



# CULTURE PLAN SOCIAL IMPACT REPORT

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A place-based Culture Strategy

## Introduction

There is a wealth of social impact being created by arts and cultural organisations in Plymouth. For some, it is the essence of their work, for others an additional, important thread. All the organisations consulted are clear that the people of Plymouth are central to their practice, and specific about the communities they work with and hope to benefit.

The intended beneficiaries are varied and range from practitioners to participants, and the reason for their engagement ranges from purely geographical to communities and individuals with particular needs or interests. Nudge Builders, for example, are intent on working with and supporting their immediate area, and are run by local residents for their fellows, while Visual Arts Plymouth supports and facilitates artists' development in a variety of ways and at various levels.

In this study, we have interviewed people with pivotal roles in the provider organisations and made contact where we could with people who have engaged and benefitted in some way from the activities and support provided. Organisations have also provided data, reports, and comments from their users.

## Key findings

All areas of the city are covered by at least four organisations, though it is hard to map where an organisation gives a catch-all 'we cover the whole city' response. It is also clear that the majority of organisations have quickly picked up the threads of their core activities and are already tailoring them effectively to the impact of the pandemic.

Those organisations who can produce and/or deliver collections material or education packs both online and to people's doors are those who have the best chance of engaging. Where there is special need for contact, or a lack of online access, some organisations are making regular phone calls to known individuals. From groups to individuals, beneficiaries roughly fall into the following categories:

- Age ranges (older people, young people, care home residents, veterans' associations)
- Families (young, new, intergenerational)
- Practitioners (artists and performers, producers, emerging)
- Specific geographic areas of need (identified through index of social deprivation, for example)
- People with specific mental health needs
- People from communities of asylum-seekers and refugees

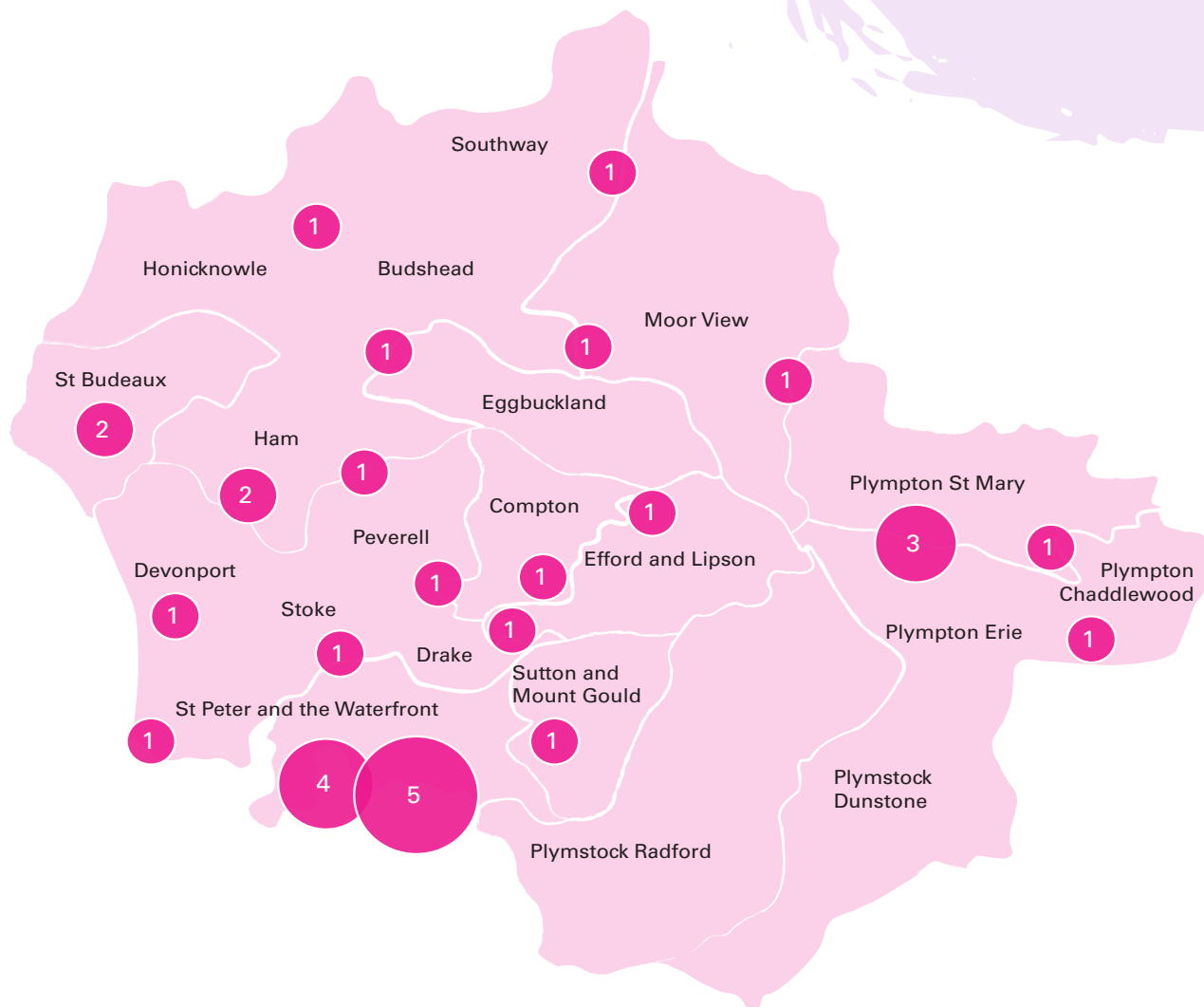
The focus has been on change – the outcomes intended to create impact and the longer term change that these aim to bring about. The personal stories create probably the most convincing narratives of improved health, new skills, improved confidence and getting work, for example, and offer information on the depth of engagement that can be of benefit to the wider policy environment. There is also a sense that all activities are core to organisations' beliefs, there is no sense that any of the projects are opportunistic in any way. The Box express this physically, even, with their learning centre showcase.

One organisation spoke of a very supportive local MP, while they felt that the local councillors had very little knowledge of what they do. Others had good relationships with and some support from their council and councillors.

The thread of the need to raise awareness of activity came through strongly in most of the interviews and is perhaps an area that Plymouth Culture as an organisation may be able to help address.

The map following shows where the social impact work is concentrated, by how many organisations. It is not possible to show the presence of organisations whose response was 'the whole of Plymouth'.

## Number of organisations interviewed who are focusing in each postal sector



## Organisation Responses

### 1. Barbican Theatre

- Beneficiary target groups: young people, care home residents and staff, isolated individuals and communities, creative practitioners.
- Areas covered: working in PL7, throughout the city
- Number of beneficiaries: over 33,000 engagements during the covid period
- Partnerships: wide variety of cultural organisations

The Barbican are working on social change initiatives in areas increasingly far apart e.g. PL7 and that region. During lockdown, the Barbican worked on Digital Rebels, taking the model to get funding for an online creative group of young people; Singing in the Rain addressed anxiety about being outdoors; they rehearsed outside in parks, then performed at care homes. The aims were to engender confidence in social situations as well as impact on the isolated.

Barbican masterclasses are free for anyone: dealing with topics from tax returns to fundraising, reaching the wider community of artists in the city; a speedway project is planned for May – for members of the community who wouldn't normally go to events.

## 2. Beyond Face

- Beneficiary target groups: Black, Asian and ethnically diverse artists, young people and communities
- Areas covered: PL1, Devonport (PL1 5), Lipson (student area, PL4 8), Stoke Damerel Community College (PL3 4).
- Numbers: tbc
- Partnerships: Barbican Theatre

Beyond Face is a performance company based in Plymouth whose mission is to raise the profile and visibility of Black, Asian and ethnically diverse artists, young people and communities, 'letting everyone be seen'. In Plymouth, they have a youth company at the University, and the Beyond Ensemble.

They aim to provide a safe space for non-white young people and a stepping-stone for young artists, telling contemporary stories, and are the only black-led cultural organisation in the area.

## 3. The Box

- Beneficiary target groups: the older, the isolated, the lonely; people with dementia and their carers; the women's craft collective; older women; the lonely, isolated, bereaved; people with mental health issues; intergenerational work for older people and those in dementia wards, in care or residential settings, carers; work involving schools and young people; hospital patients and staff.
- Areas: across the city [see organisation's Google map in appendix C]
- Number of beneficiaries: The Box on The Box series 1 (June-July) had 1,600 views delivered weekly, Series 2 has been delivered fortnightly and has had over 1,000 views.
- Partnerships: schools, community centres, care homes

While the Box was closed for capital redevelopment (from 2016 - 2020), they ran a Museum on Tour programme with two aims - to continue to connect with communities and to raise their profile, reaching across the city.

They work with a range of different communities and one of their priorities is to create work that has meaning for a community, is created by them, so that The Box are supporting not dictating.

## 4. Fotonow

- Beneficiary target groups: individuals, families, Barne Barton community, schools
- Areas covered: Barne Barton, St Budeaux, PL5
- Numbers: The project created 180 hours employment. 1 bursary student worked on the project for 76 hours and was given £4000 grant. 19 Volunteers gave over 300 hours of time, 7 individuals were from Barne Barton. 20 people attended history walks. 35 people attended Scrapbooks of Barne Barton exhibition. 12 Year Six children from Riverside Primary worked on a media project for six weeks. 45 People attended Plymouth Art Weekender exhibitions. Over 500 people saw work at local community and consultation events. 65% of project participants come from Barne Barton (have a PL5 postcode). Over 10,000 have engaged with the work via social media. Leveraged £16000 additional funding
- Partnerships: Plymouth History Festival, Tamar View Community Resource Centre, Riverside Primary School, Plymouth Art Weekender.

Fotonow have 11 years of socially engaged work in Plymouth and the wider SW region. The organisation's main objective is using media as a force for social change

As a social enterprise they have been measuring their impact and developing frameworks and developed the ambition to spend more time with fewer communities. Since August 2017 they have delivered an extensive heritage project exploring the community of Barne Barton, The Island Stories - see [www.theislandstories.co.uk](http://www.theislandstories.co.uk)

## 5. Literature Works

- Beneficiary target groups: creative writing undergraduates at the University, emerging writers, reminiscence workers
- Areas covered: across Plymouth, including the University
- Partnerships: Moments Café; University of Plymouth

Literature Works has South West coverage, but three elements of their current plan are particularly relevant to Plymouth: reviving the Plymouth Literature Festival; National Memorial Day – poetry and reminiscence including a free half day training for local poets.

in how to work with people with dementia who are still living in the community, going to memory cafes - for them and their carers; and the appointment of the Plymouth young city laureate, which is now changed to appointing an adult laureate.

The artform is now moving toward recovery writing ('outsider' writing) using it not as therapy but as a journey, and with resilient women – supporting writing groups for survivors or ex-offenders.

## 6. Nudge Builders

- Beneficiary target groups: residents; young people; emerging entrepreneurs, SMEs
- Areas covered: PL1 and across the region
- Numbers: In three years Nudge have:
- Unlocked 25% of the land in their neighbourhood that has derelict and empty buildings on it.
- Created 6 full time jobs (5 are people who live within 1 mile).
- Spent 96% of their income in Plymouth and 53% within 1 mile.
- Supported 87 people to develop projects and businesses in Stonehouse.
- Hosted 51 interventions and improvements on the street.
- Worked with 286 organisations and people to host 1479 events attracting 54,000 people.
- Created a free wifi area along the street used more than 2,000 times in 6 months.
- Supported 112 people during Covid-19 Lockdown with shopping, regular calls and pharmacy pick ups.
- Repurposed 75 digital devices with Borrow Don't Buy for local families that had no suitable devices at home for schoolwork or keeping connected.
- Nudge Builders aim to spend 70% of money raised within a mile, 90% within Plymouth
- Partnerships: city council services; Union Street residents

Nudge have just taken on their third, very large, building – The Plot (relating to allotments). They are bringing back empty spaces along Union Street for lasting community benefit. Like allotments, people take on a ‘patch’ or ‘shed’ – they monitor how who comes in will collaborate locally and relate to others in the space.

The instigators both live locally; twelve years ago they joined the local residents’ group and started a street party to create joy, rather than to meet need. They started to question why all the buildings were empty and thought if someone is to take them over, why not us?

Empty buildings lead to anti-social behaviour and this was known as a ‘no go’ area – public services were coming in dealing with urgent need, but not making any difference. They found ways to encourage lasting change for people.

## 7. Plymouth Dance

- Beneficiary target groups include: mainly over 50 (75-80%); cross-generational family members e.g. grandparents and grandchildren; carers’ groups for respite; Veterans’ associations; Tickets for Troops contacts; dance students, graduates and professional dance practitioners [see case studies in appendix C]
- Areas: invitational for anyone in the city of Plymouth
- Number of beneficiaries: from 2016-19 held 30 events at Guildhall, with over 100 per event – 1,000+ register once or more than once
- Partnerships: Plymouth Creative Education partnership; Plymouth and Devon Race Equality Council and the Respect! Festival; The Box, Plymouth University and City College Plymouth

Plymouth Dance major on best practice in participation-led and co-creation work. They concentrate on three areas:

- The professional development of dancers in the city – 45% of whom get 100% of their income through dance
- People in colleges/unis, freelancers or who work at Barbican
- Co-design and co-creation of dance projects ‘that no-one else is doing’ Their major project currently is the Tea Dances with a Twist!



## 8. Plymouth Music Zone

- Beneficiary target groups: older people, general, stroke survivors, care home staff, young people with Parkinsons, children with complex disabilities, special schools, early years' nurseries, Plymbridge secure unit, Mount Wise primary school
- Areas: 30-40% activity in Devonport; across the city – Sutton (PL2), Mount Gould (PL4), Stoke (PL3), St Paul's, Efford (PL3), Runnymede (PL6), Plympton (PL7)
- Number of beneficiaries: 20-25 weekly at hospital; 4000 plus for various wellbeing interventions including for isolation issue
- Partnerships: City counselling services; rural area partnerships; Plymouth City Council

With a mission to increase wellbeing, reduce loneliness and isolation and help people make friends, recover from illness and manage disabilities or mental health issues, PMZ work with a range of organisations and communities in Plymouth and elsewhere.

An evaluation report by BOP Consulting showed the work of Plymouth Music Zone has a significant impact on both individual and community development within the city, using the power of music to tackle loneliness and isolation by reaching out to some of the most vulnerable and marginalised people in the community.

## 9. Real Ideas (RIO)

- Beneficiaries: disadvantaged groups in city and rural areas, with a focus on young people, businesses and artists
- Areas covered: throughout Plymouth
- Across all events, beneficiaries range from one to 50,000 people; e.g. 1600 young people supported since 2014; 50 artists; 75 social enterprises
- Partnerships: Artsmark; Kickstart; local businesses

A social enterprise, all of whose projects aim to have social impact. They have contracts to work with groups for vulnerable young people and with schools – giving young people access to activities they couldn't otherwise participate in. They consider themselves not to be an 'arts organisation' but 'an organisation that creates social change'.

## 10. Street Factory

- Beneficiary target groups: see video link for examples (<https://youtu.be/GZ0emPJ65Vs>)
- Areas covered: PL1 (Stonehouse)
- Number of beneficiaries: Free Saturday sessions have up to 100 families in the room – grandparents to grandchildren; 70 pupils attend special needs school sessions weekly; 80 participants weekly at outreach and fitness classes; 30 mentoring sessions a week; 100 plus performances annually
- Partnerships: include Citybus, local councillors, livewell, public health, PCC, Schools, universities, Plymouth community homes, Santander, local businesses, City centre team, Hotels, Art College, Fire service and Police

Street Factory is in the most deprived area in the county. It is run as a teach-to-teach process – ‘when you feel better, bring others in’ – which creates a ripple effect. People always join on personal recommendation. All sessions are now online for free; the Creative Change programme continues on Facetime – during the last lockdown ‘we were on the phone all the time to people’.

They learn whatever the community needs, try to create integrated groups – so that people realise they can communicate with anyone – a great confidence booster.

## 11. Take A Part

- Beneficiary target groups: Individual case studies in impact report e.g. first person in family to go into higher education, volunteering; schools; practitioners
- Areas covered: Efford, Coxside, North Prospect, across Plymouth
- Number of beneficiaries: Worked with over 330,000 people in the city of Plymouth; commissioned over 47 artists to work on more than 30 commissions, 40% of artists employed are local to Plymouth: 8 communities across the city of Plymouth; 15 schools; created 3 social enterprises; held 30 community exhibitions
- Partnerships: Efford community, PCC, Plymouth community homes. local schools, other agencies e.g. Health, Barnardos

Take A Part have an organic approach to community-working, starting from a pilot programme with the Efford area of Plymouth and developed into a city-wide organisation and then onto a National Portfolio Organisation with regional and national reach.

The work focuses on communities of geography that are high on the socio-economic deprivation register and experiencing stressors associated with that: Lack of opportunities for employment and training, poorer than average health, lack of local services and infrastructure and the need for increased inclusion and connectivity.

## 12. Theatre Royal Plymouth (TRP)

- Beneficiary target groups: young people; communities; adults with complex needs; refugee and asylum-seeker children
- Areas covered: throughout the city
- Number of beneficiaries:
  - Over 17,000 people engaged last year in learning and outreach work
  - Annual festival has 2,000-3,500 attenders
  - With Flying Colours' target is 2,000 children over three years
  - This Land: 100 Plymouth people involved before Covid put this on hold
  - Project with children from a refugee and asylum context that has continued for 10 years; 10-12 children work intensively.
  - Our Space has worked with over 700 people and 44 referral partners. (See Funky Lama and Our Space infographics in appendix B for more detail)
  - Partnerships: In 2018 it became a social prescription under the Wolseley Trust, working with 28 primary care services in Plymouth; most city services; With Flying Colours; Mayflower 400

In 'normal' times, all their engagement and learning work has social impact and reaches huge numbers. It addresses wellbeing, people enjoy participating. TRP have a youth theatre, a people's company (citizens), a choir (mainly aged over 25), schools' work, one-off activities for young people, and more traditional work with communities.

Our Space, running for 11 years now, is unusual in outreach in sustaining something over that length of time – it's for adults with multiple and complex needs. They have managed to sustain the work during lockdown; where people find it hard to zoom they send out care packages, postcards, phone people... They are also behind 'With Flying Colours' - one of the five partners in this youth performance partnership attracting £1 million in funding – TRP wrote the application with the Barbican.

### 13. Visual Arts Plymouth

- Beneficiary target groups: includes artists and emerging artists [see case studies in appendix C]
- Areas covered: mainly Union Street, PL1
- Number of beneficiaries: [see evaluation report in appendix C]
- Partnerships: Nudge Builders, Theatre Royal Plymouth, Arts Institute and Karst, in addition to Plymouth HE institutions and The Box

Visual Arts Plymouth creates a platform for which other people provide the actual work - more indirect than direct impact. They work in areas of Plymouth where people may fall into disadvantaged category and make every effort to be inclusive, siting work as much around the city as possible. Work is delivered through project funds plus central funding for the directors to create a Covid response and survival strategy. They support a key number of emerging artists through commissions and resources and advice on how to mount events. The steering group is a mix of institution representatives and freelance individual artists – this involvement naturally skills people up e.g. all three directors began as activators.

### 14. The Wheel

- Beneficiary target groups: young people and adults from disadvantaged areas
- Areas covered: across the city
- Objectives: opportunities to train in stagecraft for young people from less prosperous backgrounds
- Number of beneficiaries: [the organisations is not yet fully established]
- Partnerships: TRP, Barbican

A production and training company, offering schools and college workshops and the Wheel Actor Training Company; a Theatre Royal Plymouth associate. They offer training workshops for young people both 16 plus and 18 plus – aimed at people who can't access other available training.

They reach out to communities that don't necessarily feel there are opportunities offered to them – in disadvantaged/deprived areas and from BAME backgrounds, offering outreach work also – identifying/meeting/encouraging people to come in, working up to them getting the strength to go to auditions and offering work to put on CVs that is as real as possible.

## 15. WonderZoo

- Beneficiary target groups: disabled performers and audiences, people identifying as BAME, LGBTQ+ performers and attenders, residents in disadvantaged areas, asylum seekers and refugees
- Areas covered: North Stonehouse area, Union Street
- Number of beneficiaries: Performance work in Union Street offered 10 performers a session, which equals approximately 20 people a month. Zoom meetings bring 30-plus attenders.
- Partnerships: Nudge Builders, Respect! Festival, Pride, Plymouth and Devon Equality Council; Plymouth Culture and Education Partnership

WonderZoo are a Plymouth-based arts collective who major on spoken word, with performance events, workshops, cross-artform activities and a radical reading group. Social inclusion is at the root of all their activities.