1. Background to ‘Back to Ours’
   1. Introducing ‘Back to Ours’

‘Back to Ours’ is a festival of touring performances that visited community venues in the North, East and West of the city during school half terms. This report will present the findings of the four ‘Back to Ours’ festivals that ran in February, May and October 2017, and February 2018.

This chapter seeks to present the vision, aims and objectives for the project; the team responsible for its design and delivery; the artists the performed at the festivals; and the approach taken to monitoring and evaluating the project.

* + 1. The Vision for ‘Back to Ours’

‘Back to Ours’ set out to create a series of temporary performance venues within existing community facilities, transforming spaces that disengaged audiences are already familiar with and feel safe in.

The spaces are turned into venues that can cater for an inspiring night out at the theatre to see a comedian, watch an incredible musician or see some world-class dance.

Using a ‘strategic touring’ approach but at a local neighbourhood level, ‘Back to Ours’ seeks to bring about such a strong and unexpected cultural intervention that it makes local people feel very proud of their part of the city, whilst also increasing their confidence to go out and explore similar events elsewhere and in the city centre.

* + 1. Aims and Objectives of ‘Back to Ours’

‘Back to Ours’ had the following project-specific aims and objectives:

* **Aim 1: To develop a recurring arts festival that brings innovative and contemporary live performance to Hull’s hard to reach communities**
* **Objective 1:** Appoint a Programme Director, a Project Administrator and Technical Coordinator
* **Objective 2:** Establish a monthly programming steering group
* **Objective 3:**Build partnerships with promoters, agents, and other arts professionals / organisations to provide artists for the festival programmes
* **Objective 4:**Deliver four Back to Ours Festivals during half-term holidays between February 2017 and February 2018
* **Objective 5:** Deliver a minimum of 110 performances across the four festivals of a range of art forms
* **Aim 2: To engage and develop audiences for arts and culture amongst Hull’s hard to reach communities, particularly those with little or no propensity to engage**
* **Objective 6:** Work with gatekeepers to Hull’s Eastern European, African, Middle Eastern/Asian, LGBT, disabled and gypsy and traveller groups
* **Objective 7:** Deliver interactive community outreach in public spaces local to the festival venues, linked to programme and ticketing announcement
* **Objective 8:** Provide translation in key languages to support shows
* **Objective 9:**Provide at least two accessible events in each festival (i.e. BSL interpretation, captioning, audio-description, relaxed performances)
* **Objective 10:** Appoint a local Marketing and Engagement Manager
* **Objective 11:** Attract a minimum of 13,000 audience members across the four festivals
* **Aim 3:** To build efficient and effective partnerships, which build capacity to enable Back to Ours to be a part of Hull’s annual calendar.
* **Objective 12**: Identify appropriate venues (targeting schools, social clubs, and community centres) within North, East and West Hull
* **Objective 13:** Build partnerships with key staff at each venue and their technical liaison
* **Objective 14:** Appoint a festival-specific local technical manager to work with the venues
* **Objective 15:**Recruit and train a team of support staff for Back to Ours for each of the three areas
* **Objective 16:** Offer apprentice / intern roles for key support roles linked to marketing and technical

In addition to these project specific aims and objectives, ‘Back to Ours’ also contributes to many of the following aims and objectives from Hull 2017’s overarching Monitoring & Evaluation Framework:

* **Aim 1:** To produce a high-quality, exemplary programme of arts, culture and heritage, helping to position the UK City of Culture as a quadrennial national event
* **Objective 1:** Deliver a 365-day programme that is ‘of the city’ yet outward looking, and which includes 60 commissions.
* **Objective 2:** Improve understanding and appreciation of Hull’s heritage.
* **Aim 2:** To develop (new and existing) audiences for Hull and East Riding’s cultural offer locally, regionally, nationally and internationally
* **Objective 3:** Increase total audiences for Hull’s arts, culture and heritage offer.
* **Objective 4:** Increase engagement and participation in arts and heritage amongst Hull residents.
* **Objective 5:** Increase the diversity of audiences for Hull’s arts and heritage offer.
* **Aim 3**: To develop the capacity and capabilities of the cultural sector
* **Objective 6:** Develop the city’s cultural infrastructure through capacity building and collaborative work undertaken by/with Hull 2017 and its partners.
* **Aim 4:** To improve perceptions of Hull as a place to live, work, study and visit
* **Objective 7:** Enhance the profile of Hull’s arts, culture and heritage offer through positive media coverage and marketing activity.
* **Objective 8:** Increase the number of Hull residents who are proud to live in Hull and would speak positively about the city to others.
* **Objective 9:** Improve external attitudes towards Hull.
* **Aim 5:** To strengthen Hull and East Riding’s economy, with a focus on tourism and the cultural sector
* **Objective 10:** Increase visitor numbers to Hull.
* **Objective 11:** Deliver economic benefits for the city and city region.
* **Aim 6:** To increase public and private sector investment and regeneration in Hull (through both cultural and wider investment)
* **Objective 12:** Support new investment and regeneration in the city.
* **Aim 7:** To improve wellbeing of residents through engagement and participation
* **Objective 13:** Increase levels of confidence and community cohesion among local audiences and participants.
* **Objective 14:** Increase levels of happiness and engagement, through arts and culture.
* **Objective 15:** Engage individuals from Hull and beyond to volunteer.
* **Aim 8:** To raise the aspirations, abilities and knowledge of residents through increased participation and learning
* **Objective 16:** Through all Hull-based education institutions, provide young people of school-age with the opportunity to engage with arts, culture and creativity.
* **Objective 17:** Deliver training, development and participation opportunities for residents through arts and culture initiatives.
* **Aim 9:** To demonstrate exemplary programme delivery and partnerships, establishing Hull 2017 as a blueprint for successful delivery
* **Objective 18:** Demonstrate Hull as best practice of how to successfully deliver UK City of Culture.
* **Objective 19:** Develop strong partnerships, where partners are satisfied with their experience.
* **Objective 20:** Establish a suitable delivery model and approach for the UK City of Culture project.
  1. The People Who Made ‘Back to Ours’
     1. Core Project Team (CPT)

To deliver the vision for ‘Back to Ours’ a CPT was brought together - their role, to take responsibility for the overall concept and delivery of the project.

The CPT for ‘Back to Ours’ consisted of 5key individuals:

* **Louise Yates – Artistic Director**  
  With a background in performing arts, Louise came to Hull in 2003 to work for Hull Truck Theatre and Young People Support Service to deliver youth arts projects. Louise became involved in the City Of Culture bid in her role as Arts Development Officer for Hull City Council, which is where the initial idea for 'Back To Ours' was formed. As a Producer at Hull 2017, Louise was instrumental in developing and delivering Back To Ours.
* **Thom Freeth – Project Coordinator**  
  Thom joined Hull 2017 as Project Coordinator for the Learning and Participation team in 2016 from the National Theatre. He has a broad background in the arts sector, which recently includes learning, participation and community producer and coordinator roles. Focussing on production and project management, Thom has played a key role as part of the core team on ‘Back to Ours’. Thom has also lead on elements of the No Limits learning programme, including Pipe Dreams, The Sixteen Thousand and Limitless.
* **Carys Tavener – Production Lead**   
  Carys graduated from The University of Hull in July 2016 with a degree in Drama and Theatre Practice, specialising in Stage and Production Management and joined the Hull 2017 team as a Junior Production Manager in October 2016, after spending the summer as a Venue Technician at the Edinburgh Fringe Festival. Carys' main project through 2017 was production lead on the Back To Ours festivals, but assisted the Technical and Operations team on other projects as well as being delegated short-term projects to lead.
* **James Maguire – Audience Engagement Manager**

James has a background in marketing and audience development in the cultural sector. He joined Hull 2017 at the end of 2015 from the National Galleries of Scotland, after previously working for Hull City Council - including during the City of Culture bid phase in 2013. James has been responsible for engaging audiences and working with and supporting community groups and organisations to engage in cultural activity. He played a key role in the initial development of ‘Back to Ours’ festival and its strategic touring concept.

* **Lisa Mayes – Marketing & Brand Manager**

Lisa has been with Hull 2017 since the bidding stage in 2013 and was part of the original bid team. She worked as part of the Hull City Council Events team and Communications team throughout the project to deliver marketing and communication for the bid and beyond to residents and visitors. Originally from Hull, Lisa was selected to work on ‘Back To Ours’ because of her local knowledge of the area and experience in engaging hard to reach audiences across the city. Lisa has also led on the marketing and brand for the No Limits learning programme, city dressing, merchandise and other artistic projects such as Radio 1’s Big Weekend and In With A Bang.

* + 1. The Artists & Installations

A total of 32artists and artistic companies were commissioned to perform across the four ‘Back to Ours’ festivals. Their names and a short description of their acts/events are provided below.

Table 1: Artists & Performances

| Artist/Company | Name of Performance | Festival | Description |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Shake Shake Theatre** | **The Story of Mr. B** | 1 | Ages 3+. This surprise-filled puppet show, set in a giant pop-up book, tells the story of Mr. Bumblegrum. This grumbling character goes on a colourful journey through the seasons, as we turn from one page to the next. |
| **In association with British Film Institute and Hull Independent Cinema** | **Picture House (Willy Wonka, Matilda, Fantastic Mr Fox)** | 1 | Ages 0+. Dive into the magical world of Roald Dahl with three of his best tales brought to life in our Picture House. |
| **Lucy Jane Parkinson** | **Joan & Hekima** | 1 | Ages 12+. Performed by drag king champion Lucy Jane Parkinson, history’s greatest gender-warrior takes to the stage, dragging up as the en she defies in this multi award-winning show. |
| **Mark Thomas** | **The Red Shed** | 1 | Ages 14+. Multi-award winner Mark Thomas tells the story of where he first started to perform – a red wooden shed aka Wakefield’s Labour Club – in celebration of its 50th birthday. |
| **The Pigeon Detectives** | **The Pigeon Detectives** | 1 | Ages 14+. Ahead of the release of their new album, platinum-selling Leeds indie-band The Pigeon Detectives are coming to a venue near you to perform exclusive new material from their fifth album, *Broken Glances.* |
| **Hijinx Theatre** | **Meet Fred** | 1 | Ages 14+. Fred is a two-foot cloth puppet who fights prejudice everyday. Fred just wants to be part of the real world to get a job and meet a girl, but when threatened with losing his PLA (Puppetry Living Allowance), Fred’s life begins to spiral out of control. |
| **Ceri Dupree, Jenny and Lee** | **Ceri Dupree & Gogglebox** | 1 | Ages 18+. C4 Gogglebox favourites Jenny and Lee join female impersonator Ceri Dupree, bringing Lady Gaga, Amy Winehouse and Cher to the west Hull club as part of his One Man, 14 Women show. |
| **Ockham’s Razor** | **Tipping Point** | 2 | Ages 6+. Enter the circus ring and be prepared to be left amazed by Ockham’s Razor in this mesmerising show that combines aerial acrobatics with playground antics and trust games. Combining circus and visual theatre to create stories in the air, Tipping Point pushes performers to their limits as giant poles are turned into a variety of acrobatic devices, from swings to seesaws. Watch in awe as the action veers from catastrophe to mastery. |
| **United Artists** | **The Boy Who Bit Picasso** | 2 | Ages 3+. An interactive theatre show with storytelling, music and chances to make your own art, this hands-on and hilarious family show introduces one of the 20th century’s most influential artists through the eyes of a young boy. Originally co-produced with Oxford Playhouse. Inspired by Antony Penrose’s book, The Boy Who Bit Picasso. |
| **James Campbell** | **The Funny Thing About** | 2 | Ages 6+. Founder of Comedy 4 Kids, author of Boyface and as seen on Blue Peter (CBBC), James’s jokes are written and performed to get children and parents laughing out loud. James Campbell’s stand-up for kids will knock your socks off, making fun of everything from your pets to your parents. |
| **In association with British Film Institute and Hull Independent Cinema** | **Picture House (The Lion King, Grease Sing-A-Long)** | 2 | Ages 0+. Join the kids from Rydell High for a sing-along screening of the musical masterpiece that is Grease, or get up and join the magical creatures of The Lion King and help them tell their story in this exciting musical experience. |
| **Life & Black Delta Movement** | **Life & Black Delta Movement** | 2 | Ages 14+. Hull’s hottest bands return to their stomping grounds to rock local venues. |
| **Audio Subscene** | **Audio Subscene** |
| **Urielle Klein-Mekongo** | **Yvette** | 2 | Ages 14+. Based on a true story, Yvette is a one-woman show with original music about a stolen childhood and growing up with a secret. Evie is 13 and lives in north London with her Mum. She wants to tell us about something … her crush on Lewis, trying to be a woman, friends, virginity, garage remixes, Hello Kitty underwear … and an “uncle” who lurks in the corners of her story. |
| **A Firm of Poets, in collaboration with Wordlife and Freedom Festival** | **Word On The Street** | 2 | Ages 14+. Featuring Manchester’s Thick Richard, whose cynical, lyrical, jet-black humour has earned him support slots for Kate Tempest and BBC 6 Music, Poetry Slam champ Vanessa Kisuule as heard on the BBC, Radio 1 & 4 and ‘Don’t Flop’, and Gav Roberts. |
| **Upswing** | **Bedtime Stories** | 3 | Ages 0+. The unique, family-friendly show will see the audience tucked up in bed as a magical story unfolds around them in a mix of dance, acrobatics and projected illustrations. |
| **Upswing** | **Once Upon A Pillow Fight** | 3 | Ages 0+. Once Upon A Pillow Fight combines breathtaking partner acrobatics with bedtime stories and interactive playfulness to create a magical experience for the whole family to enjoy. |
| **Script Club in partnership with Boundless Theatre** | **Drip** | 3 | A new one-man musical comedy. Liam is 15. He can’t swim. But he’s an optimist, so he’s just signed up for Bev Road Baths’ ﬁrst ever synchronised swimming team. A story about friendship, arm bands and getting the hang of being a gay teenager in Hull. |
| **Black Grape** | **Black Grape** | 3 | Formed in the early 90s following the demise of The Happy Mondays, Shaun Ryder and the band are back together for the release of their first album in 20 years, Pop Voodoo. This will be a rare opportunity to see this band in an intimate setting and is bound to be talked about for years to come. |
| **In association with British Film Institute and Hull Independent Cinema** | **Picture House: Monsters inc. Beauty and the Beast, Rocky Horror Picture Show.** | 3 | Ages 0+ Bringing your favourite friendly beasts and Transylvanian doctors to life this half term holiday with classic films to thrill little and big monsters alike. |
| **201 Dance Company** | **Skin** | 3 | Ages 8+ Fusing urban and contemporary styles with an original score, choreographer Andrea Walker directs a cast of seven dancers in a fast paced, emotionally driven story of family, identity and belonging. |
| **Badly Drawn Boy** | **Badly Drawn Boy** | 3 | Mercury Prize-winning, Damon Gough a.k.a. Badly Drawn Boy recently performed shows to celebrate the 15th Anniversary of his platinum selling debut The Hour Of Bewilderbeast, while his soundtrack to the 2002 ﬁlm About A Boy, starring Hugh Grant, remains one of his most critically acclaimed and successful albums. |
| **Janice Connolly** | **Barbara Nice** | 3 | Join the Edinburgh Fringe’s favourite housewife Barbara Nice for an evening of proper good fun – she’s sure to put a smile on your face and a spring in your step. |
| **Louis Pearl** | **The Amazing Bubble Man** | 4 | Ages 0+. He’s been wowing audiences around the world for thirty years, so prepare to float away in a world of incredible artistry, comedy and magic, with bubble volcanoes, rocket ships and maybe even a flying saucer or two taking flight in the most unusual of places. |
| **Lost in Translation Circus** | **Hotel Paradiso** | 4 | Ages 8+. Thrillingly spectacular circus skills blend seamlessly with charm, physical comedy, clowning, juggling, theatrical storytelling and slapstick in this colourful, loud and funny show from one of the UK’s leading contemporary circus companies. |
| **British Film Institute and Hull Independent Cinema** | **Picture House (Chicken Run and Wallace and Gromit)** | 4 | Ages 0+. Step into the magical, animated world of Claymation with two of Nick Park’s best-loved films. |
| **Reverend and the Makers** | **Reverend and the Makers** | 4 | Ages 14+. The Sheffield-based rock band will be shaking up Back to Ours with their distinctive fusion of indie rock, electro and dance. |
| **Talegate Theatre Productions** | **The Giant’s Loo Roll** | 4 | Ages 2+. The villagers living in the town below the giant’s house had better watch out – his runaway loo roll has gone bouncing down the hill heading straight towards them! Luckily the townsfolk find lots of uses for runaway loo paper – but what about the giant? Doesn’t he need loo paper? Well the ingenious townspeople have an answer for that too! |
| **Hull Comedy Festival** | **Jeddybear’s and Gary’s Picnic** | 4 | Ages 2+. Jed Salisbury and Gary Jennison from Hull Comedy Festival go on a journey full of mischief and fun to keep the whole family entertained. |
| **SECRET GIG** | **SECRET GIG** | 4 | TBC |
| **Carl Barât and The Jackals** | **Carl Barât and The Jackals** | 4 | Acclaimed musician Carl Barât returned to Hull for a special show at North Point Shopping Centre. He has featured in bands including The Libertines, Dirty Pretty Things and The Jackals whilst also performing solo. |

* 1. Venue Partners

If the project was to be accessible in the North, East and West of the city respectively, the CPT cast a wide net to find suitable venues within the community. The team first approached schools because they had the size required to receive productions on the scale of what was in mind for the artistic programme.

After the school venues were on board, the team then approached other spaces, including pubs, community centres and North Point Shopping Centre.

After consultation, a definitive list of eight venues across the city became designated performance spaces for the ‘Back to Ours’ festivals:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| NORTH | Kingswood Academy |
| Winifred Holtby Academy |
| North Point Shopping Centre |
| EAST | Freedom Centre |
| Archbishop Sentamu Academy |
| WEST | Sirius Academy West |
| Hymers College |
| William Gemmel Club |

Figure X: ‘Back to Ours’ Venue Partner Map



* 1. Delivery Partners

The CPT also worked closely with a number of partners to successfully deliver the project. These partnerships were developed to provide specialist advice and to deliver essential functions for the project.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Partner | Description |
| China Plate Theatre | China Plate is an independent theatre studio that works with artists, venues, festivals and funders to make original, exciting theatre with narrative at its heart. |
| Revolver Promotions | Revolver Promotions is a company that books and promotes primarily live music acts. |
| HPSS | HPSS provide stage sound and lighting for all types of events. |
| North East Medical Services | North East Medical Services provide first aid cover and medical cover at events. |
| Front of House Managers | Freelance Front of House and Event Managers were hired to ensure smooth live delivery of events and coordinate volunteers. |

* 1. Methodology to Monitoring & Evaluation

The following sections outline the approach taken to monitoring and evaluation (M&E) for ‘Back to Ours’.

* + 1. Project Monitoring

As with all Hull 2017 projects, a Project Monitoring Workbook was kept to record all key outputs for ‘Back to Ours’, namely:

* Production details;
* Core Project Team roles and Equal Opportunities data;
* Artist Equal Opportunities data;
* Audience numbers and Equal Opportunities data;
* Digital engagement with project; and
* Partner types.
  + 1. Project Evaluation

Project evaluation focused on research and consultation with key respondent groups who experienced ‘Back to Ours’ either as someone who worked on the event or someone who attended as an audience member.

Key respondent groups consulted were:

* Core Project Team (CPT);
* Artists;
* Peer Assessors;
* Audiences;
* Local residents;
* Delivery Partners; and
* Venue Partners.

In addition to this, Cornershop (one of Hull 2017’s PR agencies) utilised TrendKite[[1]](#footnote-1) to undertake an analysis of media coverage for ‘Back to Ours’.

A full write up of all the research and consultation with these key respondents are provided in the Appendices, however a summary is provided within the table below.

Table 2: Research and Consultation on Back to Ours Evaluation

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Respondent Group | Research Methodology | Research Type | Sample Size |
| Creative Project Team | Pre-event online survey  Post-event online survey  Post-festival 1 depth interview  Post-festival 3 depth interview | Quantitative and qualitative  Quantitative and qualitative  Qualitative  Qualitative | **4**  **5**  **3**  **5** |
| Artists | Post-event depth interview | Qualitative | * **6** |
| Peer Assessors | Pre-event online survey  Post-event online survey | Quantitative and qualitative  Quantitative and qualitative | **9**  **8** |
| Audiences | Post-event survey (online/F2F)  Focus groups  ‘Chat with Nan’ interviews  Usherette tray token counts  Emoji paddles  Vox pops | Quantitative and qualitative  Qualitative  Qualitative  Quantitative  Quantitative  Qualitative | **735**  **3**  **123**  **4,887**  **1,271**  **27** |
| Delivery Partners | Post-event online survey  Post-festival 3 depth interview | Quantitative and qualitative  Qualitative | **3**  **2** |
| Venue Partners | Pre-event online survey  Post-event online survey  Post-festival 1 depth interview  Post-festival 3 depth interview | Quantitative and qualitative  Quantitative and qualitative  Qualitative  Qualitative | **6**  7  **8**  **8** |
| Media | Media Coverage Analysis | Quantitative and qualitative |  |

* 1. Report Structure

The M&E for ‘Back to Ours’ has two main areas of exploration:

* Process Evaluation; and
* Outcomes Evaluation.
  + 1. Chapters

Chapters 2 to 6 focus on the outcomes of ‘Back to Ours’, broken down by the five key themes of the M&E Framework for Hull 2017:

* Chapter 2: Arts & Culture;
* Chapter 3: Place Making;
* Chapter 4: Economy;
* Chapter 5: Society & Wellbeing; and
* Chapter 6: Partnerships & Development.

The Process Evaluation relates predominantly to Hull 2017 and the CPT’s performance as a partner. As such, it has been incorporated into Chapter 6, presenting learnings and recommendations across a range areas of interest areas, namely:

* Concept and Creative Development;
* Motivations;
* Project Management;
* Production Management;
* Marketing & Communications;
* Barriers to Engagement;
* Audience Satisfaction;
* Accessibility; and
* Legacy.

The final chapter of the report pulls out the key conclusions and recommendations from the preceding chapters, referencing performance against the aims and objectives listed in Section 1.1.2 above.

These are then summarised within a SWOT Analysis:

* Strengths;
* Weaknesses;
* Opportunities; and
* Threats.

1. TrendKite is an on-demand earned media analytics platform that uses semantic, big data analysis. Features include breaking news alerts and automated, interactive reports. The platform uses proprietary quality and impact scoring algorithms to provide sophisticated metrics that include share of voice analysis; SEO and keyword analysis; website traffic and social media engagement metrics. [↑](#footnote-ref-1)