

ANNUAL

REPORT

Neurodiversity by Kate Genever and Amanda Rigby (Paper Rhino)



2024/25

SUMMARY

arts
derbyshire
CONNECT & CREATE

CHAIR'S REPORT

Arts Derbyshire's Manifesto states that the arts are a powerful tool for change, have the power to heal, inspire, connect and transform, and should be for all people regardless of background or circumstance; that we are committed to working collaboratively with organisations, and to supporting artists and showcasing their work; that we aim to promote the arts, inspire change and make a positive impact on the world. This manifesto encapsulates our vision, mission and practise and has been the perfect frame for a very busy, positive and productive year.

2024 - 25 has seen not only vital strategic development and consolidation, and vital work in fund-raising and organisational development, but also preparation for, and delivery of, inspirational and inclusive activity throughout the county.

We are proud to be have been selected to deliver hub management for the **Derbyshire Makes** programme, which has enabled us to build partnerships across the county, whilst effectively tackling behind-the-scenes operational and logistical detail in each hub area. It has been hugely positive to work collaboratively with arts organisations from Swadlincote in the south, to Glossop and Bolsover in the north, to create locally inspired participatory programmes, and this has enabled our vision to build a culturally connected county. Additionally, we have loved seeing people of all ages within each community, including schools and special interest groups, coming to take part in art and creativity for themselves, and work with artists to create art which reflects their community's history and cultural heritage.

Within our **New Horizons** programme we have facilitated regular networking events across the county, enabling creative organisations and artists to connect and share experience and skills - it has been fabulous to see how our local organisations come together to learn from one another and support each other, especially in this very challenging time for the arts. Alongside the vibrant **Arts Derbyshire website** we continue to publish regular and highly informative e-newsletters which provide key information on the professional arts sector, what's on and how the public can get personally involved.

We actively look out for new opportunities for collaborative projects to boost our creative communities - **Festivity** represents a great opportunity to not only support Derbyshire artists and promote the wonderful work that is happening

across the county, but also to create unique cultural experiences in new and unexpected venues. We have been really excited to develop the artist showcase and celebrate the range and quality of work made in Derbyshire through the Festivity programme.

Our **Creative Health** programme seeks to work with people in Derbyshire who have health and wellbeing challenges, less access to creativity, or experience disadvantage. We are proud to see the publication of the Social Prescribing focused "**Living Newspaper**", and are looking forward to the implementation of our new **Creatives in Place** programme, that will work in partnership with the Primary Care Trust to give people access through local health centres to creative practise for wellbeing outcomes.

Arts Derbyshire has a fantastic, hard-working and dedicated professional team, and a proactive and committed Board of Trustees, both of which contain a wealth of experience, understanding, knowledge, skill and inspiration. As Chair of the Board I would like to thank everyone involved for their exceptional input throughout the year, in both areas of exciting organisational development and innovative programming, especially in this time when arts and culture are being challenged by wider issues.

In particular, I would like to sincerely thank our Director Stephen Munn and Operations Manager Hannah Barker for their unwavering commitment and dedication, and their inspirational leadership and management; and also retiring Trustees Emma Oaks and Sanjoy Sen for their much appreciated work and individual contributions to the Board. We are very pleased to welcome new Trustees Anna Malik, Mary Muir, and trainee Sanjana Srinivasan to the Board and welcome back Kalila Storey from Maternity Leave, all whom bring substantial experience and insight from their varied professional practise.

Our core values are to be accessible, creative, collaborative, ambitious and responsive and we are proud to recognise that our work this year has upheld these principles. We are looking forward to enabling a creative, connected and inspirational year of participatory and professional work in 2025 - 26, celebrating the unique and transformative value of the arts throughout our county, and to making a positive impact on Derbyshire people's lives.

Deborah Hedderwick
Chair, Arts Derbyshire



DIRECTOR'S REPORT

2024/25 has been a year of consolidation and quiet determination—a period in which we've laid the strategic and operational foundations for two major programmes that will shape Derbyshire's cultural ecology through to 2027. In a climate of financial constraint and sector flux, Arts Derbyshire has remained resolute: securing essential funding, deepening sector relationships, and reaffirming the role of the arts in civic life.

Our work as a **Cultural Development Organisation** is built on trust, transparency, and long-term thinking. These values underpin our two flagship initiatives—Derbyshire Makes and Festivity—each designed to nurture meaningful collaboration, amplify local talent, and leave a lasting legacy.



Rising Tide by Bernie Rutter and Vitor Azevedo

Derbyshire Makes - A three-year creative programme celebrating Derbyshire's heritage of innovation and making. We are proud to coordinate six hub lead organisations across Glossop, Bolsover, Chesterfield, Heanor, Cromford, and Swadlincote. This network is supported by a strong partnership cohort including Derbyshire County Council, Local, Junction Arts, High Peak Community Arts, Cromford Mills, People Express, and MakeShift. Together, we are investing in place-based creativity and community-led production. **Festivity** - A county-wide artist showcase spanning music, spoken word, workshops, and visual arts. Following an open call, fifty outstanding artists have been selected to present work across seven indoor and outdoor venues. Festivity is a celebration of Derbyshire's creative breadth and a platform for public engagement.

Both projects will be delivered to audiences throughout 2025/26, with evaluation and legacy planning embedded from the outset.

Key Milestones for the Year

- The Arts Derbyshire network has grown to 1,030 members, strengthening peer support and sector connectivity.
- Our three-monthly newsletters—*What's On, Arts Industry, and Creative Health*—continue to inform and galvanise our communities.
- We convened three **New Horizon Network** meetings, exploring Cultural Placemaking, Creative Health, and the importance of a deliverable Cultural Strategy.
- In December 2024, we appointed a Creative Health Producer to lead the **Creatives in Place** pilot, working closely with our Creative Health Team.

Regional Developments - The establishment of the East Midlands Combined County Authority (EMCCA) marks a pivotal moment for regional cultural policy. Under the leadership of Mayor Claire Ward, there is renewed momentum around tourism, heritage, and creative industries. Initiatives such as Visit East Midlands and emerging regional partnerships are positioning our area as a cultural destination. Arts Derbyshire is proud to contribute to Derbyshire County Council's Culture, Heritage and Tourism Board (CHAT), advocating for joined-up investment and inclusive growth.

Looking Ahead - As we move into the next phase of our development, our focus is clear: to articulate Arts Derbyshire's purpose, demonstrate its value, and secure its financial sustainability. We will continue to balance strategic foresight with responsive delivery, listening carefully to the needs of artists, organisations, and communities.

We recognise that no single organisation can be all things to all people. But through clarity of purpose, collaborative leadership, and transparent practice, Arts Derbyshire can enable others to thrive. Our strength lies in connection—in the belief that together, we are greater than the sum of our parts.

I want to express my heartfelt thanks to our dedicated staff and the Board of Trustees. Their knowledge and unwavering support have been instrumental in navigating this year's challenges and opportunities. Their commitment to our shared vision is deeply appreciated and continues to inspire confidence in the road ahead.

We Connect & Create

Stephen Munn
Director



CREATIVE HEALTH

Arts Derbyshire continues to champion the integration of art and creativity into health and wellbeing, reinforcing the transformative power of creativity in improving public health outcomes. **Creative Health** is a core strand of our mission, embedded within strategic partnerships and programming that place arts and culture at the heart of local wellbeing initiatives. In 2024/25, our commitment to Creative Health was delivered through two Service Level Agreements (SLAs) with Derbyshire County Council Public Health:

- **Social Prescribing Development:** This SLA supports the expansion of creative social prescribing, connecting individuals to non-clinical interventions that enhance physical and mental wellbeing. We have facilitated referral pathways, trained practitioners, and developed arts-based programmes that are accessible and impactful for local residents. This SLA concludes in August 2025.
- **Creative Health Manager Post:** The second SLA sustains the role of our Creative Health Manager, responsible for overseeing delivery, advocacy, and partnership development. With funding secured until March 2026, we are now developing new recruitment strategies supported through Arts Council England (ACE) to continue this work.

Key developments in 2024/25 include:

- Arts Derbyshire's Creative Health Manager's continued appointment as **Culture, Health & Wellbeing Alliance (CHWA) East Midlands Champion**.
- Arts Derbyshire's role as regional host for the **CHWA Midlands Coordinator** from November 2024.
- Appointing **Nicola Middler** as **Creative Health Producer** in December 2024, whose remit bridges creative strands across our creative programme to ensure synergy and innovation.
- Completion of the **Necklace of Stars** programme in March 2024, with the evaluation completed and approved by funding partners in November 2024.

Looking ahead, our priorities for 2025/26 include:

Publishing the first edition of Arts Derbyshire's Living Newspaper '**NON-PRESCRIPTIVE**' - a creative health initiative designed to blend journalism, storytelling, and community engagement through an arts-based lens, aimed at social prescribers and the broader primary care network. This forms part of Arts Derbyshire's social prescribing work, supported by Derbyshire County Council Public Health.

Delivery of our **Creatives in Place** pilot (working with partner GP practices in Wirksworth & Erewash) - commencing in late 2025. This active research / pilot phase is anticipated to run for 8 months. During this initial phase, rigorous exploration, learning and evaluation will take place, to inform further collaborations and funding applications to extend and expand this work. Two Creatives in Place (one in each location) will work as creative catalysts and strategic bridges between GP practices and the local community, to help understand how non-medical approaches to health and wellbeing can be embedded within public health models. Creatives in Place seek to nurture more meaningful, connected approaches to place-based wellbeing.



*Adaire to Dance - Tender Steps.
Photographer Richard Richards.*

Artistic Manifesto

We believe that the arts are a powerful tool for change.

Our mission is to provide strategic direction for the arts development in Derbyshire, building on the unique creative, cultural, natural and heritage assets of our county.

We are passionate about the arts and culture being for everyone, regardless of their background or circumstances.

Our core values are to be
ACCESSIBLE - CREATIVE - COLLABORATIVE
AMBITIOUS - and - RESPONSIVE

We understand that by working together, we can create cultural experiences that are meaningful, impactful and transformative.

We advocate that art has the power to heal, inspire, and connect people from all walks of life.

We are committed to supporting artists at all stages of their career and providing opportunities for them to showcase their work.

We believe that the arts are a vital part of our cultural heritage and that should be preserved and celebrated for future generations.

We are dedicated to promoting the arts in Derbyshire and beyond.

By working with our partners, we can inspire change and make a positive impact on the world.

ARTISTIC MANIFESTO

ACCESSIBLE

CREATIVE

COLLABORATIVE

AMBITIOUS

RESPONSIVE

NHS
Derby & Derbyshire
Clinical Commissioning Group


CULTURE
HEALTH &
WELLBEING
ALLIANCE

phf Paul Hamlyn
Foundation


destination
digital

 **DERBYSHIRE**
County Council

**DERBYSHIRE
DANCE
ARTISTS'
NETWORK**

Festivity
DERBYSHIRE FESTIVALS


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