



Make the Sunshine CiC

# IMPACT REPORT 2022-23



## Make the Sunshine Overview

2022-23 saw us re-emerge from Covid-19 with a renewed determination to bring communities together and to use creativity to improve wellbeing and social connection and create hope and joy for the communities we work with.

### IMPACT SNAPSHOT

**4475**

Live Audience Reach

**1258**

Workshop participants

**10099**

Attendances

# OVERVIEW

## PROJECTS

## DETAILS

## OUTCOMES

### Creative Communities

Inspiring creative performances and workshops for older adults from opera to bellydance

- Building networks with GPs, bereavement charities and isolated older adults and reducing isolation
- A sense of hope, ambition, positivity, fun and friendship
- Increasing diversity

### 374 Ways to Change the World

A year long programme exploring art as social change with young people

- Six public social-change commissions led by young people: skills included puppetry, shadow puppetry, printmaking
- Professional performance opportunity for 120 children

### The Happiness Hunt

Connecting schools and Care Homes

- Bringing two schools and care homes in Frome together through performances
- 6 Happiness Hunt Box exchanges

### Once Upon a Dance

Professional dance experiences connecting a huge range of people across communities in Mendip

- Increase in confidence, self esteem, reducing isolation, learning new skills through creative dance sessions
- Engaging 37 new older adult dancers
- Bringing together 12 groups and professional performers
- Special focus on young people with ASD and older adults

### Mendip Together

Professional performances across Mendip bringing communities together

- From magical fire spectacles to BSL incorporated shows, from ancient shadow puppetry magic and stories of the stars to intergenerational tea parties

### All the World's Our Playground

An annual festival of magical family theatre and walkabout wonderfulness programmed by young people

- An amazing free theatre experience providing families without access to this provision a first taste of theatre
- The only UK festival programmed by primary aged children

### Arts Ambassadors

Working with 20 young people from 6 schools

- Gaining skills, experience and confidence in arts management, programming and creativity and gaining their Discover Arts Award



## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

# 61

Shows in rural communities

# 146

Workshops

# BRINGING DIVERSE COMMUNITIES TOGETHER

We don't want people to just 'enjoy' theatre – we want to create experiences that last a lifetime, build meaningful connections across generations and inspire a sense of possibility and ambition. Most importantly we want young people's voices to be valued and active in our community.

## BBC MAKE A DIFFERENCE FINALIST

Our Director, Louise Lappin-Cook is a finalist in the BBC Somerset "Make a Difference Awards for The Together Award 2023. "Awarded to an individual or group of people who encourage diversity within their community. They do this by creating real change and breaking down barriers, bringing people from different walks of life together for a common cause." There were 11,000 applications nationally for BBC Make a Difference Awards

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

21

Different Venues and performance spaces

47

Artists and performers

0-102

Ages we have worked with



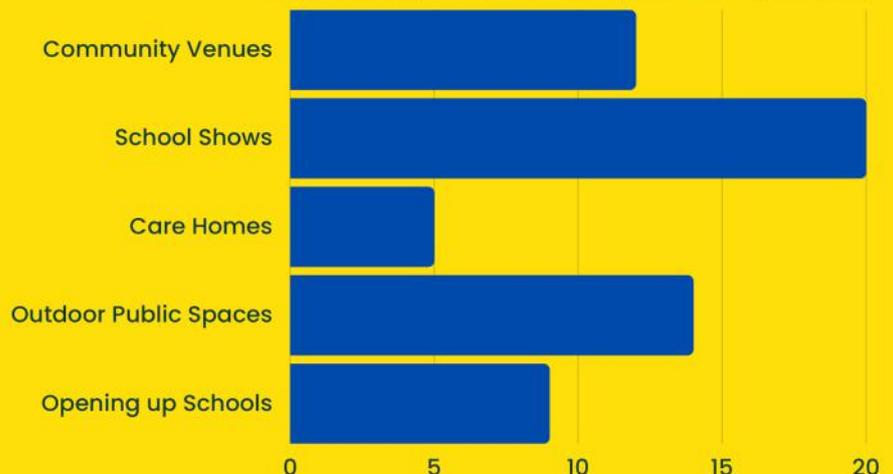
“Make the Sunshine are naturally gifted at hosting extremely well organised community events that enable participation of large numbers of members of the public in an inclusive and positive way.”

**Cllr Matt Harisson, Chair of Shepton Mallet Town Council**

The quality of work that we have seen from Make the Sunshine is without fail, exceptional. Time has been taken to find the best, care has been taken to deliver the best. **Caroline Owen, Head of School, St Paul's C of E VC Junior School**

This was such a brilliant project to be involved in. The residents loved it, as did the school children. **Steph Myler, Activities Coordinator**

## Venues for shows in 2022-23



# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

For many we offer a first experience of theatre. These experiences offer young people and families ways to explore the world, new ideas around play, interaction and development and most importantly a sense of ambition, escapism, fun and links into their communities.

In a town with no theatre, poor transport links and high levels of deprivation we strive to ensure every primary age child can enjoy the magic of theatre. We work strategically in partnership with schools to increase access to creative provision and to embed creative teaching.

24% of Mendip's population are children – the highest of all Somerset's districts.

In the communities we work with, 15.6 % of people in Shepton Mallet live in very high areas of deprivation (compared to 3.9% Somerset Average), 13.2% live in above average deprivation.



"This opportunity has had such a positive impact on the physical engagement, confidence, self esteem and social skills of the pupils involved. It was incredible to see the children grow so much in confidence and this was on show in their performance at the most amazing evening at St Paul's. The way our pupils performed but also stayed and respected / supported their fellow peers was phenomenal and an achievement in itself., **Martin Lenihan, Head of PE, The Mendip School, A specialist school for young people with ASD and speech and communication challenges**

In the last three years the likelihood of young people having a mental health problem has increased by 50% (Mental Health of Children report 2020 NHS)



"I was genuinely amazed by the process and how you got the children to understand programming, this has been such an important experience",

**Holly Wilson,  
Bowlish Infant School**

**IMPACT  
SNAPSHOT**

**11**

Schools



# CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

- We want to empower, grow and nurture young people's imagination and confidence with amazing creative experiences.
- We want to enhance skills in performing arts
- We want to reach every child in our area
- We want young people's voices to be valued and active in our community in decision making



“

Thank you for what you have done. It has really raised her self-esteem and I hope increased confidence as she moves to secondary school.  
L's mum



“

"The projects have allowed our pupils to learn new skills, find new passions and the impact on their confidence and self-esteem has been incredible" Head of School

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

# 20

Arts Ambassadors receiving their Arts Award Discover from Trinity College London



# OLDER ADULTS

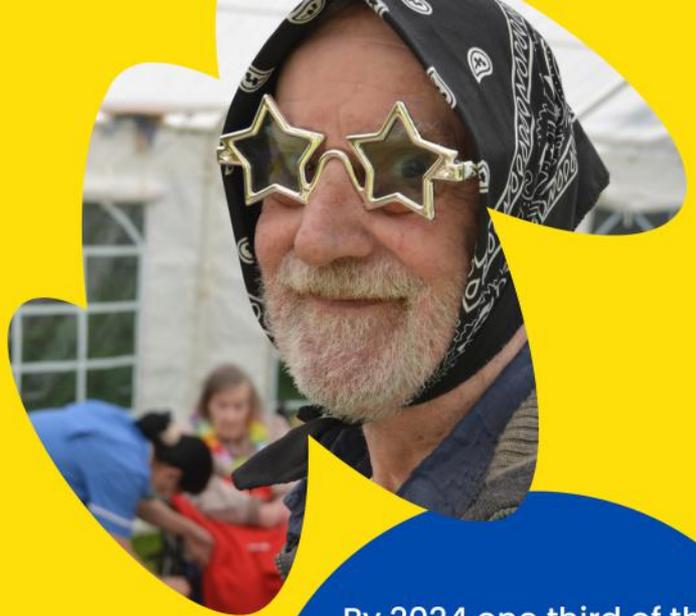
Being older shouldn't mean you stop growing and changing and yet too often older age can come with routine, limitations and isolation. We work in care homes and in the community to bring joy, connection and new experiences that get people talking and sharing memories and experiences. Seeing something new, laughing with your neighbour, feeling hopeful and experimenting are some of the outcomes we love best

## IMPACT ON WELLBEING

- 100% said sessions has given them something to look forward to
- 100% found sessions exciting
- 100% found atmosphere welcoming
- 100% said they tried something new in sessions
- 75% said they had made new friends through the sessions
- 90% said sessions made them feel more positive
- 100% said they wanted to return



Creative Communities has lifted my spirits and revitalised me. This has helped with my self confidence, especially joining something on my own not knowing people previously – many thanks



By 2024 one third of the population in Somerset will be over 65. Somerset's population is older and ageing faster than the national average (Somerset Council)



"Make the Sunshine is a vital community building chariot for older people in Shepton Mallet, providing a safe and supportive environment for many retired and often frail elderly people to come together, engage creatively, stay warm and have a positive and stimulating experiences. I was lucky enough to run a poetry session with the group a few months ago, who were numerous (30-40), all happy and engaged. I was also impressed by the organisation, care and resources."

Liv Torc, Spoken Word Artist  
Director of Hot Poets and Haiflu

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

**550**

Attendances

**24**

Creative Sessions

# WHERE WE WORK

We work across Mendip with a special focus on Shepton Mallet where we are based.

We work in every primary school in Shepton Mallet. We work in the surrounding villages and schools. We also work in communities in Frome.

We are passionate about working with people who traditionally get less of a say in how society is run.

We don't have an office - we work remotely and in this last year took performances to 21 different spaces indoor and outdoors.

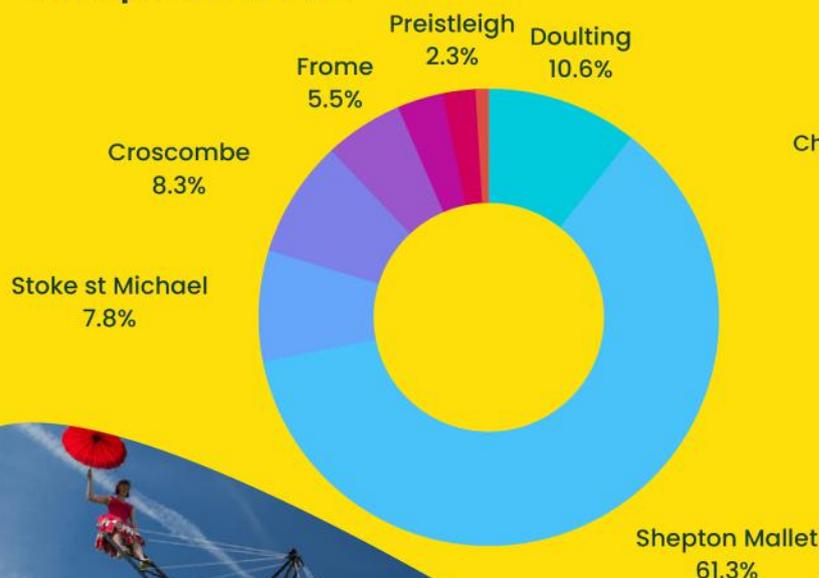
We are passionate about using creativity to open up new community spaces and to encourage us to look at places afresh



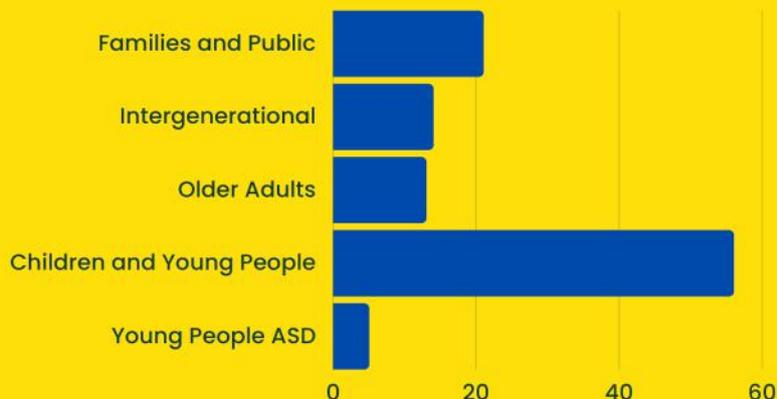
PaddleBoat Theatre has loved working with Make the Sunshine to bring shows and workshops to schools and libraries around Shepton Mallet. The events always have an amazing turn out and relaxed atmosphere - MTS really understand how to engage young people in the community by hosting events in spaces families know and feel safe accessing.

## Areas of work in 2022

**60% in Shepton Mallet**  
**40% in surrounding villages and wider Mendip communities**



## Focus of our events in 2022



The bringing together of so many schools, the community groups and to project such a strong message touched my heart and made me cry. Thank you for making our lovely town such a wonderful place to live and for bringing together the generations and making us all think about what is important. Thank you. Thank you.,  
 Chrissi Kennedy, Director of Shepton Mallet Snowdrop Festival

# OUR FUTURE AMBITIONS

	2023-24	2024-25
<b>CONNECT</b> - bringing diverse communities together	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop our collaboration and partnership with a specialist ASD school creating shared experiences with local primaries</li> <li>Regular transport and outreach for Creative Communities</li> <li>Increase the number of intergenerational events to 16 per annum</li> <li>Develop theatre workshops offer in care homes with regular commitment</li> <li>Explore autism dance company</li> <li>Launch phase 2 of the Happiness Hunt across 6 local schools and care homes with accompanying events</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop schools network in Frome</li> <li>Outreach Officer post increased to 3 days per week</li> <li>Expand Creative Communities programme with two monthly sessions</li> <li>Develop strategic relationship with Shepton Mallet Town Council and Frome Town Council for events delivery and family and public programmes</li> <li>Increase Intergenerational events to 18</li> <li>Launch phase 3 of the Happiness Hunt creating online materials for wider reach</li> <li>Balance of programme 50% Shepton Mallet, 50% surrounding villages and areas</li> </ul>
<b>CREATE</b> - high quality arts experiences for all	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increase schools regularly working with from 6 to 8</li> <li>Arts Ambassadors to commission artists to celebrate 5 years of all the world our playground - expand reach, capacity and scope of festival</li> <li>My Memory Jar and Me and shared intergenerational production</li> <li>Continue to increase diversity of artists on our Plays in the Playground programme to reflect the global majority</li> <li>Focus on physical theatre, verbatim and puppetry</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Establish annual event with Frome School programmed by young people</li> <li>Fundraising officer in place to support increased delivery (1-2 days per week)</li> <li>Focus on contemporary, international and street dance and storytelling through dance shared community production with schools, care homes and community groups</li> </ul>
<b>INSPIRE</b> - trying new ideas and raising ambitions and professional opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed Arts Award into production preparation with 160 Explore candidates</li> <li>Develop Arts Award for SEND settings</li> <li>Develop Arts Ambassadors programme with a range of professional speakers</li> <li>Taking risks with excellent artists - experimenting</li> <li>Build our relationship with larger national arts bodies e.g. Outdoor Arts, WithoutWalls etc</li> <li>Explore strategic relationships with The Octagon and The Egg</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Embed Arts Award into production preparation</li> <li>Shared Arts CPD sessions across all schools</li> <li>Annual arts day / event shared across schools</li> </ul>
<b>TOGETHER</b> - co-creation, ensuring community voices are heard and valued	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop All the World's Our Playground festival in its 5th year - expand programme and concept</li> <li>Develop programming workshops and establish a toolkit</li> <li>Establish a Make the Sunshine Youth Board and ways of working</li> <li>Develop and lead a youth arts survey with primary aged children in all schools</li> <li>Shared wellbeing measure across schools for arts engagement using ACE metrics</li> <li>Offer youth volunteering programme alongside youth board experiences</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the World's Our Playground marketing to be youth-led and volunteering opportunities embedded</li> <li>Embed Youth Arts Charter with local schools network with shared vision for arts engagement</li> <li>Youth Board to feed into local arts governance and developed volunteering experiences for young people</li> </ul>

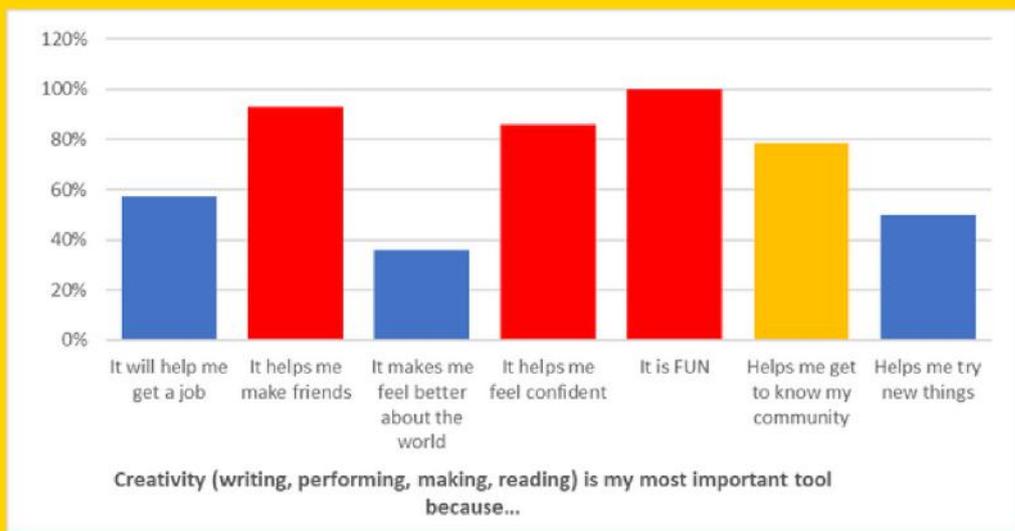


# OUR STRATEGIC PLAN WITH PARTNER SCHOOLS

## Young people's ambitions for Shepton Mallet

We ran a two hour creative session with young people aged 6-13 to explore their feelings about creativity and why its important and to find out where they think the focus of our work should be going forward. Their core vision identified that

- **We want Shepton Mallet to be the most creative place to grow up in the UK**
- **We want Shepton Mallet to be a place where creativity makes everyone friends**



## Key Findings

For young people involved we found the main reasons they feel creativity and performing arts was so important was in helping them to:

- Make friends and new social connections
- Develop their confidence and self esteem
- And as a way of having fun

**100% of children felt they needed more creative opportunities in schools**

**100% of children surveyed said that performing helps them grow in confidence**

**79% said that they felt it was important for young people to make decisions about their town**

**2023-4**

Design a survey around creativity, wellbeing and creative engagement for young people aged 4-11

Establish School Programming Panels

Establish a Youth Board for Make the Sunshine of young people aged 7-16 with a training programme

Embed Arts Award into all MTS school projects and standardise feedback measures across all events

**2024-5**

Work with students and schools to Create an Arts Charter that local schools sign up to

Students making key creative decisions in schools and in the community

Youth Board to advise on governance and feed into MTS decision making

Schools to begin working towards Arts Mark Status and each school to make an arts plan

**2025-6**

Establish a Cultural Educational Partnership to create community links and funding to support its delivery

Youth board to feed into Shepton Mallet Town Council strategy

Shared Arts CPD across schools  
At least 2 Schools achieving Arts Mark Status

# ARTISTS AND COMPANIES WE WORK WITH

From nationally and regionally celebrated acts such as The Wardrobe Ensemble, Liv Torc, Brook Tate, Pirates of the Caribina, Paddleboat Theatre, Scratchworks Theatre, Wassail, aKa Dance Theatre and Theatre Alibi; to micro companies and incredible local artists who are experts in their field. From Glastonbury Festival sensations to some the South Wests most creative performers, storytellers and makers. We are so grateful to the amazing companies and artists we have had the opportunity to work with.

“

Make the Sunshine bridge the gap between artists and audiences and put people at the heart of everything they do. If there's an event curated by Louise and the Make team you can guarantee it will be top notch! It's safe to say that creativity in Shepton Mallet and surrounding areas has grown greatly since Make the Sunshine arrived. They are a credit to Somerset, Jenny Grant, Director aKa Dance Theatre

“

My experience of working with Make the Sunshine has been incredible. The first performance I was a part of absolutely blew me away ( 374 Ways to Change the World). I taught just a small part and when I watched the whole performance I was in tears- the way in which it had been put together with the children's ideas and voices was so thought provoking, engaging and emotional, I felt blessed to be part of such an amazing piece of work, Bekki Oats, Choreographer and Dance Teacher



“

The care and attentiveness that this company has and the impact it creates for its community is incredibly important and was clear from our first meeting. Danny the Fire Performer

## IMPACT SNAPSHOT

18

Volunteers

56

Artists



# THANK YOU TO ALL OUR FUNDERS AND VOLUNTEERS AND SUPPORTERS

Thank you to all of our supporters and volunteers who have made this work possible

**Creative Mendip**  
**Frome Town Council**  
**Mendip Community Fund**  
**Shepton Mallet Town Council**  
**Somerset Community Foundation**  
**Somerset Sports and Activity Partnership**  
**Take Art BARN Fund**  
**Wells Festival of Literature**  
**Our partner schools and care homes**

Thank you to the amazing creative partners, volunteers, community organisations, artists, companies and staff who made this work possible. We are so grateful for all your support

“

Jellyfish Theatre have worked with Make the Sunshine twice on their "All the World's our Playground" festival in Shepton Mallet. Super organised, friendly, no fuss - we've found it really easy to work with Louise and her team - and really enjoyed the mix of local children performing alongside professional companies. Our Jungle Book show was selected by local young people. This seems a great way to encourage families to participate and attend events, bringing in large audiences and creating a cultural experience that is relevant to, and really belongs to the local community. Sarah Simpson, Artistic Director, Jellyfish Theatre

“

The impact it has had on so many people is amazing! Creating unity within a community in a world that can seem very divided and daunting to young people and adults too is a very special thing - you achieved that this weekend!",  
Claire Hitt, Audience Member



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