



# Shetland *arts*

## 2022 - 2023: Quarter 1

Report of activity relating to Social Outcomes

Case Studies: HIDE\_OUT, Shetland Youth Theatre Connections

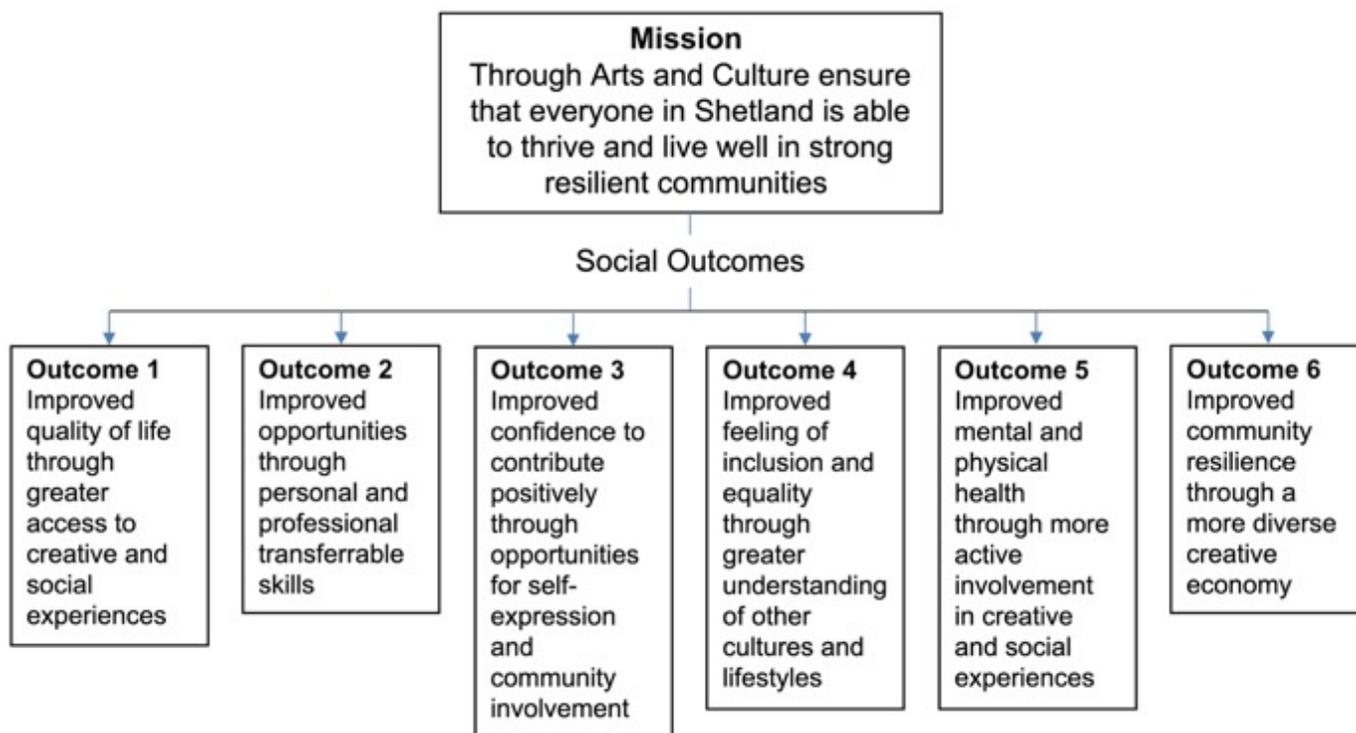
Interim Key Performance Indicator Statistics (appendix)



# Introduction

In the summer of 2020 as part of an overall review of strategy Shetland Arts developed a new mission and six supporting social outcomes. This work was done in response to a range strategy documents, including the Shetland Partnership Plan, Scottish Government's Islands Plan and Cultural Strategy alongside Creative Scotland's Priorities and Ambitions. This work was supported by the Social Value Lab and was formally adopted by the SADA Board of Trustees for implementation in April 2021.

We have used 2021-22 to transition to this new way of thinking about our work and this Q1 report for 2022-23 concludes that change. We now actively design our workplan using the social outcomes developed and report against them.



When planning an activity, we decide which two Social Outcomes it is our intention for the activity to deliver against. Many of our activities will deliver against more than two of our Social Outcomes, however our KPI reporting is only against the two outcomes we defined at the beginning of the project. In our narrative reporting we acknowledge that a participant or audience member may well have experienced a different impact than we intended, and we will make every attempt to capture their story.

# 1: Improved quality of life through greater access to creative and social experiences

This first quarter of 2022/23 has delivered a wide range of experiences aimed at improving the quality of life for the people of Shetland, from superheroes in the cinema to folk musicians on stage, via foreign language films and contemporary classical music – there has been something for everyone. Highlights include: **Top Gun: Maverick**, folk group **Fara**, **The Godfather Trilogy** and a classical recital from the **Scottish Ensemble**. We've had tears with Irish language drama **The Quiet Girl** and laughter with stand-up comedian **Gary Meikle**.

For children we had the action-packed and fully interactive show **Peter and the Wolf** courtesy of Children's Classic Concerts; for grown-ups, **The Red Note Ensemble** performed music by Lutoslawski, Thomas Ades and Aileen Sweeney. Cinema highlights for children included **Sonic the Hedgehog 2** and a double bill of tribute acts in early May brought smiles to many faces young and old.

Mareel hosted a wide variety of events promoted by other organisations in April, May and June, that provided access to creative and social experiences including:

- The joyful **Simmer Dim Song** brought the Mareel and environs alive with samba drumming and communal singing, a wonderful project led by Edinburgh-based singer and musician Heather Macleod.
- Five concerts were hosted as part of **Shetland Folk Festival**, which made a welcome return after a Covid hiatus.
- **Shetland's Got Talent**, a "fast moving, fun, local talent show" featuring a diverse range of local talent of all ages and descriptions raised a healthy sum for Cancer Research UK's Relay for Life
- **Young Fiddler of the Year**, the annual competition held over two days organised by the Shetland Folk Society.
- The **Saltire Awards**, which celebrates and recognises young people's volunteering achievements
- The **Bergen Shetland Race** reception, a prize giving and social event for participants and supporters of the annual sailing event
- **GLK Promotions** promoted tribute band Little Mix Magic, along with well-received shows featuring ABBA, Cher and Shania Twain tribute acts.

The Garrison Theatre hosted **Islesburgh Drama Group's** hugely popular production of **Calendar Girls**, and the **Shetland Accordion and Fiddle Festival** committee's well-attended Variety Concert.

Venue Hirer. *"On behalf of the Simmer Dim Song production team, may I extend a hearty thank you to all the team at Mareel for a professional and excellent job of staging our show "Simmer Dim Song" on 18th June, a diverse and technically complicated production which was handled flawlessly."*

Review of Scottish Ensemble in Shetland News. *"It was an evening of calm contemplation and resonant beauty provided by the Scottish Ensemble, the UK's leading string orchestra.... If music is food for the soul my soul was nourished on Thursday. The lyrical sound of the strings resonated in my ears long after they had finished"*

## 2: Improved opportunities through personal and professional transferrable skills

This quarter has seen students working towards their final group awards for the 2021-22 academic year. This has been another challenging year with COVID restrictions testing the resolve of the tutors and students. We are very proud of everyone's achievements during these trying times.

**15 Skills for Work** 3rd year students were all successful in completing the necessary units to achieve their creative industries qualification (8 Skills for Work 4<sup>th</sup> year students previously completed their studies in March.)

**6 NC Creative Industries** students completed the final creative projects required to achieve the full NC group award.

**5 HNC Music** students achieved high marks for their final Graded Unit portfolios. Four of the five students achieved an A grade. Successful completion of the HNC enables all students to progress onto higher education establishments on the mainland.

Our **5 BA Contemporary Film Making** students continued to make progress through the academic stages of their degrees.

The academic year culminated in a **Student Showcase** at Mareel.

The Mareel education staff are continuing to promote and interview for all the courses during the summer break. So far numbers are looking promising. Both Skills for Work courses are fully subscribed, and a number of NC students are returning for the HNC music course. We will launch a **new drama strand** to the Skills for Work course in the coming year, and interest has been strong from potential students.

The **Upskilling Modules**, designed to provide information and guidance for creative practitioners on a number of topics (tax and finance, applying for opportunities, designing workshops etc.) are nearing completion. The freelance Project Manager and developers have gained skills and experience through working on this project, including content creation and e-learning pedagogy. The completed modules will be freely accessible and offer creative practitioners the chance to learn and improve their skills to enable them to progress their practice.

Mareel continued to provide rehearsal and meeting spaces for practitioners and arts groups, including **Lerwick Brass Band**.

Graduated student. *"I learned so much on this course. I don't think I realised how much I had learned till I started working!"*

### 3: Improved confidence to contribute positively through opportunities for self-expression and community involvement

This year's **Student Showcase** comprised a cinema screening of students' work from the 2021/22 academic year, followed by a concert in the Mareel Auditorium. Tutors and members of Shetland Arts' leadership team even joined the students onstage to contribute backing vocals for the final song! This end of year showcase and celebration of student's achievements is a real boost to their confidence as they get to see their finished films in a real cinema and perform onstage at Mareel in front of their peers, friends, family, and the public. It's an excellent way to round off the academic year.

For budding young film makers, **Film Crew** and **Film Crew PLUS** ran for 3 sessions in June/July. Film Crew PLUS is for those with more experience, and they can self-select if they feel ready for this class. This differentiation of classes allows for newcomers to feel welcome and work at a level that suits them, while Film Crew tutor **Keiba Clubb** can go more in depth with those with more experience. 11 attended Film Crew and 6 attended Film Crew PLUS. The participants and tutor were happy with these refinements and the classes will continue after the school holidays.

The **Young Musician Sessions** continued in Mareel's Café Bar, giving budding performers an opportunity to gain experience of playing live in front of supportive and appreciative audiences.

**Shetland Youth Theatre Company** met weekly throughout school term time, working with up to 12 young people at each session. These sessions, led by experienced practitioner **Stephenie Pagulayan**, were developmental, focussing on group work and the learning of technical theatre skills. Attendances were lower than the usual 18 due to the older participants in the company having their exams this term.

**Shetland Youth Theatre** also had an Easter Intensive, working with the company director to rehearse and refine the script for their entry into **National Theatre's Connections Festival**. 12 participants took part in this week-long intensive, with a visiting Director travelling from Glasgow to provide feedback to the company and participants.

The **Connections** festival was held at The Lowry in Manchester. 8 young people alongside the Company Director and Shetland Arts Sales and Communication Lead travelled to Manchester to take part in workshops, rehearsals and the performance (see Case Study blog).

Audience Member. *"What a super event the Student Showcase was last night! I'd really appreciated it if you would pass on my thanks and congratulations to all involved."*

## 4: Improved feeling of inclusion and equality through greater understanding of other cultures and lifestyles

After a long delay due to Covid-19 we were able to welcome **Holly Veselka** to Shetland in May for her month-long residency at The Booth in Scalloway, as part of the **XCHANGE** programme. This international partnership was established between Shetland Arts and the McNay Art Museum in San Antonio, Texas, in 2020 as part of the Art Fund (UK)/Association of Art Museum Curators (US) engagement programme, with the intention of building a relationship between two curators. Whilst all these programme plans changed due to Covid-19, the dialogue and the ambition to build a creative connection between the two places remained.

Virtual discussions highlighted unexpected similarities between the two locations, most notably the dependency on extraction economy in remote, treeless landscapes, particularly in relation to the oil industry and renewable futures. This formed the basis of a proposal to connect international visual artists, with the scope to work digitally and/or with moving image in these two settings, to explore themes around the economics of the natural resources in these distinct geographic areas within the context of the global environmental emergency. With significant additional funding from British Council, we were able to create this opportunity for an artist from Shetland and Texas to spend time in their exchange setting and work towards a final body of work on the theme of Extraction, Renewables, Environment & The Future.

Holly Veselka spent a month in Shetland and gave a free artist talk at Mareel on 27 May to illustrate the work she had carried out. This will lead on to the next stage of her project which has yet to be defined. Shetland-based artist filmmaker **Shona Main** will travel to Texas in November to complete her residency.

Shetland Arts hosted ***Caught in this Moment***, a play supported through the Life Changes Trust written and performed by someone with early onset dementia. It explores his relationship with Amazon Alexa and there was a discussion after the play about dementia and how aids such as Alexa can support people to maintain independence. As expected, there was a lamentably small audience, but they were extremely engaged, and the discussion was profound and helpful.

Cinema continued to be an excellent vehicle to allow Shetland audiences to gain insight into other languages, cultures, and lifestyles, with a broad range of international programming as part of our **Screen Horizons** strand.

Holly Veselka talk participant. *“On behalf of everyone here, I’d like to thank Holly. She’s completely changed the way I think about the relationship between nature and the oil industry”*

## 5: Improved mental and physical health through more active involvement in creative and social experiences

The **Creative Islands Network**, a **Culture Collective** programme, ran from August 2021 – April 2022, and had a wellbeing as its primary aim. We were delighted to secure further funding for another year of activities. Participants reported that the opportunity to (re)connect socially again after Covid restrictions interactions was positive for their wellbeing and motivation and gave many groups confidence to restart activities and meetings after so long unable to do so. Participants and practitioners noted that projects creative a 'buzz' for people and places and 'something to look forward to.' For some participants, especially those who had been isolated and shielding, project activities became a talking point that could precipitate further conversations among their communities. Practitioners commented that projects allowed them to get to know and develop relationships with people in their own communities in new ways and so feel more connected. The programme also provided opportunities for creative practitioners to meet with each other, and the peer support network developed was also felt to be valuable for both wellbeing and professional development.

A successful application for further funding means we can run a second round of the Culture Collective programme. Opportunities were advertised in April/May 2022 and practitioners selected in June 2022. Projects will run from August 2022 – April 2023 and once again focus on wellbeing.

Through funding from The Creative Learning Network via SIC Creative Links, Shetland Arts and Shetland Islands Council co-delivered **HIDE\_OUT**, a creative project in Sandwick Junior High School with Secondary 1 pupils to support wellbeing, art and design (see Case Study).

**Wellbeing Choir**, led by **Sue Briggs**, began again with a programmed 5 sessions. We knew that reintroducing these sessions may take some time due to the vulnerable nature of many of the participants. It is also noted that during lockdown singing was banned and therefore many people feel even more self-conscious than before about singing with others. The first session had no participants; however, this gave the tutor a chance to meet our newly appointed Creative Assistants who will support the sessions. Numbers for the other sessions grew steadily; participants have been asking for them to return, as had a spokesperson from Mind Your Head.

Shetland Arts has worked collaboratively with **Alzheimer Scotland** to host sessions in literature and dance. The literature sessions took the form of **The Big Red Book**, allowing participants to revisit old memories and write them down, with support from carers. These sessions had guest artists. **Dance for Dementia** took place on Wednesdays in the Mareel Auditorium with up to 10 participants attending each week. These sessions were incredibly popular, and the group have asked for them to return in the Autumn.

**Bookbug**, Shetland Arts and Shetland Library's ever popular song, rhyme and fun sessions for babies and toddlers continued in Mareel's café mezzanine.

Participant. *"Dance for Dementia!! It's absolutely amazing! I think we'd be stupid to end this group"*

## 6: Improved community resilience through a more diverse creative economy

**Culture Collective**, funded by Creative Scotland, supports freelance creative practitioners in Shetland through grants to deliver creative projects with communities. In round one, which ended in April 2022, 14 creative practitioners received a share of £65,000 and delivered activities across the islands including Unst, Yell, Papa Stour, Bressay, Fair Isle and Fetlar as well as Mainland Shetland. In round two of Culture Collective, which recruited practitioners in May and June 2022, 8 creative practitioners will split a total of £45,500 to deliver activity over the next 9 months.

Creation of the **Creative Upskilling Modules**, supported by Creative Scotland, is nearly concluded. As well as providing accessible skills development from creative practitioners in Shetland and beyond, this project directly supported 14 freelance practitioners with a total of £30,500. This included freelancers creating the e-learning modules – writing, filming, construction of modules – as well as contributions from a variety of Shetland-based creative practitioners who were filmed for inclusion in the e-learning.

Mareel and Bonhoga Gallery continued to provide **retail spaces** for a variety of artists and creative practitioners.

**Visual Arts and Crafts Makers Awards**, funded by Creative Scotland and Shetland Islands Council, has supported 6 artists this year totalling £4,000. The scheme aims to support development in artists with emphasis on creativity as opposed to commercial emphasis on the artists' work. There have been 2 freelance artists on the panel for each round of applications, as well as input from Creative Scotland.

The **Scottish Ensemble** made use of the Mareel Recording Studio to capture their performance at Mareel in May for potential inclusion in a film documenting their tour.

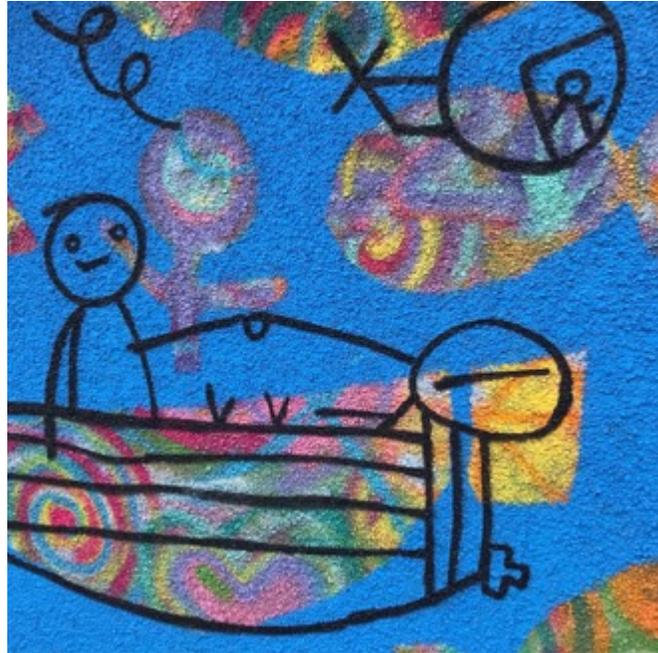
There were recording and mix sessions for **Freda Leask** and **The North Ness Boys** and **Random House** commissioned some recording sessions for recording and editing of an audiobook in April. **Stuart Hubbard**, **Charity Johnson** and **Bigton Collective** all recorded soundtracks for short films, and the **Shetland TV Series** returned for ADR and location recording in May.

Feedback from local creative. *“Just a quick note to say thank you. Xxxxxx and I work together as a team of filmmakers. The lockdown saw our workload and livelihoods seriously reduced, and during this time Shetland Arts have funded and assisted us with several projects. The funding not only saw us through a rough financial time, it allowed us to experiment and expand our practise.”*

Bonhoga Customer. *“Always a lovely display of Shetland Craft and Arts which can be purchased”*

## Case Study:

### **HIDE\_OUT: Sandwich Junior High + Mareel**



Through funding from The Creative Learning Network via SIC Creative Links, Shetland Arts and Shetland Islands Council delivered **HIDE\_OUT**, a creative project in Sandwich Junior High School with Secondary 1 pupils supporting wellbeing, art and design (March - June 2022).

The Creative Learning Network Fund supports local authorities to build capacity for creativity across leadership, learning, teaching, assessment and achievement, and to support more creative and innovative approaches to curriculum design. This year the fund was principally concerned with using creative approaches to address the negative impacts the pandemic has had on learners' mental health and wellbeing.

**HIDE\_OUT** was devised and managed by Jane Matthews (SADA) with Noelle Henderson (SIC). With the project's aim to explore wellbeing and positive mental health as part of post-Covid recovery in school, it was decided to focus on the bike shed as a starting point, an inside/outside space marking a physical boundary between home and school, but also possibly a psychological boundary between comfort and discomfort, between fitting in and not fitting in. This offered scope for an exploration of wellbeing through creativity via a liminal, physical space outside the confines of the classroom, with the added benefit of being an exterior space that could be used if Covid restrictions continued to limit access into the classroom for visiting creative professionals.

Glasgow-based street artist and illustrator Ursula Kam-Ling Cheng was commissioned to develop and deliver the project via a series of creative workshops resulting in a permanent artwork for the school bike shed, reclaiming this space within school grounds for use by its young people and transforming an arguably ugly space into something that reflects its value as a sanctuary for the young people that use it. An additional artwork was commissioned for the façade of Mareel as a temporary public artwork, to acknowledge and celebrate whole project.

In February, Ursula introduced herself and the project to the whole S1 year in Sandwick via a recorded video and then sent disposable cameras for pupils to take photos of their journeys to and from school. In early March, Ursula led three days of creative workshops in person, in school, with the same pupils, using meditation, doodling & mark-making as a starting point. These were informal and relaxed sessions that allowed pupils to experiment with materials and expressive techniques that they had never used before, like charcoal, spray paint and inks. They had fun using Ursula's creative exercises to focus on mindfulness; drawing their own breathing patterns, drawing with their eyes closed and responding to their feelings and instincts rather than more traditional classroom methodologies. Pupils were enthusiastic, engaged and relished the opportunity to experiment.



Back in her studio, Ursula digitised all the class work and used it to create designs for the bike shed. She delivered an online session with the pupils in May, during which she showcased her creative approach and the processes involved in her professional practice, how she uses software to create her designs and how she translated the physical work done during the workshops into the final designs for the bike shed and Mareel.



Ursula returned in June to complete the work with the help of her team of young artists at Sandwick. All pupils were involved in the painting of the bike shed to create the mural designed by Ursula. Additional digital print elements on computer-cut aluminium panels were installed after the painting was complete, to create the final technicolour, mixed-media installation that will remain for years to come.



Simultaneously, the large vinyl artwork was installed across the front windows of Mareel. This brings the project to the wider community, celebrating the achievements of the project and the young people at Sandwick. The big colourful clouds of creativity will float over the front of the building all summer.



Ursula summarises the project: *“Everyone has the capacity to be creative and use their imaginations. These workshops in Sandwick allowed the young people to see that art can be used as a tool to treat anxiety, they can tune into the power of their senses and benefit from being mindful and present in every aspect of their lives. The work they created during these sessions directly influenced the overall outcomes of the bike shed ‘hide-out’ - this shared space between home and school - and the public artwork at Mareel. They were able to create the work with me as part of the process.”*

# Case Study: Shetland Youth Theatre: Connections

In early April, **Shetland Youth Theatre** members travelled to Salford. Here's a blog kept by Esther Renwick, one of the member's parents.

## Day 1

Shetland Youth Theatre are in Salford, Manchester today for the National Theatre Connections festival!

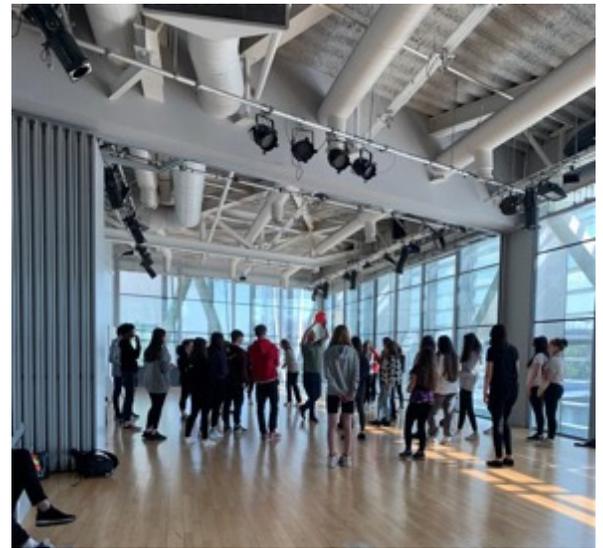


After a rather chaotic journey down and an extremely late night we're currently in tech rehearsals, then a full dress-rehearsal this afternoon, ahead of the performance of *The Ramayana Reset* tonight at The Lowry theatre!



## Day 2

The young people have been absolute heroes, they didn't even get into their rooms until after midnight (the hotel had double booked and had to taxi us to another Ibis in central Manchester) and they have worked so hard today! They are absolutely committed, have learnt a tricky play so well and are complete stars. The staff here were so impressed with their hard work and resilience that the Director of the Lowry...



...sneaked us (just SYT) into their matinee performance of *Strictly Come Dancing: The Professionals Tour* in their HUGE main auditorium (capacity 1,730)! 😊



The young people were totally overwhelmed - this is what Connections is about - the hard work, the commitment, the teamwork and then getting to perform in a big shiny venue down south! ❤️

Dress rehearsal done and we are all wired for the public performance tonight 🎭 🕺



## Day 3

The young people did amazingly last night, they really pulled out all the stops from the earlier rehearsals yesterday. It's been a tough run up with a variety of issues (mostly, but not exclusively, Covid-related) leading to a load of substitutions over the last few weeks, so the current cast have only been working on the play in their current roles for a few days. It was also great to see all these younger SYT members stepping up without the older SYT who have exams this week.

The production included a projected film again this year, incorporating cast members who couldn't travel due to exams (Connections sent us to England instead of Scotland so dates didn't work). This was an added challenge for the cast to react to when it was running behind them, but they all did brilliantly, and we had a lot of compliments on the performance. Older members worked as a production team at home, as an Assistant Director, Stage Manager and Costumer Designer. We also trialled an idea we were inspired by when Steph and I travelled to Germany - all the photos and video you will see on our posters and social media were shot by our in-house photographer this term, another SYT member.



Goodbye Manchester - that was an intense, unforgettable day!

Actuals (see footnote 1)	Concerts, Screenings, Exhibition Days				Attendances				Development Sessions				Participations			
	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q1
Delivered	310	248	366	924	19,248	11,936	23,800	54,984	105	145	73	323	688	637	1,075	2,400
Profiled Quarterly Target 22/23 (see footnote 2)				1,068				38,370				380				3,291
% of Target Delivered				87%				143%				85%				73%
Impact (see footnote 3)	Concerts, Screenings, Exhibition Days				Attendances				Development Sessions				Participations			
	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q1	Apr	May	Jun	Q1
Improved quality of life through greater access to creative and social experiences	278	212	316	806	14,090	11,273	21,035	46,398	9	18	36	63	136	43	607	786
Improved opportunities through personal and professional transferrable skills	52	34	43	129	6,041	598	2,124	8,763	79	124	17	220	361	571	213	1,145
Improved confidence to contribute positively through opportunities for self-expression and community involvement	33	35	33	101	5,198	638	1,799	7,635	69	108	27	204	494	519	351	1,364
Improved feeling of inclusion and equality through greater understanding of other cultures and lifestyles	43	49	47	139	288	466	339	1,093	0	1	0	1	0	22	0	22
Improved mental and physical health through more active involvement in creative and social experiences	157	100	217	474	4,741	1,699	10,648	17,088	23	22	57	102	293	173	720	1,186
Improved community resilience through a more diverse creative economy	57	64	73	194	8,138	9,133	11,363	28,634	36	27	9	72	182	96	259	537

1: Attendances are the number of people who attend concerts, screenings or exhibitions. Participations are the number of times people take part in development sessions

2: We have profiled each quarter against data from previous years' so we can more accurately predict and analyse seasonal variances

3: Our activity is planned and measured against the 'Social Outcomes' (SOs) listed under the Impact heading - each event, session or project has two priority SO, and the table above cumulatively captures these priority SOs

# Notes on KPI variances

The number of Concerts, Screenings, and Exhibition days is down from previous comparable years due to restricted building opening days and hours.

Attendances are higher than previous years due to public art projects such as Locus.

There are less development sessions due to less activity happening in care homes and with our wellbeing sessions due to continuing Covid concerns for our more vulnerable participant groups.

The jump in participations in June is mainly due to the launch of our Culture Collective activities, together with some large group consultation sessions.