

high peak community arts ANNUAL REPORT 2023 - 24



Photo: Tall Tales, Jellyfish from *Hidden Depths*

“It’s about opening your eyes and really looking”

It’s In Our Nature participant

Our extensive programme of creative workshops continued to provide much-needed support to many people experiencing challenging circumstances across the High Peak.

Our dedicated team has worked tirelessly to provide high quality experiences whilst navigating the everyday pressures of limited charity sector funding and a second office move.

Despite the concerns raised by the withdrawal of statutory funding, we embraced the opportunity to streamline our organisation and further define our place within the communities we serve. We have sought funding opportunities for both new and continuing projects, including exploring crowdfunding initiatives to support our youth programme. Our bid for £70,000 to ITV The People’s Projects was successful when viewers in the Granada region voted for our intergenerational project ‘It’s In Our Nature’. This venture brought our youth and adult participants together to work on creative elements for an exciting showcase event.

We launched ‘Space to Explore’, our National Lottery funded project encouraging participants to explore their own neurodivergence whilst creating community artworks. With support from Autistic UK, we focused on creating an appropriate environment for neurodivergent participants to thrive, reinforced by bespoke training sessions for staff, trustees and volunteers, to increase

awareness of neurodiversity.

Project eARTH, our arts and health programme for adults, now in its 14th year, continued to receive Arts Council funding providing weekly workshops in varied artforms and themes drawing upon nature and the landscape of the Peak District. Participant feedback continues to stress the positive impact, both socially and emotionally, of spending time on creative activities, and the sense of achievement from sharing completed artworks with the community.

Our long-standing youth projects, Film Cuts Club and Tall Tales, encouraged young people living in Fairfield and Gamesley to engage in meaningful social and creative activities, building new skills and forming new friendships. During the year, eight young people worked towards their Arts Award, and three were supported to take on enhanced leadership roles within the workshops.

Our Board of Trustees worked alongside staff to increase organisational resilience amid growing pressures within the sector, including supporting a staff restructure which led to the outsourcing of payroll and accountancy roles to external contractors. Although the funding crisis is unlikely to subside dramatically in the short term, we retain a positive outlook and a sense of cautious optimism for the coming year.

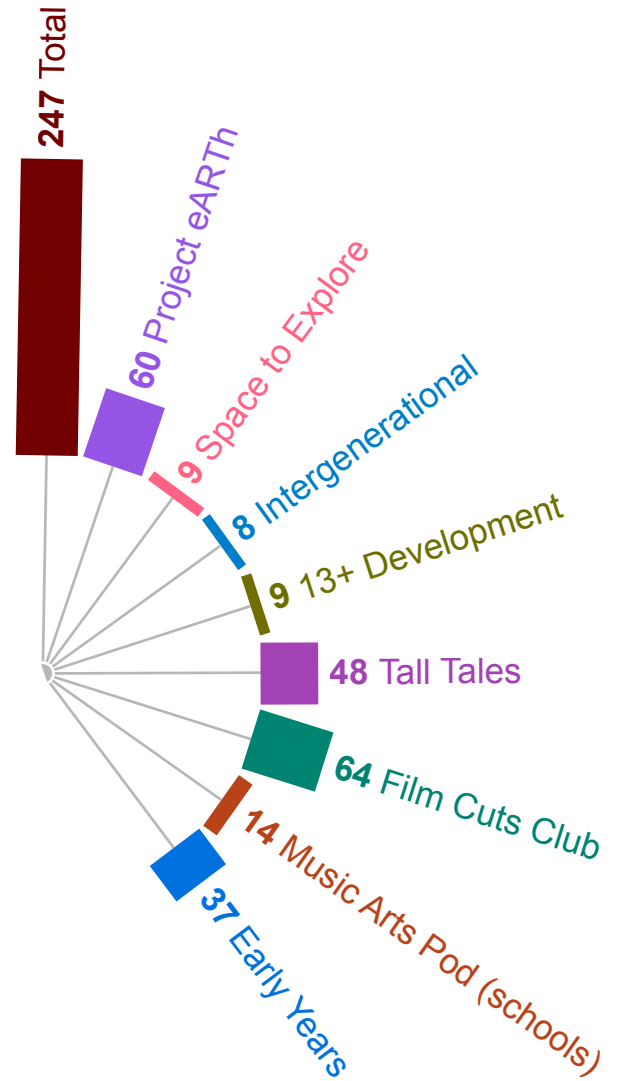
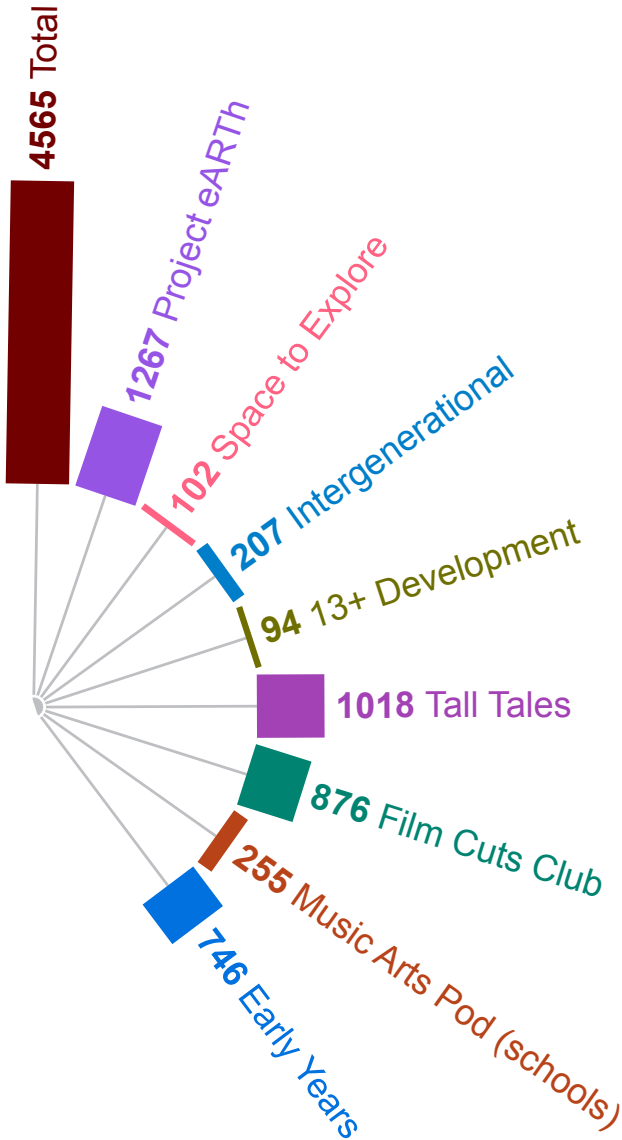
Barbara Walmsley, Chair of Trustees

OUR IMPACT

Number of Participant Sessions*

* 1 Participant session =
1 person in 1 half day workshop

Number of Workshops



Tall Tales includes Easter and summer

Evaluation methods vary by project, but these charts opposite give two examples of the impact tracked.

“I feel like I could talk about not just film... but also stuff at home”

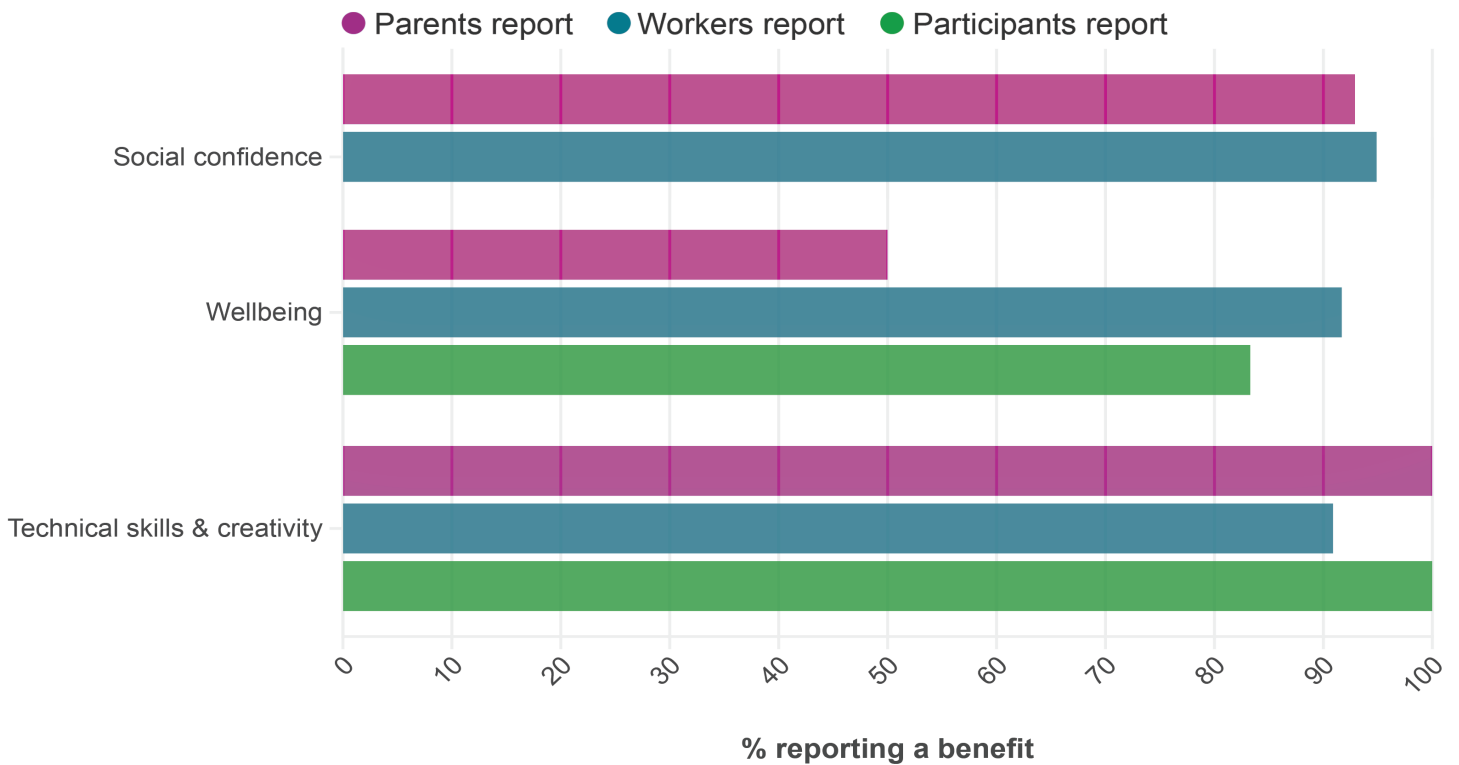
“It’s helped me towards this self-discovery”

Film Cuts Club participants

“She’s working as part of a group rather than just watching from the sidelines”

Film Cuts Club parent

Film Cuts Club impact

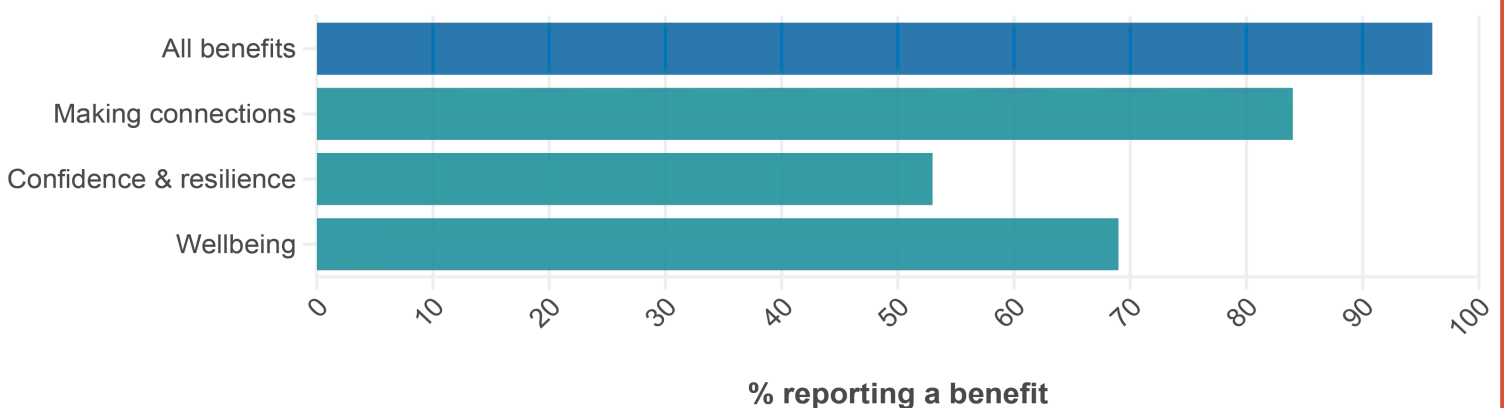


Participant hard data is limited.
Wellbeing rating only recently introduced.

“He has learned a huge amount about how to use drawn animation apps – he has pursued their use passionately”

Film Cuts Club worker

Project eARTh impact



‘Project eARTh is a lifeline to me and without art I would end up in hospital...it is the only thing that alleviates my symptoms of anxiety. Without it, I would be completely isolated and unable to cope with the most mundane problems’

Project eARTh participant

ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

Adult programme:

The adult programme this year included the long running arts and mental health 'Project eARTH' and a new project, 'Space to Explore' for neurodivergent participants.



Project eARTH

is a community arts for mental health project for adults in the High Peak area. It has now been running for over 14 years. The project runs two weekly groups, one in New Mills and another in

Buxton. This year, there were often approx. 25 participants in each group.

Projects in this year:

Silk Painting.

Both groups continued to work with artist Sara Blackburn to create sets of silk painted flags and banners for community events and venues – Buxton Fringe Festival, Buxton Pride Picnic, Poole's cavern, Rock Mill Centre, and the One World Festival – unveiled in June 2023.

Townend Mosaics. The Buxton group continued working with artist Tracey Cartledge on making two 750mm circular mosaics for Townend Community Garden in Chapel-en-le-Frith – on the gardening theme of flowers, fruit and vegetables. The mosaics were unveiled in September 2023 by the Deputy Mayor of the High Peak at a Celebratory Tea Party at the Community Garden.

Sounds That Soothe. In June and July 2023, the New Mills group continued working with artist Ian Pringle to create soundscapes of relaxing sounds – e.g. woodland



walk and seascapes and the resulting soundscapes are on our website.

The Cranky.

From September to November 2023, the Buxton group worked with artist



Lois Blackburn to create a 'Cranky'. This is a wooden structure, like an open TV, through which you 'crank' scrolls, so the images on it pass across the 'screen'. The group made two scrolls illustrating local landscapes, landmarks and wildlife, as well as changing seasons. We held an unveiling event in late November, and then the Cranky was displayed in the Green Man Gallery in Buxton over Christmas and until the end of March 2024.

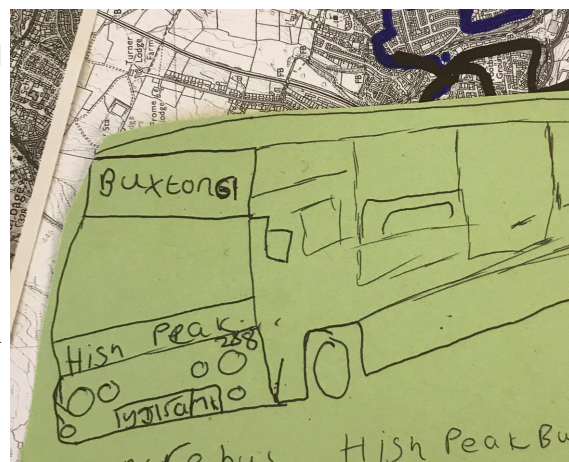
Felted Animal and Landscapes. In Autumn 2023, and then into January 2024, The New Mills group worked with artist Carol Wilson to make felted animals (owls, foxes and badgers) and some landscapes (building on work done in intergenerational holiday workshops). The landscapes will be made into wall hangings for St. Matthews Church Hall in Hayfield after the Showcase Event in September 2024.



Printing and Zines. In November 2023, the Buxton group worked with artists Mandy and Charlie Collins on a two week project to do a variety of printing methods, and then makes mini zines from the prints.

Route 61 Creative Writing Project. In autumn 23 / winter 24, both groups worked with poet Genevieve Carver on creative writing, to create a book inspired by the 61 Bus Route between Buxton and Glossop. They looked at the places on the route, the nature, landscape, towns, villages, history, and other themes, memories and experiences that participants felt inspired to write about.

The book was launched on March 28th 2024 and 20 of the poems are now displayed as A4 posters on High Peak Buses.



ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

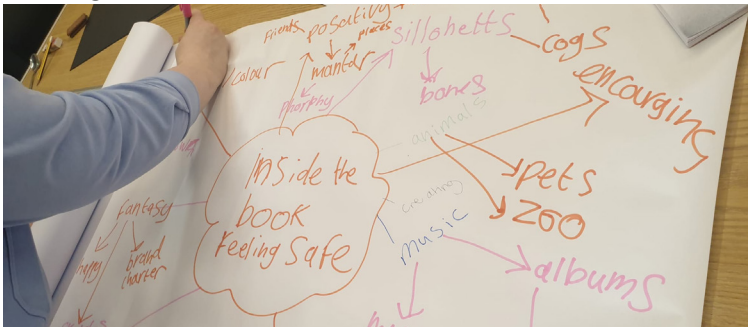
Doves of Peace' Textile Printing Project. In February and March 2024, the New Mills group worked with artist Joanna Allen to create 3D doves from collograph printing onto calico. The resulting flock of 26 doves was unveiled at a Celebratory Event on 27th, and were displayed over the summer 2024, culminating with a special service for World Peace on Sunday 15th September.



Papier Mâché Animals. In March and April 2024, the Buxton group worked with artist Patty Callaghan to make papier mâché animals of their choice. People mainly chose their favourite pets, so we had dogs, cats, guinea pigs and hamsters, but also a tiger, fox, hedgehog and a sheep.



Space to Explore is a new project for neurodivergent participants which we started planning in November 2023, with workshops in Hayfield from January 2024 onwards. The aim is for neurodivergent participants to meet in a smaller group (up to 12) and use creativity to explore and further understand their neurodivergent identity. The project also includes ND training for staff, trustees, volunteers and artists.



Workshops included:

Making Zines. The group worked with artist Charlie Collins, exploring themes of 'Safe Spaces' to create individual zines and a collective zine.

With artist Andrea Joseph, the group explored communication through illustration.

Intergenerational Programme: It's In Our Nature

In May 2023 we won funding from The People's Projects, through a public vote run by ITV Granada Reports. This funding contributed to the adult and children's programmes this year, but we also ran intergenerational



workshops in October and February half terms, with workshops in printing led by artist Louise Janetta, wet felting by artist Carol Wilson, film making with filmmaker Mark Turton; story making with artist Gordon MacLellan and developing story ideas for Tall Tales with writer and filmmaker Benn Turton.



ARTISTIC PROGRAMME

Youth Arts & families:

A broad programme to widen access to the arts from the earliest age, with development for those interested in creative careers. Most of this programme is funded by the National Foundation for Youth Music and Arts Council England.

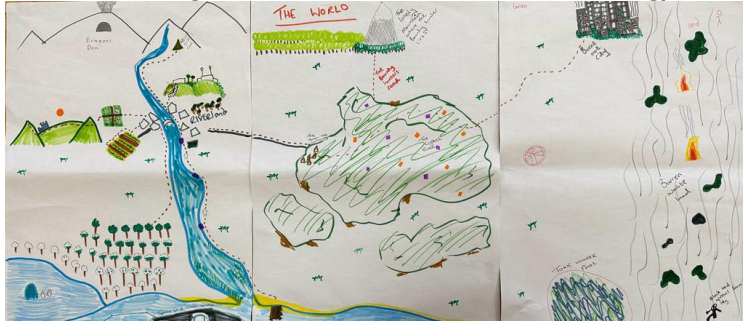
Film Cuts Club

This year we completed our Children in Need Covid Responses funding, and ran a public crowdfunding campaign to match the People's Project funds we had



won in May. Our regular filmmakers, Mark & Benn Turton completed the 2023 season with a screening for friends and family. When we launched the new season of Saturday workshops in September 2023 we introduced the 'Nature & Wellbeing' theme to link all our work for It's In Our Nature. We continued with the two half hour 'intro' workshops

– ranging from character design or model making, to crewing a film shoot, to audio recording and folio sound - with the rest of the day left free to develop individual ideas. The first few weeks focused on 'world building' where we imagined a future time where technology



has been wiped out, and humankind has been forced to return to nature. This allowed freedom for individuals to create their own ideas within this frame. During this year the group have produced 12 individual ideas or episodes which link around the world created, with characters from one story appearing as cameos in other people's ideas. 8 young people are working towards their Arts Awards at Explore, Bronze and Silver level and 3 young adult volunteers have continued to build their skills in supporting the group.



Music Arts Pod

Reduced funding has led us to review this programme of work and focus on taster activity to signpost into our out-of-school projects.

Young Writers' Camp

We were awarded Holiday Activity & Food funds once again, so we ran a four day creative camp at Easter, where Mark Turton, Lucy Jackson and Gareth Carbery ran the 2023 Young Writers' Camp for age 8+ with the theme of Under the Sea. We started with a masterclass in character and story with local artist Gordon



MacLellan. A further 3 days created a range of song and story ideas and an immersive, sensory underwater room at Buxton Community School.

Tall Tales

From May 2023 Gareth Carbery and Lucy Jackson ran 10 weeks of evenings sessions from Gamesley Community Centre and Fairfield Adult Education Centre, providing musical instrumental playing, creative writing, song writing and visual arts for young people age 8+.



It felt like we were back on track with recruitment, as people returned from last year, bringing more friends. They were also able to build on



skills and interests from last year, and were better able to think of individual goals.

Once again we had additional income from the Holiday Activity & Food Fund and also Shared Prosperity Funding, so we were able to extend our Summer School to 9 days. Andrea Joseph, Lucy Jackson, Mark Turton, Trixi Bold and Gareth Carbery provided the regular artforms of music, vocals, drama, dance, film and visual arts, with Joseph Doubtfire from Leo & Hyde bringing the VR headsets to create digital projections for the



show. On 21st August 2023 we presented Hidden Depths in Glossop Methodist Church – which pulled us under the sea, to the world of Poseidon and the Ocean Goddess, where we did the crab dance and mermaids tried to save the seas. The full film is available on our YouTube channel.

13+ development:

This year we teamed up with the Heritage Action Zone in Buxton to deliver music development workshops for older teens, which culminated as part of the 'Illuminate Buxton' public event in February 2024, where our group hosted a Youth Takeover, live music stage at the bottom of the Slopes. We continue to support volunteer



opportunities and young workers within the youth programme, and one of our original Kickstart workers has taken a new role on the Space to Explore neurodivergent project.

Arts Award & Young Steering Group

Young people in Film Cuts Club and Tall Tales continue to work towards Arts Awards, however completion and moderation were paused while we moved office.

Early Years

We continued to provide early years music workshops in New Mills East and Gamesley, and this year added a term



of sensory arts, which was welcomed by the children, families and leaders of the groups.



ACCOUNTS

Copies of the accounts for 2023-2024 are available on request from the Registered Office (email your details to lidija@highpeakarts.org) or can be viewed online via the Companies House website (www.companieshouse.gov.uk, searching for company number 2036083).

FUNDING

High Peak Community Arts is an independent membership organisation, company limited by guarantee (2036083) and registered charity (517887).
During the year 2023-2024, revenue funding was received from:
High Peak Borough Council
Foundation Derbyshire
The Friends of High Peak Community Arts
Other donations and earned income.

We raise funds independently and additionally for all our artistic activity. During 2023-2024 funding for projects was received from:

The National Lottery Community Fund – Reaching Communities
Arts Council England – Project Grants
The National Foundation for Youth Music
Department for Education, Holiday Activity & Food Fund
Derbyshire Music Education Hub
Derbyshire County Council
The Arts Society
Mind
The Bingham Trust
Tesco Bags of Help
High Peak CVS
High Peak Borough Council Councillor's Initiative Fund



The Bingham
Trust



YOUTH
MUSIC



Supported using public funding by

ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND

PEOPLE

High Peak Community Arts is managed by a voluntary board, who are trustees of the charity. They are drawn from our members. We strive to be accountable to our community and so we actively encourage broad membership.

Patron

Dame Joan Bakewell, Baroness Bakewell of Stockport

Ambassadors

Bella Hardy
Helen Mort
George King

Trustees 2023-2024:

Dawn Bryan – Chair
Pam Garside – Secretary
Lucy Rennie – Treasurer, resigned 11/23
Ann Lyon
Maia Preston
Jean Rushby
Caroline Storr
Barbara Walmsley
Andrew Worrall
Gill Scott, elected 11/23
Lorna Young, elected 11/23

Membership

There are currently more than 400 members.

Staff

Alison Bowry – Arts, Health and Wellbeing Programme Manager
Sophie Mackreth – Youth Arts Programme Manager
Susie Bennett – Finance & Administration Manager, resigned 11/23

Lidija McKnight – Fundraising Manager, Operations and Fundraising Manager from Jan 24

Freelance Artists

We contract freelance artists to work within our projects, bringing in a range of arts skills including music, drama, dance, visual arts, and digital arts.

High Peak Community Arts exists to create opportunities for people to participate in creative arts and develop their quality of life through self-expression, focussing on people who have less access to the arts.

We work with agencies, special needs groups, schools, community organisations and individuals to generate participatory arts projects across the High Peak.

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Twitter: @HighPeakComArts

Instagram: @highpeakcomarts

Registered Charity No. 517887

Company Registered in England No. 2036083



Department
for Education



High Peak Borough Council
working for our community