Cox, Engagement Co-ordinator Back to Ours

Each estate was different with varied performance times, level of community engagement and experience from the year before (that is, whether the Bus Tour had visited in 2021 or not). These differences meant that each location was unique – and thus the ownership and success of each event was in the hands of Hub Members who organised and rooted the programme in their communities.

The bus acted as a mobile venue from which the Back to Ours team and Hub Members could deliver the programme. Planning was quicker in 2022 because four locations had been used the year before. Back to Ours supported the Hub Members to expand the 2021 offer – rather than solely focusing on the Sharrabang, there was a community programme (on a static site) before and after the bus visit. Hub Members actively promoted the events and knocked on doors to encourage more attendees on the day.

Traditional cabaret entertainment - professional singers and comedy - was mixed with poetry and acro-dance to introduce new artforms. This mix was important – the aim was to deliver an engaging family-friendly experience that audiences would enjoy whilst experiencing something possibly novel and unexpected.

The community-curated activities included football skills, Zumba lessons and refreshments and food provided by local businesses. This meant that Hub Members have led on organising and delivering a community relevant event, bespoke to their area, which wraps around the Back to Ours offer.

Hub Members have inadvertently led their own community events under the guise of wraparound Back to Ours activity evidencing the extent to which their leadership and confidence levels have developed and highlighting any additional support and skills development they may need from other Hub Members and the Team.

Learning

The success of this event is the wow factor – the spectacle of a loud bus full of visually stunning performers turning up on your street, at your park, on the green outside your house.



The event at Elmbridge Parade, in Greatfield Estate, was the first time delivering in a public shopping area. Here it proved more challenging to recruit an audience compared to residential sites where the audiences are on their doorstep.

We really worked on engaging the wider community this year to encourage more people to come out to the shops at Elmbridge, whereas other areas are literally on people's doorsteps, and they can stay in the gardens if they wish. Sometimes means it's easier as you have a captive audience.

Laura Cox, Engagement Co-ordinator Back to Ours

The partnership building the Hub Members have undertaken with local businesses to create their static offer shows the potential for more corporate sponsorship development, on both a micro business and big business scale. The Team have highlighted the unique opportunity of their bus as an advertising platform. The visibility of the touring bus on the estates presents an opportunity for income generation through sponsorship - or using the exterior for a mobile visual art exhibition showcasing visual artists or the work of the local community.

This was the first year that advanced marketing was undertaken for the event - including reminders on social platforms. Advertising and marketing began ten days before the event. Followers on social media engaged in the advertising and extended invitations for the Sharrabang bus to visit their existing activity. Inclusion of pre-existing events could be utilised as a way to advertise the Sharrabang and their wider programme, reaching new

audiences. This engagement highlights the potential role of Back to Ours social media followers. Earlier advertising and call outs would create an opportunity to increase dialogue and decision making about activity into this forum. This would democratise decision making to a greater diversity of voices and serve as an open door to signpost people to become Hub Members.

Programming differences between the two days of the event meant that the offer was different between communities visited on day one to day two, and illness impacted the numbers of performers. This year the event had a unique acro dance performance, but this was only available for one day. Ensuring a consistent quality and diversity of offer is something the Team feel they could achieve by overbooking performers of each type which would mean that a minimum performance offer could be provided in unforeseen circumstances.



Central to the success of the experience is having the right host to create a welcome from the communities visited, segue between performers and hold the attention and engagement of the audience.

The short performance window at each site means that the Sharrabang can provide a test opportunity for new performers and artforms to be trialled with communities. This enables the Team to take managed risks before developing bigger projects or performance opportunities within their communities and challenge community perceptions of the art forms they enjoy or will engage with.

It gives people a chance to see a variety of acts and stuff, have singers to magicians, whatever you can think of, 'cause it's on people's doorsteps [and] they don't have to worry about getting there. It would be great to try and cover more areas – just trying to cover each area of Hull but that means having the funding.

Hub Member interview 2022

Impact

Delivering free hyperlocal taster activities via a pop-up show broke down barriers to participation for many of those least likely to engage with the arts. Sharrabang negated the need to travel to engage with culture; it presented activities that focussed authentically on the community and its needs. By utilising local public spaces, it made audiences feel safe and welcome.

The Sharrabang was a catalyst for community self-organisation. Extending this event into more estates brought an atmosphere the Team described as “curious and fresh”, “overwhelming and awe-inspiring” and a “big party”. This model has great potential longer term. It shows how communities can be enabled to be cultural decision makers and leaders; they can both shape cultural events and see the benefits of engaging with them. It also demonstrates the impact culture can make when communities are enabled to have the agency to be decision makers and leaders.

I loved the madness of Sharrabang. The acts were so different! Because it was in our local areas, it was bit like hosting a party someone else had paid for. Bring your picnic and come and see the shows. My daughter's friends were all there and they were asking when it was coming. I would happily do that every Saturday afternoon. Where it was, there were people that would like to organise more!

Hub Member interview 2022

Case study 2: Christmas Card Parade

An outdoor winter celebration at a hyperlocal level.

The journey

Back in 2020, in response to early consultation with Back to Ours, Sara, a Hub Member from Orchard Park estate in North Hull, had an idea for an event. In response to the pandemic and because she loved Christmas cards, she wanted something that people could step into and have a cosy yet magical experience.

The idea developed during Hub Meetings and the Christmas Card Parade was brought to life. The pandemic meant it wasn't possible to stage a Parade in 2020, with Bedtime Story acting as a "bridge" into it happening in person in 2021.

Repeating the event in 2022 was an unusual approach for Back to Ours. But, after such a successful Parade the previous year and overwhelming positive feedback from the Hub Members and steering group, the decision was made to continue.

The Parade took place across four nights⁴⁷ in neighbourhoods where Hub Members lived. In these areas, Back to Ours engaged with the Council's Area Teams, providing deeper knowledge of both the local people and the area. It also worked with Hull Carnival Arts to create the characters from the card and bring them to life and aimed to ensure the presentation and offer was high quality, the bar was set high in 2021 with the programming of Thingumajig's Ghost Caribou.

A substantial amount of planning and problem solving took place alongside managing key stakeholders.

The marketing was carefully planned. Hub Members were out on foot helping to distribute marketing materials and they organised engagement activity for show nights - this helped keep people outside while waiting for the Parade, despite the weather being chilly and wet.

The event was made up of a Parade (illuminated vehicles including buses, a land train and cars, people in costume, a brass band etc.) and static sites with stalls and free mulled wine or hot chocolate where performances took place.

The Parade gave Back to Ours the opportunity to make something outdoors, hyperlocal but with a sense of scale. Though predominantly Victorian themed, the time-travelling nature of the Christmas Card allowed for an eclectic mix of characters and styles to be used.

A magical experience

Back to Ours worked with both an illustrator and a Christmas Card design specialist to get the right look for a card to invite people to the Parade. This card included all the elements that made up the magical Christmas Card and would therefore appear in the Parade. Thought went into how and when to deliver the card so residents would read it rather than ignore it. In the end, the Victorian Land invite was in an envelope and sealed, the general invite was simply a card through the door. It was enticing, creating a call to action.

This care paid off with people who got the invitation saying it felt special – some said they even intended to keep the Christmas Card. It told a story: if you receive the card the magic will happen, it will come to life and the parade will be right down your street.

The decision to keep the routes and the continuation of imagery gives a sense of permanence, and there was a build-up of excitement knowing that it would be coming. Those who were unable to leave their houses were still able to see the spectacles and Parade from their window, so everyone was included allowing the magic to be spread as far and as wide as possible.

⁴⁷ 6th to 9th December 2021 inclusive



My children's faces were an absolute picture. They were so happy. We are struggling this Christmas to do all the usual Christmassy things that we'd usually do but by them being on the train, they felt really special and so happy.

Audience member 2022

Having Back to Ours staff at the event was seen as a positive – they could capture stories and see people's excitement and enjoyment. In 2022, some of the team attended as audience members and experienced a real sense of pride as they were in the mix of people, seeing and hearing the reactions around them and seeing the Team and performers deliver an amazing parade.

People of all ages came out for the parade and to Victorian Land – talking to neighbours, looking out of their windows or standing on the doorstep. This was reflected online with lots of positive sentiment on social media.

The Show Globe in 2022 was a highlight. It was mesmerising and everyone was in awe.

She was just so magical and different – it was not something that people expected.

Hub Member 2022

This review in 2021 by a Hub Member of the night in her area conveys the excitement and feel of the event:

What a night! Loved every minute of the Victorian Land and having it literally on my doorstep was fantastic. So many people from babies in prams to pensioners came out to see it, a lot of which would not normally go out into the city centre to see such an event.

The event was well organised and provided some great entertainment and totally transformed the look of the green with the lighting: not just the festoon lights hung around, the ones shining on the trees and the ones on the actors/community group that were performing, it looked so magical. The singer and dancing Victorians got us in the Christmas mood, the kids seemed to be loving the Jack in the Box, fairies, toy soldier and teddy, all of which interacted well with them, my grandsons loved them. I really enjoyed the performance by the reindeers, it was mesmerizing to watch. Only criticism I have is that as it was towards the end of the night, quite a few people missed out on seeing it.

Providing free drinks was a nice touch and went down well and I wasn't expecting seating so that was good for those that needed to sit down.

Stood waiting to see the parade pass by was exciting and the parade didn't disappoint. Again the lights had a big impact of the look of it - first thing you saw as it was coming around the corner, the reflection of the lights in house windows and it was great to see a variety of different kinds of vehicles used in the Parade. It's not every day you get a horse and carriage, train, open top bus, etc coming down your street, it was just beautiful. There were so many happy faces as it went by.

I have had lots of good feedback from family, friends and neighbours who attended the event and saw the Parade, many of which can't believe something like this would happen on our street. Thank you Back to Ours.

Tracy Padley – Hub Member, review of Bilsdale Grove Christmas Card Night

Static sites

In 2022, the static sites were led by Hub Members and residents. This approach provided opportunities for Hub Members and local partners to step up further and into a supporting role. It also freed up the Team to develop the artistic side of the event, improving the Parade and building on the work of the static sites, increasingly supporting these to be fully community led without sacrificing quality.

Ada Homes

The scheme has 35 apartments supporting independent living for those over 60.

It was arranged that two performers would go into the care home and entertain the 16 residents before the Parade arrived. A lot of the residents were joined by their families and the carers also enjoyed the show.

The build-up as well as the actual event heightened excitement and added to the overall Christmassy feel. The residents felt an increased sense of being part of the community as the event was delivered from people outside of the organisation and the entertainment took place inside their space which made them feel more special. The fact that it was out of hours meant that it was out of the norm for residents and increased their sociability at a time when they would typically be winding down for the day, but also that their family could attend, and this brought together generations as grandchildren came along too.

There were lots of smiling, happy faces.

Ada Homes

- Public green at Bilsdale Grove, Southcoates – 2021 & 2022
- St Stephen's Neighbourhood Centre – 2022
- Ada homes (residential scheme), Orchard Park – new in 2022
- Wold Road outside Café Two-O-One in Derringham – 2022

Location of the static sites

Southcoates

Hub member Tracey Padley led this static site on the green at Bilsdale Grove. Tracey arranged for Christmas Carol singing to take place before the Parade through her connection with a local Church, Saint Aidan's. The site also offered free hot drinks and mince pies, with the supplies being donated by the local shop. People really enjoyed this offering and it made the event feel extra special.

The atmosphere on the green was very festive and it was a good community night. People were seeing and talking to neighbours which they may not have done before, and there was still a buzz about it for days after.



Learning

- **Problem solving:** Each night had new challenges, changes and ad libs – some of which were then incorporated into the shows.
- **More on the buses:** The success of using buses and vehicles as a way of getting out to communities – of working outdoors and being hyperlocal – built on from the Hub Bus Tour and earlier work.
- **An intergenerational experience:** Having the Parade at a time when people will generally be home allows the different generations to come together and make it a group experience.
- **Extending the length of the engagement:** By spreading out entertainment, people could be encouraged to stay out in the street for longer.
- **Building on the community element:** Alongside the professional entertainment, this could bring more local people to the Parade.
- **Engaging with Ada Homes (and other) residents:** This was to explore ideas for future parades and could impact on the residents' wellbeing through their longer-term engagement and enable their voices to be heard.
- **Changing needs for highways management:** As the Parade's audience grows, so does the need to implement full road closures instead of rolling road closures. This comes with its own challenges, including the associated costs.

What next?

Looking forward, the Parade will continue to be an annual event, with a move to it being a Winter Parade. The routes, neighbourhoods and story will remain the same each year so people come to know what to expect although new elements of the card and its characters will be brought to life.

Back to Ours' environmental commitment will see subtle but important changes, such as using bikes or electric vehicles. Building on the success of the static sites run by Hub Members and the community, it is hoped that increased ownership of these will grow and welcome more local people.

Case study 3: High Horse

Investing in developing unique content.

An evolving show

In 2018, Back to Ours started to think about creating their own show. This resulted in the development in 2019 of their first in-house production called High Horse.

It was written and directed by Louise Yates⁴⁸ and developed in conjunction with artist Jason Coyle. Jason remained a constant through the show's evolution over the Phase.

The production tells the story of the Great and Powerless Peter and his beloved horse Star and their escapades. Initially, the show was a way to invite children to write rules for naughty adults and ask questions around rule making. It featured a large number of performers including a community cast playing a circus troupe.

The success of the original production in 2019, and the flexibility of its format, enabled Back to Ours to develop further productions that saw the characters go on new adventures. There was a rewrite for the performance at the Big Malarkey 2021, Hull's children's literature festival. The Team was keen to find ways to develop the story with the young audience. So, the emphasis of the story shifted from "rules" to inviting the young audience to think about what "tradition" means and exploring the wider world.

Post-Covid, the idea was to invite the audience to look outward and think about different cultures – an idea that was reflected in other aspects of Back to Ours' work like the Bus Stops (see [case study](#)). The latest iteration sees the audience given globetrotting passports with activities they can complete at home to extend their engagement.

As part of the 2021 evolution, Back to Ours worked with artist Alex Bennett to create an intricate pop-up journal version of the show which was read as a Bedtime Story. One hundred of these storybooks were made to share at the Big Malarkey performances. This was more than just a book; it was a device to engage the audience and get them to help in the development of the stories.

Great story! David loves it and he curled up after it for bow bows so extra bonus for me! Thank you... more please 🙏 xxx

Vicky Williams, Facebook comment on the Bedtime Story Oct 2022

Back to Ours used their involvement with the national Play Days – a celebration of children's right to play with free song and story sessions – to share the High Horse story with more people and generated a new set of audiences for Back to Ours family shows.

Brilliant. I was struggling to get up that way for tickets. All booked. Can't wait. Cole thought these guys were amazing at National Play Day!

Tammy Rylands Facebook comment on the online ticket booking link October 2022

High Horse content has crossed over into other aspects of Back to Ours' delivery. For example, Peter and Star's adventures have been read as Bedtime Stories⁴⁹ on three occasions, and Star made an appearance at Pride in Hull in July 2022.

For October Half Term 2022, High Horse returned to its starting point. It was performed at Bransholme Chat Shop with Alex Bennett designing a set that reflected the style of the pop-up book.

⁴⁸ Director of Back to Ours

⁴⁹ Digital strand of the programming where a children's story is read by a local performer and shared via Facebook Premiere

Key learnings and outcomes

A popular show that explores issues

Creating their own unique production has given the Team a vehicle to tell relevant children’s stories that explore themes and issues impacting on the lives of those children. High Horse uses the arts as a vehicle to increase understanding and address issues that arise within many estates in Hull. The show appeals to children and adults by creating positive shared experiences that challenge perceptions and aid learning.

High Horse has evolved. We are bringing in traditions and it’s expanding kids’ horizons and making them think of different cultures. It’s making them realise if someone does something different, it’s not wrong because it’s different to how you do it, it’s just because they do things differently in their culture.

Jason Coyle, High Horse performer

Creating a world, building a repeat audience

By expanding the world that Pete and Star inhabit, they have created something familiar that local families have invested in. Families want to continue on the journey with Pete and Star as they embark on new adventures. This has built a repeat audience for the show and something that can grow with the children – developing each year to reach old and new audiences alike.

You’d see kids coming time and time again over the years because they wanted to see what was next – how is it going to change and what would be.

Jason Coyle, High Horse performer

Investing in local artists

High Horse demonstrates that by creating high-quality, locally relevant productions with local artists for the communities of Hull, Back to Ours are investing in the cultural ecology and increasing the value local people place on the arts.

The emphasis on working with local artists has allowed Back to Ours to invest in local talent. The mainstay of this is the involvement of Jason Coyle, but the evolution of the show has allowed it to become flexible enough to include local (guest) performers for different iterations of the show. The extension of the story into a book and Bedtime Stories allows other artists to become involved as well.

A flexible core offer

High Horse has become a core part of the Back to Ours offer – one that is self-created and demonstrates how a popular show can be devised and evolved. The format, and its ability to adapt, demonstrates High Horse’s flexibility and indicates it can evolve again in the future. The storybook and the possibility of a wider education offer to be toured in schools also has the potential for future revenue generation.



Figure 16: The High Horse journey, 2018 to 2022



Cole absolutely loved High Horse today. Brilliant show. You definitely need to take it into schools!

Tammy Rylands, Facebook comment on the October 2022 half term performances

Back to Ours brilliant 🙌 I attended with another childminder and our mindees and we had as much fun as the little ones! 😊

Sara Jayne Facebook comment on Play Days activity August 2022

Case Study 4: Bus Stop Portals

A creative response to local authority need that introduced Back to Ours to a new community.

How do you undertake cultural activity in an area for the first time?

Thornton Estate had experienced artists working on its streets before. Goodwin Development Trust had commissioned an artist-in-residence five years previously. However, there had not been a marked increase in engagement with the arts on the Estate. This was because of a lack of consistent activity, wariness of the Trust, the pandemic and a changing demographic with lots of new arrivals onto the Estate. However, Back to Ours identified Thornton Estate as a new community to work with.

Within walking distance of Hull city centre, the Estate is “an island” surrounded by dual carriage ways. Around its circular layout, you will find mid-century bus stops with concrete benches that were in a state of disrepair. Viewed by the community as not fit for purpose, these mushroom-shaped shelters were due for maintenance and repainting by the local authority.

Working with Hull City Council, Back to Ours brought together funds from four different partners – including themselves and money earmarked for renovation work.

This allowed them to recruit artist Andy Pea to transform the shelters. In doing so, they delivered a more meaningful and engaging experience for residents, giving them ownership of, and pride in, the outcomes.

We connected the dots and bought the four partners together. We developed the idea more. We were only going to do one bus stop and then the Council said they had more money to spend if we wanted to do all of them.

Ellie Irwin, Project Manager, Back to Ours

Visibility, intrigue and conversation

Community engagement days were delivered at the bus stops to invite residents to share their stories and provide ideas and imagery.

Making the bus stops a shelter and a transformative space – a portal to another place – required imagination, something intriguing to grab people’s attention and a catalyst for conversations. The Team recruited One Man Band Charles Huckvale to perform at the engagement days as an invitation for people to stop, chat and exchange creative ideas whilst listening to live music.

The kids were exposed to music they had not heard before. We had an MP3 player with a variety of music on and some kids were obsessed. You could tell that they don’t have access to it at home. They were so interested in Charles’ instruments. Having come out of lockdown they didn’t know what they were - one girl kept trying to put her hand in the drum. They were curious!

Ellie Irwin, Project Manager, Back to Ours

Having the Team visible and supporting the artists on-site created a safe, welcoming environment for different community members. They felt able to engage in a non-threatening and new experience as Andy Pea collected ideas for each bus stop.

Children followed Charles between bus stops like a pied piper. Andy was able to collect and curate the ideas from local people, creating designs for each shelter to become a portal to a new world. Through this process, the Team came to better understand the Estate’s residents, and this will inform future programming.

Undertaking consultation activity by each of the stops to ensure the designs would be representative was challenging. Not all stops were in places of high footfall, so creating spectacle and enticing people out of their homes meant there were peaks and troughs of engagement.

The stops located off the circular route were hard actually.

Dragging anybody out to really engage with it unlike at the school where we just got mobbed by people, it was more like there was too many people to know which way to turn, which was lovely. But yeah, the other ones [were] hard work because there's no sort of focus of people there really. I just kept playing regardless.

As a performer, if you've not got people, it's hard keeping that energy to be a character. Which shows how challenging it can be if there really are just two people and the dog and you have to make them feel extra special. I have experience of having worked with [that] when developing my own show and the other projects I've worked on with Back to Ours previously.

This was like completing the circle of all that development work on the other projects. If there's just two people, you've got to sort of have that same level of enthusiasm as an engagement.

Charles Huckvale, One Man Band

Transforming the stops

The results ranged from a Meerkat scene in hot Africa painted on the coldest day, to planets in space, toucans in a jungle and a countryside of otters being disrupted by a parrot streaking through the sky.

As the transformations took place, the community came out to watch and comment. All the pupils at the local primary school applauded from the playground as Andy painted the one opposite their school.

The project revitalised these dilapidated public realm spaces into pockets of colour which brought joy. A change in how an area looks and feels can transform people's perceptions of a place.

As I was painting, there was an Asian guy I used to see who would go twice a day to his allotment, he said 'it's nice to have different things.'

Andy Pea, artist interview

Learning

With over 52 languages spoken in the local school, the Team encountered both language and literacy barriers to engaging residents with printed marketing.

Some families had children who were able to provide different levels of translation. However, the Team started to develop and test more visually-led marketing – similar to social stories⁵⁰ – to increase the accessibility of the printed matter and promotional materials.

The Team were supported by Hub Members volunteering and engaging local residents. Having a local resident supporting the community conversations proved an integral part to the success. Another useful engagement tactic was presenting residents with a map to show where they had travelled from before living on the Estate.

With this outdoor activity taking place across the Summer and up to October Half Term, the weather and major national events (such as the Queen's passing) all impacted on participation. However, having activity remain consistent across several months created familiarity with the Team and the artists.

⁵⁰ Social Stories were initially developed for children with autism. They convey information, concepts and nonverbal communication scenarios through visual icons and illustrations instead of written language. Use of social stories and visuals are often used to support those learning a second language. Icons for easy read versions of legal documents, such as image release forms have long been in use by cultural and third sector organisations in work with new migrant communities. Extending this to marketing reduces language barriers to engagement.

Impact

Andy was the original artist-in-residence on the Estate for Goodwin Development Trust. Revisiting the community meant Andy reconnected with the children he previously met who are now parents. The creative interventions have laid the foundations for a change in how the community values culture.

It's uplifting to see change at the end of a year of residency and then this time being recognised. Seeing kids from the residency before as parents now, bringing their kids to you. There is a small uplift; the next generation are accepting of arts and culture, and they appreciate it.

Last time it was difficult to get them off the estate and go into town and do the Freedom Fest – we walked it at the time and it's only 1000 metres away but that was difficult, whereas this time they are actively seeking us out and taking up opportunities, valuing what you have to offer.

Andy Pea, artist interview

The Team being present didn't only allow them to fact find about the Estate, they were also able to have difficult conversations about race and the changing demographics of the Estate in a positive way.

There was a guy that had been quite right wing in his viewpoints about things, especially regarding what we could achieve with the kids from the school because they don't speak English anyway, but he actually got really engaged in the project after talking to Lou and Ellie from Back to Ours to the point that he thought I really was a chimney sweep because of my one-man band character. He even donated some old chimney sweeping brushes that he didn't need any more so I could take them out so the kids can just sweep with them or dance with them.

Charles Huckvale, One Man Band artist

Longstanding White British residents were the hardest to engage in the process – whilst the newly arrived global majority residents were eager to connect with people on the street.

The estate has a real mix of nationalities, and it brought kids and people together. The place is a starting point for refugees in the city. There are 52 languages spoken in the school and the kids embrace it all. We need to normalise having such a diverse community, and art can do that. From Africans, Nigerians, Middle East. English residents are the hardest to engage; it's those generational barriers of art and culture.

Andy Pea, artist interview

What next?

This intervention sparked a series of continuing activities on Thornton Estate. Back to Ours returned with the Sharrabang and artist Andy Pea is painting other spots and reconnecting with the Estates' community radio station. Maintaining the visibility of activity is essential for building trust, enabling greater change and developing a willingness to engage in culture.

It was an engagement exercise, helping us to begin building that trust within the Thornton Estate. We will do something again this Summer and by the end of the next 3-4 years, we may have a Chat Shop there.

Ellie Irwin, Project Manager, Back to Ours

The intention is that the Bus Stop Portals will be developed into a series of stories inspired by the images that were co-produced, the industrial typewriter heritage of the area, and characters and stories collected from Estate residents.



Appendices

Appendix 1: Methodology

Data source	Collected from	Base (number of responses)	
		Year 3	Phase 2 total
Event monitoring data	BTO events by the BTO team	146 events	384 events
Audience demographics	Monitoring at BTO events	3,382 responses	13,744 responses
Indices of multiple deprivation postcode analysis	Postcodes from all BTO events, some estimated (such as Christmas Card Parade)	15,182 valid postcodes	24,553 valid postcodes
The Audience Agency postcode analysis	Postcodes from all BTO events, some estimated (such as Christmas Card Parade)	17,473 valid postcodes	26,844 valid postcodes
Project sheets	Provided by BTO Team	N/A	N/A
ACE quarterly reports	Provided by BTO Team	N/A	N/A
Social media monitoring	Provided by BTO Team	4 quarterly reports	12 quarterly reports
Team reflection sessions and Story of Change reviews	Regular Team reflection sessions to support reflective practice and draw out learning	2 sessions	8 sessions
Interviews	Artists	3	25
	Team members	6	25
	Hub Members	9	16
	Other (including Act to Ours participants)	10	15
Observations	Reports provided by 'Chat to Ours' members from observations at wide range of Back to Ours events	14 reports	22 reports Over 16 types of events over Phase 2
Audience surveys	Year 3: Christmas Card Parade audience (98), February Goldilocks Panto audience (109), October Half Term shows audience (High Horse, The Giant Balloon Show and Aladdin – 53), Pride in Hull audience (334) and Circus on Your Doorstep audience (79)	673 responses	857 responses

Artist survey	Qualitative survey of artists who work with Back to Ours (mostly replaced with interviews in Year 3)	2 responses	12 responses
Hub Member survey	Members of BTO Hubs (replaced with interviews in Year 3)	N/A	43 responses
Participant survey	Participants who got involved with Back to Ours events	191 responses	238 responses

This report is based on work carried out by a number of different researchers. Ruth Melville Research (RMR) and the Back to Ours team developed and analysed data collected within an evaluation approach developed by Ruth Melville in discussion with the Back to Ours team and Steering Group and which followed on from the approach taken during the evaluation of the previous Phase.

The evaluation framework takes into account the National Evaluation Research Questions developed for Creative People and Places (CPP) by Arts Council England (ACE) at the start of the programme in 2012 and not changed since:

1. Are more people from places of least engagement experiencing and inspired by the arts?
2. To what extent was the aspiration for excellence of art and excellence of the process of engaging communities achieved?
3. Which approaches were successful and what were the lessons learned?

It draws on the monitoring and reflection required within the ACE Quarterly monitoring and reporting model, with adaptations made to fit with the particular focuses of Back to Ours, and then to fit with necessary changes on programming prompted by the Covid 19 pandemic.

Chat to Ours were utilised as a volunteer researcher network, providing observations and qualitative data reports from a range of Back to Ours events. This had not been practical early in the phase due to social distancing requirements during the Covid 19 pandemic, but was used more in the later years of the phase.

Data collection was carried out by Ruth Melville, Kirsty Hillyer and Charlotte Eade from RMR and by the Back to Ours team and volunteers, particularly Christie Parkin, Monitoring & Evaluation co-ordinator.

Analysis of postcodes was carried out by The Audience Agency and by Mac Ince.

Full analysis and reporting was carried out by the RMR team.

Case studies were written by Kirsty Hillyer and Charlotte Eade.

Data gathering included:

Audience surveys: carried out at most audience events, using a mix of paper questionnaires, postcards and online surveys prior to March 2020, and online surveys only after this time. Audience surveys received 857 responses over the phase.

Hub and participant surveys: carried out in 2021 and 2022, largely online since lockdown first began in March 2020, by Back to Ours and RMR with participants and Hub Members taking part in a range of programmes. 43 people responded to the Hub Members survey and 231 to the participant survey over the phase.

Interviews and focus groups: carried out formally by the RMR team with the staff team, and informally by Ruth Melville with the staff Team, partners, Chat to Ours and commissioned and associate artists. Throughout the phase, 25 artists were interviewed, with two artists taking part in repeat interviews to give comparator data. 25 staff members interviews were conducted over the phase, with Team members often completing more than one interview each. 16 Hub Members were interviewed in the Phase to provide reflections on the programme and Back to Ours activities.

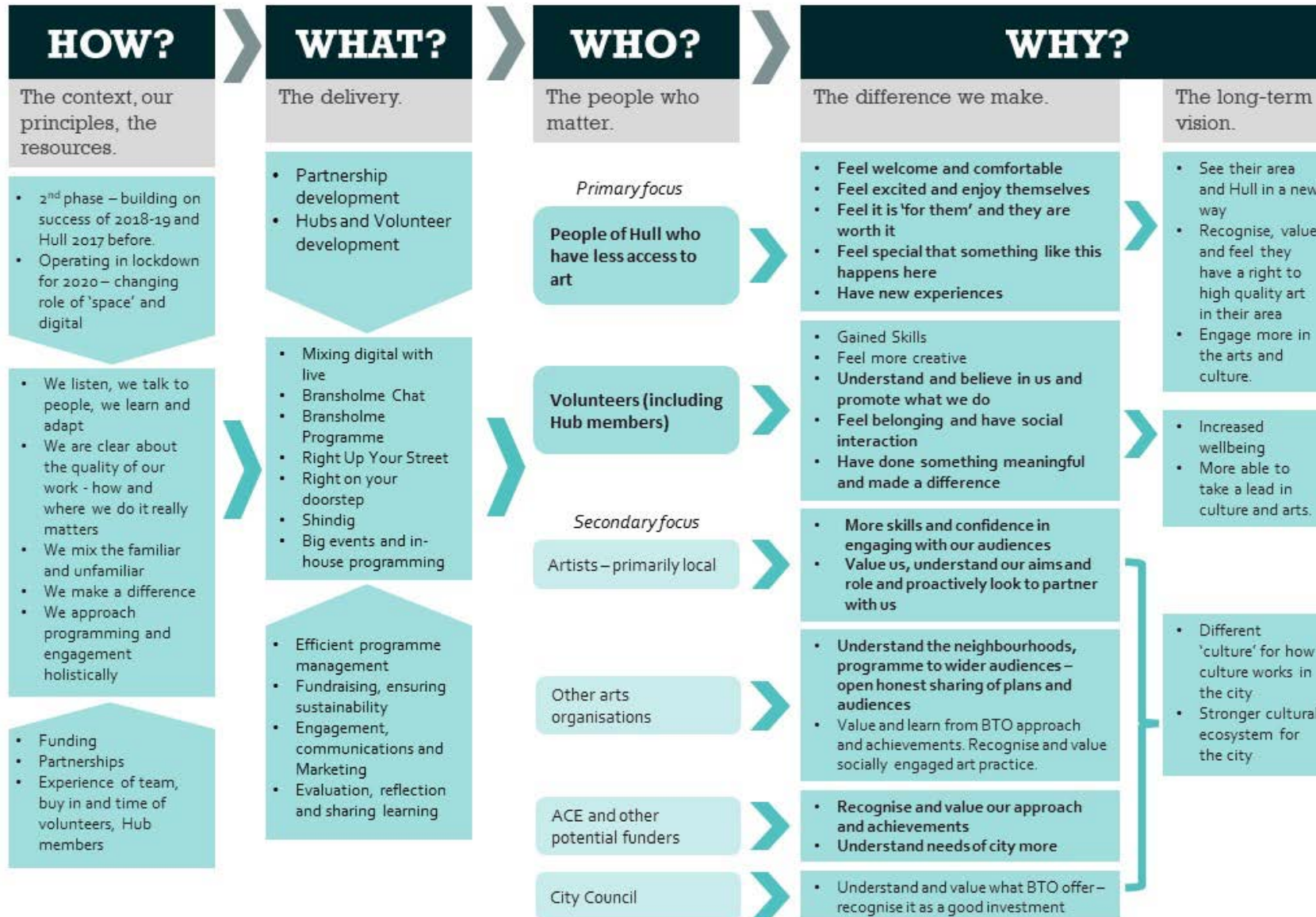
Observation: extensive data gathering has been carried out through observation and participant observation at Team meetings, **Right on your Sofa events** and Hub meetings during the phase.

Story of Change sessions: the Story of Change approach is a way of looking holistically at a project, taking into account what the outcomes and stakeholders are: 'who' you want to make a difference to, 'why' – what's the difference you are trying to make, as well as principles and approaches – 'how' you'll do it, before thinking about 'what' you are planning to do. This approach is helpful for avoiding programmes rushing into action, giving a chance to stop and reflect on why they are doing what they do, but also is helpful for developing an evaluation framework as the 'why' elements form the basis of what difference is intended and thus should be measured. Back to Ours' Story of Change is constantly evolving – see Appendix 2 above for Phase 2 model, and will change throughout the course of the programme as they reflect and learn and adapt what they intend.

Analysis was carried out within and across the various projects. Both Back to Ours and the RMR team worked together to draw out the learning from analysis across the 2020 programme.

Postcode analysis was carried out to determine the reach of the audience. Postcodes were collected from a sample of 26,884 audience members who attended 384 events delivered. These postcodes were validated, matched and used in the analysis (separately) by Mac Ince of RMR and The Audience Agency.

Appendix 2: Back to Ours Story of Change



Appendix 3: Reach into audiences least likely to engage in the arts

Attracting new audiences to the arts is a central aim of Creative People and Places and can be hard to measure. In order to get the clearest view on this, and on whether Back to Ours are reaching not just 'non-attenders' but also those who typically are least likely to engage in the arts, we typically measure via two routes:

- Direct feedback from audiences at events through a question on previous arts engagement.
- Analysis of audience postcodes, matched to Audience Spectrum segmentation, which uses consumption behaviour to map likelihood of people living in this postcode to engage in the arts.

Key findings from these two areas are presented in the main report. This appendix provides more in-depth information, specifically on the latter.

There can be benefits and issues with both approaches – self reporting can over-represent through positive bias (people feeling they should say they do attend the arts) and/or be unreliable due to memory. On the other hand, Audience Spectrum profiling only looks at the likelihood of people attending due to the consumer characteristics of where they live. Despite this, in previous research we have found strong alignment of these two indicators. There is an issue around how people self-define being new to the arts and is shared by other CPPs. The question asked: 'Have you been to an arts event in the last 12 months, e.g., a theatre, gallery, festival etc? Yes/No' appears clear. However, it is known from analysis of data in other CPPs that people's own definitions of 'art' varies, plus their memories may not be totally reliable. It also needs to be considered that attendance in these events in the last 12 months will have been affected by ongoing issues surrounding the Covid-19 pandemic.

In Figure 17 we present the full Audience Segmentation using Audience Spectrum postcode analysis.

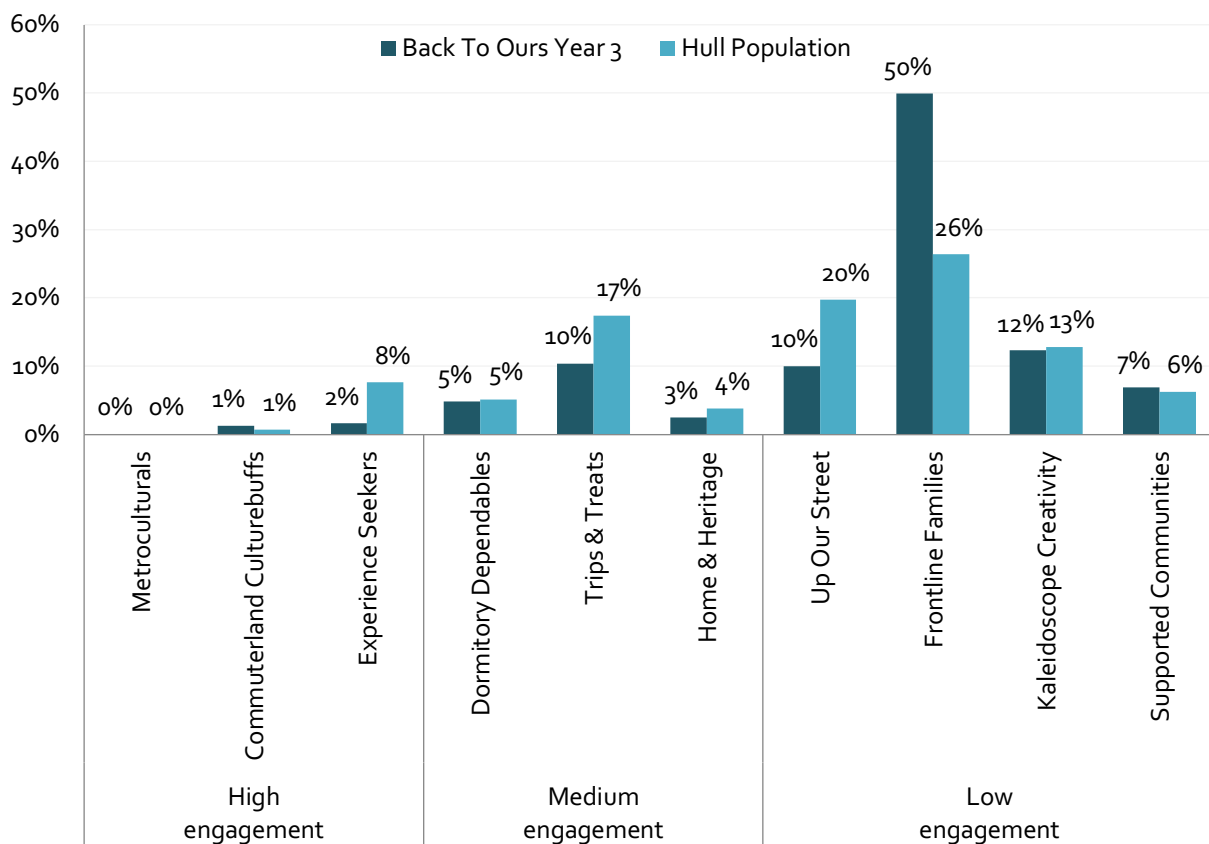


Figure 17 Results of Audience Spectrum analysis showing Back to Ours Year 3 engagements against the Hull population. Base = 17,425

We find that 64.5% of Back to Ours engagements in Year 3 come from the 10% most deprived areas of England. This is a lot higher compared to just 45.7% for the Hull population in general, which shows that Back to Ours are effectively reaching people from the most deprived areas. In total **92.7% of all engagements come from the top 40% most deprived areas of England**, which is substantially higher than the 76.8% from the Hull population in general, and a fantastic result. The chart above shows Back to Ours reached one core group of those least likely to engage in a highly successful way, at nearly twice the average for the Hull population: Frontline Families.⁵¹

Frontline Families tend to be young families with financial concerns such as unemployment and caring responsibilities. Some of the great reach into this group this year is likely due to the hyper-local events such as the Christmas Card parade, as well as the ever-popular half-term shows such as High Horse that hold huge appeal with this group and naturally fit the schedules of those with children. In addition, the range of online offer such as the Bedtime Stories mitigates any barriers this group faces in terms of access, especially given the current cost of living crisis where many may be less able to travel for cultural events.

These findings are consistent with the events monitoring that found that while 42% of events hold broad appeal, a further 40% are specifically targeted to families and children and young people, as seen in Figure 18.

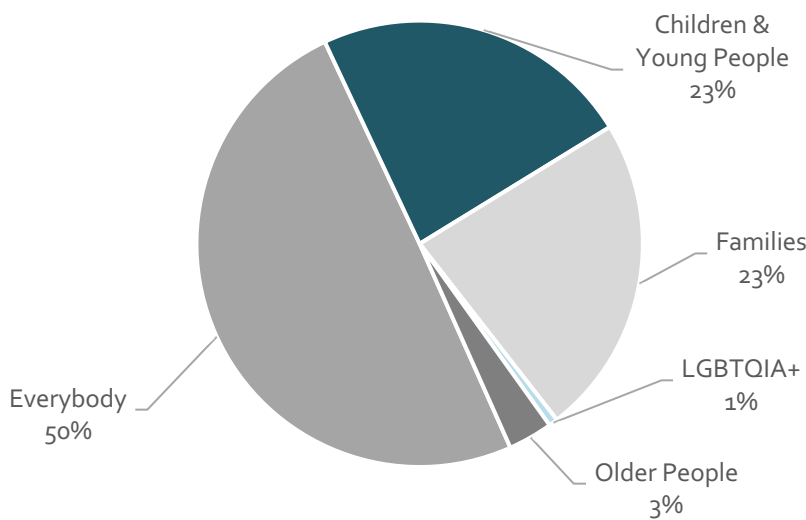


Figure 18 Target audiences of events, from events monitoring. Base = 144

In addition to the Audience Spectrum analysis in Year 3, here we present the results across the whole Phase. This has yielded an interesting pattern of results about the shift in Back to Ours over Phase 2. Percentages for reach into the groups least likely to engage in the arts and the groups less likely to engage are shown in the table below:

Table 1 Audience Spectrum analysis results, showing percentages of those least and less likely to engage in the arts for Years 1, 2 and 3. Base = 26,066

	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Least likely to engage in the arts	65%	88%	79%
Less likely to engage in the arts	87%	97%	97%

⁵¹ A brief description is provided here to illustrate, but for more in-depth information please see the Audience Agency website <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-finder-data-tools/audience-spectrum>

These results highlight that **Back to Ours are maintaining their 97% reach into groups less likely to engage from Year 2**, although there has been a drop in those least likely to engage, due in part to a small rise in two of the Medium engagement groups: 'Trips & Treats'⁵² and 'Dormitory Dependables'.⁵³

The rise in these two groups this year is likely linked to the Indices of Multiple Deprivation analysis results presented earlier in the report. This analysis highlighted an increase in less deprived groups in Year 3 compared with Year 2, pointing towards more attendance from people in more well-off areas. Events that had high numbers in these less deprived groups include Act to Ours rehearsals, Bransholme Chat support calls, Circus on your Doorstep, Play Days, Shindig on Your Doorstep and The Comfort Chronicles. A breakdown of these high-ranking events can be seen below:

Table 2 Highlighting higher levels of less deprived groups from IMD analysis. Base = 15,182

Name of event or activity	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Act to Ours rehearsal for The Hogwallops	11%	2%	10%	18%	22%	7%	31%	0%	0%	0%
Bransholme Chat support call	15%	0%	0%	31%	0%	0%	54%	0%	0%	0%
Circus on Your Doorstep	20%	3%	7%	16%	9%	11%	8%	18%	7%	0%
Circus on Your Doorstep - tickets sold at BC	34%	4%	15%	12%	5%	4%	7%	17%	1%	0%
Play Days	18%	10%	5%	8%	6%	12%	9%	25%	7%	0%
Shindig on Your Doorstep	26%	3%	26%	9%	7%	4%	5%	0%	20%	0%
The Comfort Chronicles	4%	9%	8%	32%	10%	0%	14%	5%	18%	0%

From Year 1 to 2 there was a big shift in reduction of the number of High and Medium engagers in favour of more groups who are least likely to engage. Their decision to hone their offer and focus on tried and tested events such as the parade and High Horse can be seen with their increased reach into more family-focused groups such as 'Frontline Families'.

⁵² For information on this group please see <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum/trips-and-treats>

⁵³ For information on this group please see <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum/dormitory-dependables>

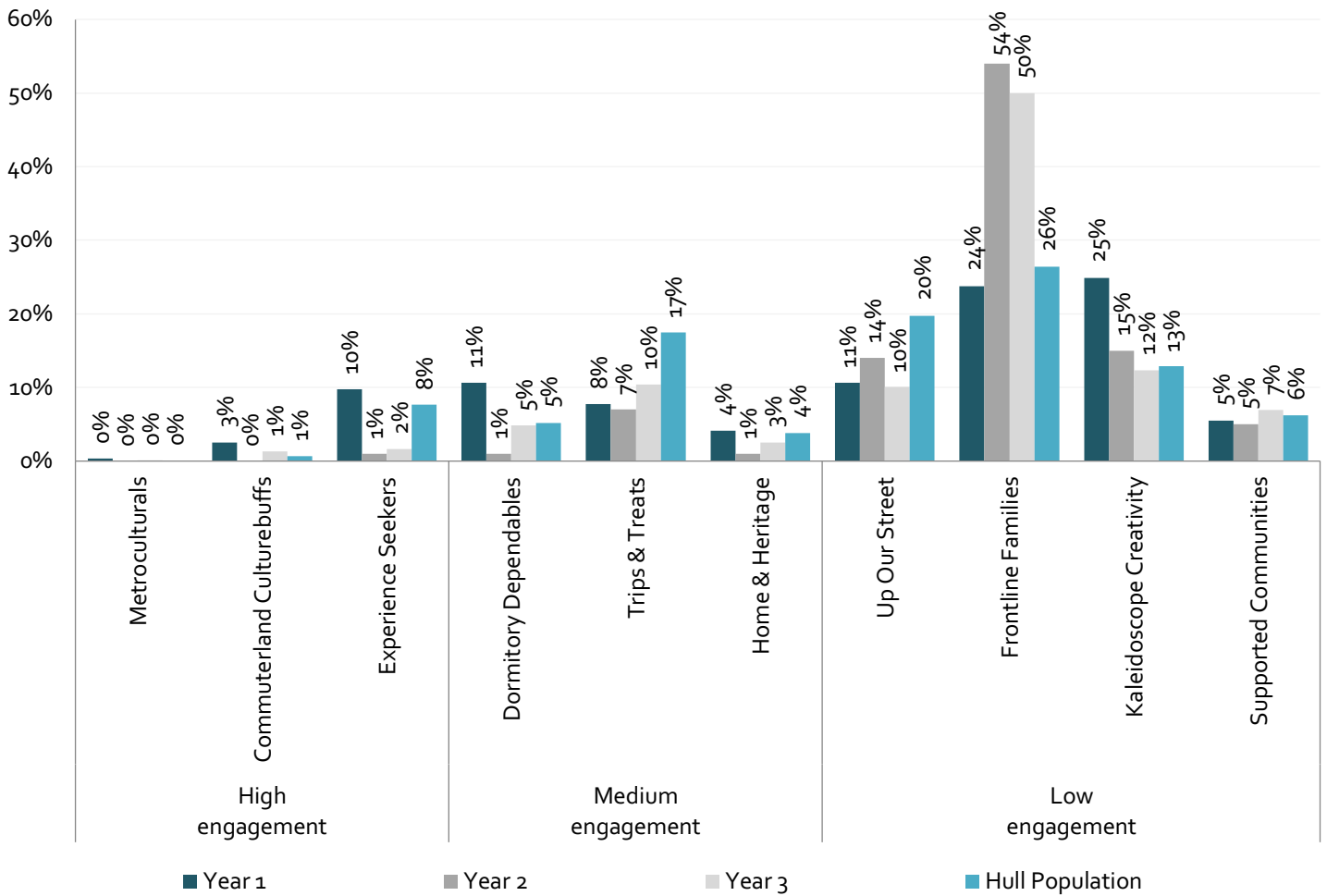


Figure 19 Collated results of Audience Spectrum analysis showing Back to Ours Year engagements in Years 1, 2 and 3 against the Hull population. Base = 26,066

The figures would suggest there has been a drop in a key group who are least likely to engage: Kaleidoscope Creativity⁵⁴. Less engagement in this group, which tends to be the most ethnically diverse of the segment groups, would represent less reach into diverse communities. However, the numbers being reached within this group has climbed consistently across the three years, but the growth in this group has been dwarfed by the sheer numbers in the Frontline Families group. This means that Back to Ours are still reaching this group, but not growing their reach at the rate of other segments. To address this if they want to increase reach here, increased focus on events that reach this group could be considered.

⁵⁴ For information on this group please see <https://www.theaudienceagency.org/audience-spectrum/kaleidoscope-creativity>

Appendix 4: Pride in Hull demographics

Findings show a much more varied response to gender and sexual orientation, such as in the chart here:

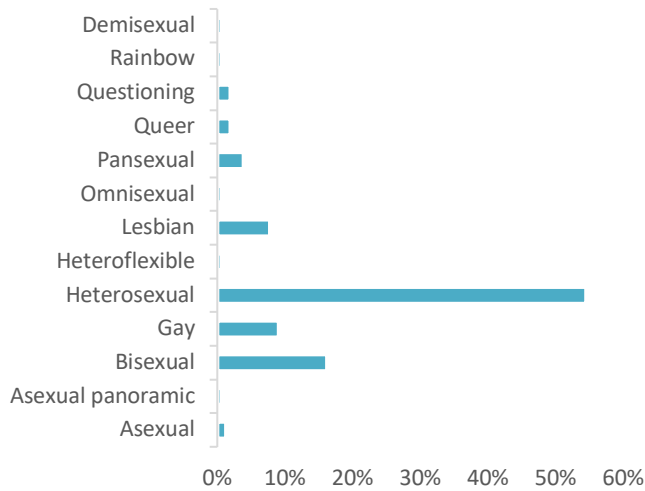


Figure 20 Responses to sexual orientation given by participants in Pride in Hull. Base = 189

However, engagement and monitoring data provided by the Team currently does not capture this information. This is something Back to Ours could consider for future data processes to ensure the full diversity of their audiences is being captured, and allow comparison across events, especially those that aim to target the LGBTQIA+ community. There are also other ways the current data processes could be tweaked. For instance, there is no option currently recorded for non-binary as a sex/ gender identity within the engagement and monitoring data collated by the Team.

Appendix 5: Full statistics of Phase 2 in numbers

Statistic	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Phase 2 Total/ (Average)
Number of events	85	153	146	384
Number of digital events	80	116	67	263
Number of events in person	5	43	94	142
Duration	671	1,792	643	3,106
Number of activities	211	366	391	968
Number of volunteers/ opportunities	303	645	544	1,492
Volunteer hours	1,747	1,238	3,779.5	6,764.5
Value of volunteer contributions	£15,226.00	£11,747.15	£31,596.62	£58,569.77
Physical audience	5916	29,255	44,583	79,754
Digital audience	162,447	132,706	149,697	444,850
Total audience	168,363	161,961	194,277	524,604
Physical participants	100	507	4,927	5,534
Digital participants	24,006	8,189	5,279	37,474
Total participants	24,106	8,696	10,206	43,008
Total engagements	192,469	170,657	204,483	567,609
Male %	24%	30.90%	21%	(25%)
Global majority	10%	6.40%	14%	(10%)
Disability	18%	26%	17%	(20%)
New to the arts	60%	43%	49%	(51%)
IMD 40%	88.7%	96.0%	92.7%	(92%)
IMD 10%	56.3%	69.7%	64.5%	(64%)
Audience Spectrum least likely to engage	65%	88%	79%	(77%)
Audience Spectrum less likely to engage	87%	97%	97%	(94%)