



**The Dorset Performing Arts Fund (DPAF)
Year 3 Impact report – June 2021 – Sept 2022**

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Main Grants Programme

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Grant to the Arts Development Company

Summary

Strategy to improve inclusive practice in Performing Arts

On review of the Dorset Performing Arts Fund and its grants over years 1 and 2 as well as projects funded in Spring 2022 (year 3), DCF felt that there was a need to improve one of the priority areas of the Fund; to award grants that would increase the inclusivity of Performing Arts opportunities. Not all funded projects were making a conscious effort or devising targeted approaches to ensure that projects were reaching diverse communities.

In partnership with Arts Development Company, DCF hosted an online meeting with groups awarded funding in Spring 2022. to discuss the challenges of improving inclusive practices and how the Fund could potentially help groups to move towards more inclusive projects. An interest in formal training was one of the outcomes of the meeting and as a result DCF agreed to fund a day and a half training with Diverse City (local expert organisation) to include the Social Model of Disability and strategies for Approaching Access. Unfortunately due to organisational pressures and the continues impact of the pandemic, this training was postponed to early 2023 – we await feedback on the outcomes of the training.

Meeting discussions also highlighted that groups may need to include Access Costs in their application in order to improve the accessibility of projects and performances. Finally, we discussed that there is often a need to do preliminary work with marginalised communities to built trust and identify barriers to inclusion (and how to address them) before projects begin. As a result of this feedback and further discussions with ADC, DCF updated the guidance for future applicants to the Dorset Performing Arts Fund, with a new section on Equality, Diversity and Inclusion. This includes clarification on including access costs (up to 20% of overall budget) and funding for early stage work with marginalised communities. We hope this will improve project proposals made to the next round of the Fund in 2023.

Groups already awarded grants in Spring 2022 were offered an opportunity to apply for additional funds to support Access Costs, and all groups took up this opportunity.

Expenditure

- £8500 - 34 days of ADC staff time used for the delivery of the grant funded activities
- £4600 - CPD bursaries (£250 underspend)
- £1650 - Additional staff time to maintain and develop What Next? Online networking group for local artists and arts organisations

Purpose of grant

- Support organisations to make applications to the Dorset Performing Arts Fund (Round 4 of Main Grants Programme), developing new innovative projects & performances that deliver social benefit
- Support performing arts organisations' future sustainability by providing support around income generation, opportunities to learn and network
- Continue running the CPD bursary scheme for professional artists in need of financial support

Beneficiaries

- 15 professional performing artists received a CPD bursary
- 10 organisations supported to apply to Dorset Performing Arts Fund
- 461 members of networking platform What Next Dorset

Supporting groups to apply to the DPAF Main Grants Programme

We approached and held discussions with 10 organisations interested in applying for the DPAF grant, discussing the criteria that the funder is looking for and ensuring that the groups that were applicable were on the list of recommendations to DCF. 7 groups were awarded grants and we were contacted for advice from some of the groups after the grant was awarded - we were happy to offer our expertise to offer further advice and support. We also went to many of the shows to look at the quality and see how the artists and their communities benefited from the grants.

We also worked with Diverse City to ensure that organisations who received grants can share learning about how the 'top up' funding for Access Costs helped them and those people who needed accessibility support. We are looking to do this before the next years intake, as then the learning can also be utilised for those new applicants. Diverse City have agreed to chair a session on this topic and ADC will do the logistics and admin.

Since the launch of the Dorset Performing Arts Fund I have seen so many people get involved in the performing arts, who would not usually do so. I will always remember the young woman who was clearly deeply troubled and her confidence being so low that she could not look people in their eyes. Then after the 4 weeks of rehearsals with a funded group, there she was performing to the audiences and confidently. A lot of the performances did not take place in theatres, i.e. more in the public spaces, and this attracted audiences that would not usually go to theatres. It also helped people see our landscapes being animated and viewed and appreciated in a different way.

The grants we have received from the Dorset Performing Arts Fund mean that we are constantly in touch with organisations and individuals, which helps to develop links and more knowledge about what our sector is developing in performing arts throughout the County. This year we wanted to ensure that organisations delivering work in the cultural cold spots - Purbeck, East and North Dorset were catered for. We also made good partnership links in these areas, for example one of the grant recipients Angel Exit are now working with Thorngrove - which is a garden centre, run by people with learning disabilities in Gillingham. They are currently performing in one of the poly tunnels and have been working with the students at Thorngrove and community members in Gillingham to make and be part of the show.



The idea to create the Dorset Performing Arts Fund emerged from a Bridport based community theatre Project called "FLEA!" which took place in 2017. This large scale production involved a diverse cast & crew of over 200 children and adults, led by a team of local professional artists. Local philanthropist Alasdair Warren was inspired by the level of enthusiasm, community engagement and broad-based community benefit which "FLEA!" generated. Working with the team responsible for producing "FLEA!"; producer Sally Vaughan, community dance practitioner Anna Golding and theatre director Niki McCretton, the purpose and guiding principles for the Dorset Performing Arts Fund were defined.

Professional artist CPD bursary programme

In our application we proposed that we would offer ongoing mentoring support for performers with disabilities who needed extra support to get back to performing post the pandemic due to a loss of confidence or performing opportunities. Fortunately the people we had identified no longer needed this support as they had got back to their creative activities via dance and theatre leaders. Instead with agreement from DCF, we allocated funds towards additional CPD bursaries for individuals, including raising the amount that people could apply for to address the cost of living crisis.

15 individuals benefitted from CPD bursaries. We had a total of £4850 and spent £4600. (e hope to 'roll over' the remaining £250 to next years bursary scheme.) It has made a huge difference to every applicant, from learning how to perform on silks, to script writing support, to being able to go on training that critiqued their performance skills and opportunities to perform elsewhere - helping their career development. The grant gave them an opportunity to get career and professional development and through an accessible application process. The applicants were at all different stages in their careers from people recently leaving college, to mid and more established careers. All of the successful applicants work with Dorset communities in performing arts. All of the recipients have reported that they could not have done their CPD without this funding.

- **Alice Flynn** received a bursary of £500 to work with an experienced radio play writer over a number of months, to assist her in developing my first radio play & sending it out to producers.
- **Anna Golding** from Fingerprint Dance received a bursary of £365 to enable her to attend a 3 day Butoh workshop with Marie Gabrielle Rotie at Chisenhale Dance Space, London.
- **Archie Rowell** from Offpiste Theatre received a bursary of £150 to fund hiring a day of space at the Corn Exchange in Dorchester to film a proof of concept and experiment with lighting (alongside other Offpiste team members)
- **Sarah Acton** from Black Ven received a bursary of £500 to attend an Arvon residential playwright course which teaches key principles and structure of theatre writing – from character, dialogue and subtext to dramatic action, structure and plot.
- **Carrie Mason** received a bursary of £200 to travel and learn how to make a performance, part of a workshop series in London and where she also did a performance at the end of the course.
- **Charmaine Parker** received a bursary of £500 to support volunteers of The 'Portland Players to develop ideas for a site-specific part promenade adaptation of 'The Tempest' inspired by local stories
- **Ed Viney** received a bursary of £500 to find out about how scriptwriters living and working in Dorset could be helped with an informal network, to include readings of new work, either based at or attached to a theatre/arts organisation. Then establishing a group across Dorset which could meet to read plays once a month and eventually develop to producing script in-hand performances.
- **Ellie Walker** received a bursary of £200 to undertake training in how to become an arts Award adviser in music and performance for organisations in Dorset. Specifically , silver and gold award training which are two separate online courses.
- **Imi Neylon** is a young artist who with the impact of covid has lost her way. She received a bursary of £175 for acrobatic lessons on ropes, so that she can see if this is the area of arts she wants to develop.
- **Jodie House** received a bursary to support work exploring the similarities and differences in delivering a community arts programme between two community groups who are recognised as living in areas of deprivation; The Isle of Portland and The Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea. Both localities are places Jodie is already working and both have barriers stopping engagement including service phobia, basic needs not being met, i.e. housing, poverty, wellbeing and stretched mental health services. Jodie is looking at the possibility of facilitating a week-long creative arts programme and run postcard exchange project between the Portland and London families, and a social media exchange where the two communities can share, reflect and connect.

- **Jorja Follina** is a freelance dance artist based in Wareham. A bursary of £150 will support her to explore opportunities to continue the development of a new solo project *Upside Ways*, about hope and overcoming obstacles. Specifically, a studio day with Dorset based dramaturg Chris Fogg – to explore and learn more ways in which dance and text can be combined with her draft score of movement material.
- **Michelle O'Brien** received a bursary of £500 to have time to work with experienced writer, theatre director, writer and teacher, Stephen Unwin. This will help her to develop the writing within the theatre experiences she would like to make for and about Dorset. E.g. ideas for shows about *The Suffragettes* in Dorset.
- **Roni Neale** received a grant of £100 for mentoring with theatre-maker Emma Frankland. To support a development period for a one-person show, *Buoyancy*.
- **Sophie Fretwell** is a disabled performer who wanted to increase her puppetry skills. A bursary of £460 supported her to look at cutting-edge production and design techniques for puppetry, learn how to use AI computer image generator 'Midjourney', learn about 3D printing and the 'z-brush' software – aiming to model components of puppets and get them printed at Arts University Bournemouth's Innovation studio.
- **Amalia Fahle-Clouts** is a dancer who has been impacted by long covid and wanted a bursary to help her diversify her performance work. A bursary of £150 paid for singing lessons, so she could develop her vocal skills to incorporate into her work.

Case Studies

Anna Golding from **Fingerprint Dance** received a CPD bursary to enable her to attend a 3 day Butoh workshop with Marie Gabrielle Rotie at Chisenhale Dance Space, London. Anna runs a number community dance groups including opportunities for adults with learning disabilities. It is great that she can continue learning, developing her practice and bring that learning to her teaching and classes.

'I was delighted to be attending a workshop with Butoh specialist Marie Gabrielle as I had spent some time with her many years ago and found her teaching and facilitation to be genuinely inspiring and thought provoking. Butoh is a contemporary Japanese theatre form which uses grotesque imagery and environments to explore taboo topics. As a form, it grew out of the beginnings of post-modernism around the time of, and in some ways in response to, the nuclear bombing of Japan. I came across it by chance around ten years ago when I was drawn to the use of imagery and poetry which are integral to the Butoh process. The almost anti-aesthetic of slow, abstract, internalised movement spoke to me as I could see and feel its connections to the moving untrained body expressing the trials of life. And how this can in turn release an expression of the joy of life.

These three days were spent with an eclectic group of Butoh aficionados, dabblers and newcomers and, through Marie Gabrielle's teaching, I was once again reminded of the accessibility of the form. The oldest dancer in the group was close to 90 and the youngest still at drama school. We worked slowly and organically and this was a reminder to myself to let time play out when groups – particularly those new to each other – create and move together. That rushing is counterproductive. As a community dance practitioner, there can often be the pressure to entertain your participants and that this equals engagement – Butoh reminds me that this is not necessarily the case. Also that darkness can be explored if framed in the right way. Butoh seems to approach the existence of death and loss in an enlightened objective way that makes these difficult subjects manageable.

*I was delighted to connect with one of the group who is a longstanding member of the company Amici who are an iconic inclusive dance theatre company based at The Lyric Hammersmith under the direction of Wolfgang Stange. As a consequence I am attending a workshop with the company at the beginning of July before being an enthusiastic audience member of their new show *One World*. My company Fingerprint Dance has its core*

inclusive practice and I have long been inspired by Amici and so this connection is a delight. Marie Gabrielle also introduced me to the work of surrealist poet Pierre Reverdy who, since the Chisenhale workshop, has appeared in several of my own classes and will continue to do so as we've found his imagery stimulating, both personal and epic.

Thank you for funding my place at this workshop – I could not have afforded to go without this support so it is much appreciated.'



OffPiste Theatre were awarded a bursary in order to fund hiring a day of space at the Corn Exchange in Dorchester to film our proof of concept: *text me when you get home*. The bursary benefitted 3 staff members.

"Text me when you get home is a digital theatre/short film hybrid monologue that follows the struggle that Jen has to go through in order to walk home at night after work. We used the Corn Exchange in order to make use of their new lighting rig and experiment with lighting states that we've never been able to use before, as well as being local to Dorset. This enabled us to take a step forward with the work that we're wanting to make as an Associate Company to the National Youth Theatre: exploring the relationship between theatre and film.

We're incredibly proud of what we were able to achieve in the Corn Exchange with such a small team and hit all of the notes that we wanted with this part of the piece. After the outdoor part of this project is completed and the films are spliced together, we are hoping to use it as a proof of concept for a South West-wide project, with open calls for writers, directors, actors, set designers and making film and theatre crews work together with the goal of making a collection of these hybrid monologues.

We're very grateful to the Arts Development Company for awarding us with the £150 bursary as it allowed us space to experiment and begin the preparation on a project that we've been planning for a while."



Connecting artists and organisations / Long term impact

We have been developing the 'What's Next Dorset' online networking group which aims to build a network between practitioners (freelance and employed) and organisations in Dorset. Once a fortnight we can get together on line, to talk about national and local issues impacting the arts. This is a good way of sharing information, ideas, strategies. The group also aims to encourage leadership and support members see that they can also effect change.

Our theme, our guiding light, is Solidarity.

We have four aims, each of which we believe is totally dependent on the others.

- To **support** one another through these challenging and unstable times
- To build a better **understanding** amongst ourselves of the breadth and diversity of the Arts & Culture Sector in Dorset, and the interdependencies between us
- Begin to build our **vision**, our manifesto, for Arts & Culture in Dorset and the role we can play in supporting the wider ecology in Dorset - and indeed the wider South West
- Identify what we collectively want to **fight** for in the coming months, at local level alongside our friends in local government and at national level in the upcoming spending round

We have changed the structure of the group; we now pay 5 freelancers to sit on the steering group, to programme the sessions and discuss with the sector about what they would like to discuss in the fortnightly zoom sessions. This is a way of changing the power balance, so that freelancers and those who work directly in delivery, have a democratic say in the direction of the group. which will best benefit artists and communities.

Gemma Alldred, Deborah Clarke, Jennifer Forward-Hayter, Natasha Nixon, Jon Valender are all freelancers who now make up the What's Next steering group. Each freelancer is involved in chairing meetings, agreeing on subjects for discussion and promoting the network. The purpose is to was get the voice of freelancers (who make up a large part of our industry) at the table when for key strategic conversations.

Being part of the national What's Next network is really important. We're seen as being progressive nationally by paying freelancers to lead this network and hopefully other chapters will start doing that too.

[What Next? Building unlikely alliances through arts and culture \(whatnextculture.co.uk\)](https://whatnextculture.co.uk)

What Next Dorset continues to meet fortnightly on zoom and membership has risen from 390 to 461.

Conversations over the last six months include:

- Geographic disparities in Dorset
- Music education
- Freelancers, a national perspective (with Kate McGrath, Director of Fuel)
- Civic engagement (with Anna Farthing, External Engagement, Arts University Bournemouth)
- Career development
- A session in response to the Arts Council NPO decisions and going forward
- LGBTQIA+
- Freelance task force
- Understanding Dorset Cultural Strategy
- Civic role of cultural organisation

Future projects

We now have a much better idea of where the gaps are and what support Dorset citizens need in the area of performing arts. From this knowledge we are setting up new initiatives such as One Stop Shop, launching in January 2023 and aiming to better utilize all the skills sets of local arts organisations. Culture is a multi-skilled sector, with people working in a diverse range of roles: administration, budgeting, programming, producing, directing, strategic working, fundraising, marketing and project delivery. There's a whole raft of people with so many skills between them, which could be utilised to offer tailored support. It's about pooling the skills and giving people the support they need to develop their careers, businesses, hobbies and communities.

One Stop Shop brings together five cultural organisations* who've generously offered their time and expertise for free to anyone making culture in Dorset. This could include be a freelancer, those working in an organisation, involved in community events, or a hobbyist. We can also help anyone looking to start working or getting involved with culture in the county. We aim to match those in need of support with the right agency who can advise them. We would like to help with a range of topics including these initial ideas:

- Reading and making suggestions on funding bids, proposals, CVs or business plans
- Knowledge about communities and the cultural sector in different geographical regions
- Touring performances
- Signposting to funding, resources, training, networks and opportunities
- Providing insight into career paths
- Marketing and social media
- Digital skills
- Ticketing systems
- Streamlining processes and procedures
- Writing policies
- Understanding and using spreadsheets
- Recruiting volunteers
- Managing budgets

* The organisations who are taking part are: Activate Performing Arts, Artsreach, Bridport Arts Centre, b-side & Diverse City.

Main Grants Programme

1) B Sharp

Summary

12 young people participating in B Sharp training and mentoring programme MusicFutures, to create and deliver a new performance 'Songs of Here; Songs of Now' based on the Sea Defences, working with community participants – increasing their employability and benefitting the wider community

Grant

£10,106 awarded in June 2021

Expenditure

Grant covered B Sharp management, freelance artists, materials/equipment and pastoral support

Beneficiaries

66 community participants, 8 artists, 200 audience

Project Delivery

The core participants were young people aged 15 – 25, who took part in the MusicFutures programme in 2020-21, a programme to support young people who are interested in a music career but need support to know how to progress and where to start. We work hard to reach young people from a wide range of backgrounds and needs, by promoting the programme through partnerships with Dorset Youth Association, Bridport Youth Club, Lyme Regis Youth Club, ASCape, Sir John Colfox, School, Woodroffe School, Beaminster School, Thomas Hardy School, Bridport Arts Centre, The You Trust and arts partners Activate, Arts Development Company and Bridport Arts Centre. Most participants took part in the Songs of Here; Songs of Now project, including young people who are LGBTQ+, with ASD and mental health issues, who took part in additional sessions for extra support.

Led by music leaders Robert Lee, Leonie Prater and Ellie Kirtley the young people worked in groups to produce their original songs using photographs and conversations to spark their lyrical ideas, and then group improvisation to compose the music. They also took part in site visits to the seafront location with an experienced outdoor arts producer, to play their instruments and experiment with how sound worked in the interesting locations, and spaces of the sea defences on Lyme Regis seafront. They experimented with how the different instruments worked in the space, against walls, and at different heights, and started to think about how to create a site-specific performance, and choreograph a series of musical performances which worked across the space and the time period of the performance.



(Sea Defences site visit)

Thanks to the additional access funding we were able to run individual sessions with 2 young people who couldn't participate in group activity (due to social anxiety/mental health issues) to give them opportunities to prepare work for the performance. One rehearsed and performed a live set and the other created a film and music video that was displayed at the event.

We ran a series of workshops led by artist Holly Miller, to design set dressings. Community participants age 8+ took part in weekend workshops and created sculptures to dress the space. The sculptures included references to favorite local places such as the skate-park, sweet shop, the sea, beach, gardens, fossils, pets, seagulls, swimming – both as motifs, and through choices of colours, textures, fabrics and designs to reflect the ideas. Our partnership with St Michael's Primary School after-school arts club, enabled us to reach a group of children aged 8 – 11 from lower socio-economic backgrounds, and who do not routinely take part in cultural activities.

Music Leader Ellie Walker worked with young people who attend B Sharp weekly sessions Boombox (age 8 – 11) and Hub Jams (age 11-18) in Lyme Regis to help shape a community song, inspired by their words and ideas. Ellie taught the song to participants at community workshops (age 8+). Community choir Seaton Acapella learnt the song and took part in the performance.



The performance was designed to flow across the space – with the audience 'led' from performance to performance across the space, as the songs flowed round the location. Unfortunately, the weather on the performance day (Sunday 1st May 2022) was very wet, and it was impossible to perform outdoors. Instead the performance took place in St Michael's Church Hall, Lyme Regis. We lost a wider audience that would have been present through attending the Fossil Festival and being on the seafront at the time - but we maintained the flow across the space, and the planned design. The resulting performance showcased high quality original music by young people, with assured performances presented in an unusual way, about their lives and times and the place they find themselves growing up in. The audience was large and inclusive – with families, friends and community supporters across a wide range of ages and demographics enjoying the performance



100% of young participants felt that their musical skills have improved as a result of the song-writing workshops and performance opportunity, and 85% also felt their confidence has improved. They specially mentioned they felt they improved in: • Writing lyrics and songs • Playing with a group • Being able to perform with other young people • Playing instruments • Coming up with ideas • Song-writing • Composition • Coordinating songs with others in a short space of time • Playing with others • Being able to perform in front of others Sharing ideas.

"[I have enjoyed the most] just being able to play and perform with people and just having a good time"

"I think I have expressed myself through the project, and gained especially from seeing other people express themselves"

Young participants have learnt about a new way of performing (site specific, outdoor) and have learnt new skills in production, and events management. It is clear that for several, being able to speak up in the group, and suggest creative ideas was new. For some it was their first experience of performing for an audience. A young photographer and filmmaker documented the event, and a young technician managed the sound tech for the performance; more opportunities for local young creatives, developing their skills and employability.

Community participants of all ages benefited from taking part in free and interesting creative opportunities, led by professional artists and musicians. They made connections with their communities through taking part in mixed age, multigenerational workshops. The performance was mixed age and inclusive, with young people performing alongside older people from the Community Choir, improving community cohesion through shared celebration of the locality. It was useful to have written an access guide to the performance – which was the first time B Sharp has created one for an event. It was really useful to have funded time to research, and get input into how to write a guide so that we can ensure we can provide these for all future events

In agreement with DCF, an underspend of £483.07 will be used to support our next MusicFutures project starting in September, which will support another cohort of young people age 15 - 25 who are interested in a career in music.

<https://vimeo.com/732146258/9f120fde11>

<https://bsharp.org.uk/songs-of-here-songs-of-now/>

2) Doppelganger Productions

Summary

Heart of Stone community play inspired by discussion cafes at Portland Museum and involving community participants to devise and perform the show, by working with multiple local organisations and schools

Grant

£7907 awarded in June 2021

Expenditure

The grant was largely for professional fees, and also for volunteer T-shirts, refreshments, materials for props and costumes, venue hire, printing, recording costs (soundtrack), and subsidised tickets.

(An additional £14,900 for the project was sourced from an Arts Council grant via the National Lottery)

Beneficiaries

156 community participants, 29 artists, 237 audience

Project Delivery

We co-created, workshopped and performed a new original community play with a newly formed group of Portland Players led by a professional theatre team, to celebrate Portland stone, landscape and people. The Portland Players were 10 local residents ranging from complete beginners to members of Royal Manor Theatre amateur society. The play brought together generations, to share the local and social history of Portland Stone industry and life on Portland in living memory, using ideas sparked by conversations with quarrymen in a 2019 writing residency Poet Sarah Acton ran at Portland Museum.



It has been a huge learning curve for the team managing the production 6 months after the original timeline due to lockdowns and Covid 19 restrictions. We all worked flexibly to reach an outcome that had to be reviewed and tweaked to meet the times. Initial 'tasters' in June 2021 were undertaken with strict rules on numbers. The Portland Port Authority allowed us to use the Old Engine Shed as our drama studio for 10 sessions without charge and we secured a portaloos for use in an otherwise remote area.

We made 7 schools visits at Atlantic Academy School on Portland and Westfield Arts College in Weymouth, engaging younger voices to workshop scenes and add new perspectives. We also ran two further discussion cafes at Portland Museum and four library 'craft and conversation' sessions at Weymouth and Portland libraries. Our outreach activities were all made possible through this grant from the Dorset Performing Arts Fund.

One aspect that was really successful was working with the Island Voices Community Choir, with over 15 members recording the show soundtrack and taking part in workshops and performances. The songs are all original, taken from the script and set to music with composer and choir working together, and there are two original songs by the choir musical director also. The emphasis evolved to focus on how we share and listen to older generations in a community, learn and make a space for the stories and celebrate common connections.

The play script itself successfully mixed verbatim text from new discussions with quarrymen, intergenerational groups at the Weymouth and Portland libraries and new original text drawing on Earth history, mythology, climate change and songs from Island Voices Community Choir. Working with an experienced creative team, we workshopped the script over ten sessions at the Old Engine Shed drama studio space. We were very blessed to work with b-Side festival, who came on board to support us and agreed to include us in their international live art festival in May. We gave two outdoor performances in Stadium Bowl as part of the b-Side arts festival. 237 audience members watched the final R&D shows and gave amazing feedback to compliment the production, Players, cast and musicians. It was an epic achievement to get to this stage with so many uncertainties. The show looked amazing with costumes by Sophie Fretwell, and everyone was proud to be part of it, inviting audiences of family and friends. The quarrymen came and applauded, 'that's all about me' one said after with a huge smile on his face, 'thank you for telling our story'.



Being supported by b-Side festival really helped with publicity on such a high profile platform. We subsidised the performance tickets and advertised these as 'pay what you can' from £0-£5 to make the shows accessible to individuals where costs was a barrier, and to encourage people who may not usually come to a show. We asked audience members to fill out feedback forms and we received over 100, all raving about the performances.

The Dorset Performing Arts fund enabled us to record an audio of the performances – we recorded the soundtrack of songs and spoken word and engaged Rob Jayne as our professional film-maker to film the process and make two short films at the end for evaluation and to celebrate the achievements of the community.

Future legacy

The Island Voices Choir said that they may not have survived had the project not come along; they had not rehearsed all lockdown and only came back together to start learning the Heart of Stone songs. They were asked to sing for 300 people at the opening gala of the b-Side festival as a showcase performance and have gleaned new members through the show. They have now started a new series of meetings with renewed confidence. The Portland Players have spoken to us to ask for advice as to how to continue, and it is the intention of the core team to help support projects in the near future. The Players have made firm new friends and continue to meet up and celebrate and enjoy creative community together.

The stories of how this project has brought together people who were lonely, struggling as carers, or just disengaged from social life after Covid, is one of the most powerful and poignant legacies of the project. To think that lasting friendships and support networks have formed is very special.

We will be looking to work with all of our cast and crew again to look into developing some new outreach workshops to compliment the tour dates and venues. Our online Facebook Community continues to grow and is at around 91 members, all awaiting news of the tour and possibilities after this.

As a result of the grant we also completely renewed our organisational policies through Community Training Consultant guided and supported by Caro Hart at Dorset Community Action, this included Safeguarding and Whistle Blowing Policy and Procedure. The three Directors of Doppelganger all benefitted.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=4fcbvzHmci8

3) Dorchester Arts

Summary

Songlines project, creating new songs inspired by the Natural Dorset collection (Dorset Museum), and delivering community performances with multiple community participants, through engaging local schools and groups

Grant

£9964 awarded in June 2021

Expenditure

Professional fees and staff time, recording, filming and PA costs

Beneficiaries

500 community participants, 4 artists, 200 audience

Project Delivery

The Dorset Songlines project took inspiration from the Natural Dorset collection at the newly refurbished Dorset Museum and we ran the project with Geof Edge, a Dorchester-based composer and performer. The main partners were Dorset Museum and DASP Music. This intergenerational project used the rich resources offered by the museum collection as the basis for children and adults to come together to compose, learn and perform a collection of original songs and music.

RESEARCH: The project involved all Year 4 students from 16 local schools (over 450 children). Guided visits to the Natural Dorset gallery allowed children and adults to learn about the subject matter and use it as inspiration to compose songs. Schools/children were given additional resources to complete and further develop their experience and build on from what they had explored and learnt from their visit.

COMPOSITION: Using the materials provided, the schools and 4 community choirs were guided through the process of song composition in a way that suited their age, ability and needs. Geof Edge visited all schools/choirs involved and collaborated with them to shape their research into songs. Choir leaders and some of their members attended a composition day at the Dorset Museum to explore the exhibition and various artefacts. He collated all the initial musical ideas and arranged them into a series of nine songs.

REHEARSAL: All the schools/choirs had a least two rehearsals with Geof and Hannah Trevorrow (DASP Music) and continued working on these in their own time. All schools were provided with a guide and rehearsal track. 'So Here We Are' was composed as a unifying song and was released to the public alongside a vocal recording and lyrics so that members of the public/audience could learn the song prior to the final performance.

PERFORMANCE: A free, outdoor performance took place at Maumbury Rings on Saturday 18th June with over 250 participants involved in the choir and over 500 people in attendance as audience. Maumbury Rings is a fully accessible venue. Disabled toilet facilities were provided by Dorchester Arts. As part of the performance the audience was invited to join in with 'So Here We Are' and a short 'live' rehearsal was conducted by Geof. 'Dorset Songlines' was also performed at Hengefest on Sunday 31st July. The recordings of the songs and instrumentals will be offered to Dorset Museum to accompany their collection, either as part of the displays or on web platforms, enabling 'Dorset Songlines' to reach much wider audiences.



<https://vimeo.com/737488391/8c5ce8cb2f>

The participants explored, celebrated and encapsulated Dorset's natural heritage through music. The project enabled several different partnerships working collaboratively on variety of different levels. The final performance saw an intergenerational choir with all of the groups coming together, building a sense of cohesion and togetherness.

(Several of the those involved in Songlines will be involved in a large scale outdoor performance event in Summer 2024)

4) Fingerprint Dance CIC

Summary

Fingerprint Dance CIC delivers inclusive dance and performing arts projects in West Dorset. Their work celebrates diversity and different life experience and challenges preconceptions about who makes and consumes art. A grant was awarded for the Forest project supported by Arts Council, with an aim to use the grant to provide professional training and performance opportunities for people with learning difficulties and disabilities, currently members of No Limits community project.

Grant

£13,070 awarded in June 2021

Expenditure

Staff costs, guest artist fees and other operational costs to run the project

Beneficiaries

11 participants & 700 audience

Project Delivery

This grant has enabled us to launch 'Forest', a new inclusive performing arts project for adults with and without disabilities in West Dorset. The project was launched in September 2021 with a residency with Emily Alden, a hearing-impaired choreographer from Cornwall <https://www.emilyalden.com/>. Emily collaborated with the Forest dancers, their director Anna Golding, mature dance company Grace + Growl and composer Andrew Dickson over several weeks to create an original piece of dance theatre 'Two and a Half'. The piece took as its theme the 2.5°C rise in Arctic Sea temperatures where lost ice, shrinking habitats and climbing sea levels are rapidly changing the world as we know it. The residency culminated in two live site responsive performances as part of the Dorset flagship outdoor arts festival, Inside Out Dorset, the first at Christchurch Priory Park on the 19th September and the second at Symondsburry Estate, Bridport on the 26th September. Both performances were very well attended by a warm and responsive festival audience.

Following this launch to the project, the company settled in to their first term of weekly dance, theatre and music sessions with director Anna Golding and the Forest team which includes musician Andrew Dickson, dance assistant Salud Botella and creative access support Mickey Bonome. Work culminated in a Winter Cabaret showcasing several new short contemporary dance pieces by Forest, a magical lantern procession and guest appearances from magician The Big Foolini and Grace + Growl Dance Company.

The spring term saw our weekly sessions continue with committed attendance from all concerned, the cohesion of a performance company now well established. Between May and July 2022, Forest worked with Far Flung, a professional inclusive theatre company based in Plymouth who produce the festival Funky Llama which offers disabled artists the opportunity to show their work at a professional level. Through this partnership a new piece of dance theatre 'Phoenix' was devised through the shared experiences of surviving isolation, how we can find ways back to reconnecting, ultimately celebrating strength in unity with the powerful final image of a huge bird, the phoenix, rising from the ashes and circling the stage. Phoenix was performed at The Octagon Theatre, Yeovil on the 24th July as part of 'Collective', an evening's programme of dance and music from across the region. This was the first time that several of our dancers had performed on a professional stage, under lights and in front of people they didn't know, and it was a huge achievement.

The engagement and outreach officer at The Octagon worked with Fingerprint Dance and our carers and families to develop a strategy for the day of the performance which would ensure that everyone had their support needs met so that the experience was as positive as possible. This included the hire of an electronic wheelchair lift by the theatre, designated quiet resting areas in the scene dock to the side of the stage and a visit to The Octagon prior to the event for Forest dancers to familiarise themselves with the stage and building.

One of the key barriers to access for people with learning disabilities in a rural area is transport. Our DPAF access funding has meant that Fingerprint Dance have been able to provide regular lifts, car shares and mobility taxis for participants. For performances in Christchurch and Yeovil we were also able to hire an accessible 17-seater minibus which ensured that all participants could travel to and from the venues safely and comfortably.

Our Forest participants include adults with and without disabilities, the majority of whom have experience of mental health issues and social isolation. The project has given those involved, including the creative team, a structure within which its own small community has evolved. The mutual support of trusted friendships has carefully developed through this first year and this was palpable in the lead up to our Octagon performance. On the day itself, where nerves and excitement levels were high, Forest took responsibility for themselves and each other which ensured that the experience was wholly positive.



AS is an older man with moderate learning disabilities who lives independently with additional support from his brother and elderly mum. He does not use mainstream LD provision such as day services and has chosen to live a quiet and largely private life. A suggestion was made to his brother that he might enjoy No Limits and they both came to a taster session in Sept 2021. AS quickly embraced the friendly, fun, and warm environment and our sessions became an important part of his weekly routine. A couple of months later, AS was offered a place in Forest which he gladly took up. The Winter Cabaret was the first time AS had ever performed publicly and he was brilliant. His mum said *"what an uplifting and lovely evening that was. It was so nice that everyone had their chance to shine. It made Andrew feel a part of what others of us take for granted."*

AP is a young woman who has profound physical disabilities, moderate learning disabilities and is a wheelchair user. She was also a student at the National Star College in Gloucestershire for three years with a primary focus on dance and choreography. As AP transitioned from SEN school and college into adult life, she found that opportunities to follow her chosen path began to fall away and much of life was spent at home or at the local day centre. AP was put in touch with us through staff at The Ridgeway Centre in Weymouth and almost straight away she became an enthusiastic and dynamic member of the company. Her access needs are complex in that she travels with an automated wheelchair, mobile hoist equipment and a toilet wheelchair. Venues in which sessions take place where AP is a participant must have level access between parking and rehearsal areas, a private changing area with safe turning space and ideally the provision of a quiet, cool, and low light break out space. Fortunately we were able to find one venue, Bridport Town Hall, which has been able to satisfy our needs, and this has become our base. After our recent performance at The Octagon which opened with AP alone on stage in a pool of light, her dad said *"she has just come on leaps and bounds since joining Forest. I didn't know what to expect but it really was fantastic."*

The first year of this project has shown us that people of all abilities are able to achieve beyond expectation when the right combination of support and challenge is in place. The support of organisations such as People First Dorset, Encompass Dorset and Tricuro were invaluable in the recruitment process. We have the highest respect for the care providers and family members who support those attending Forest and are committed to maintaining and growing these relationships which are key to the success of our work.

Forest on Fingerprint Dance website <https://fingerprintdance.co.uk/index.php/forest-2/>
Fingerprint Dance At Inside Out Dorset Festival <https://www.emilyalden.com/blog/insideoutdorset>
Two and a Half performance details <https://activateperformingarts.org.uk/events/two-and-a-half/>

5) Landance CIC

Summary

Landance productions animate outdoor spaces with memorable free contemporary dance performances for audiences from all social backgrounds which enliven local spaces and address current issues in a stimulating and thought-provoking way. They engage people by offering free accessible workshops related to each project to local schools, libraries & other organisations embedded in their community.

Grant

£1000 awarded in June 2021 as match funding for the project

Expenditure

Our contribution enabled funding of £30,000 To be secured from Arts Council England – it was used for general costs of the project.

Beneficiaries

260 participants, 17 artists and 300 audience, plus others viewing online

Project Delivery

The Dorset Performing Arts Fund supported Research & Development work in 2020 for this project. This included poetry and dance workshops in collaboration with Dorset Libraries, which were run online due to the pandemic. Vanessa Kisuule, the project poet, ran sessions with the creative team, community participants and the assistant choreographer/producers Reuben Squirrell and Rory Armstrong. The sessions produced excellent movement work as well as poems for the 2021 performances.

The project in 2021 worked with much wider groups of local participants. Two schools' workshops involved 7 secondary classes (170+ students) & 2 primary classes (65+ pupils) taking part. 15 people attended the adult workshop (35 booked). The sound workshops at the B sharp Busking Festival were also well received (outside venues and online sessions) but with fewer participants. Plymouth University Marine Department was generous in sharing their Lyme Bay Marine Protected Area seabed film footage & their research papers.

This project delivered 2 outdoor dance performances, 3 online poetry & 2 live sound workshops. Due to Covid numbers per performance were restricted to 150. We attracted a wide range of people, feedback card postcodes were mainly locals, some tourists. More people joined the audience as it promenaded & at the beach.

1 min video: <https://vimeo.com/636241555/fb490a1a41>

full video: <https://vimeo.com/630016106>

6) Marine Theatre

Summary

Development of a large-scale participative community play in Lyme Regis involving local theatre, dance and music groups and with a particular focus on including older people

Grant

£16,485 awarded in September 2020

Expenditure

Freelance artists, rehearsal venue hire, set/props/equipment, technical support & publicity

Beneficiaries

102 community participants, 10 artists, 1178 audience

Project Delivery

The project was not able to go ahead over 2020/21 as planned due to the pandemic. An extension was agreed.

We created print publicity to invite everyone to sign up to take part and this was distributed across the whole community, from care homes, to nurseries, health centres, local community centres, bownies, schools etc. The result was inclusive engagement for both participants and audiences. We already had a strong partnership with a number of the cultural organisations in the town but now have a much broader number of partners who we will be working together with again on our community programme.

Following previous award-winning plays, Lyme Regis screenwriter and Marine patron, Andrew Rattenbury, worked with the community to create the story for Lyme and the Sea. The play was directed by local director, Tessa Morton who ran weekly rehearsals from Jan - June 2022, to bring the show to life with musical director Declan Duffy, alongside many organisers, singers, musicians, technical crew and our 80+ strong volunteer team.

The play became the life blood of the theatre coming back to life after the pandemic, and despite a concern that people would be hesitant to take part, the opposite effect was seen, with an overwhelming number of the local community coming forward to be part of this incredible participatory performance.



Lyme and the Sea was performed over 4 nights in June 2022 and was directed, managed & performed by over 100 people of all ages and abilities from the Lyme Regis community, from young children to the older participant age 92. It celebrated the history of Lyme Regis and its enduring relationship with the sea. The performance presented a story spanning over 1200 years from the town's earliest inhabitants to the present day, showing the crucial role played by the sea in the lives and the livelihoods of its residents.



The 4 performances were all sold out and feedback demonstrates the impact the play had on the community, with an overwhelming positive response from professional and volunteer visitors and participants.

“a heartwarming performance making everyone feel as though part of the community”

“a true celebration of Lyme Regis”.

The play attracted local people but also a tourist audience, who fed back that they had learned much more about the history of the area from the play than from visiting the museum or tourist information. Our social media sites were very active in response to the play and our followers increased.



The main feedback from those taking part was they felt like part of a community and felt the theatre was a place they would like to support in the future and come back and be involved in other activities. With such excellent feedback the plan is to continue to present the community performance every 2 years.

Lyme Regis has a large elderly community and many have struggled with loneliness, particularly during the lockdown period. We arranged transport for those less able to come and take part in the community play and the feedback has shown that they have been able to develop friends and start up a social network since taking part. We have had a significant increase of sign ups to the volunteer programme, many age 60+ who visited the theatre for the first time and are now returning both as audience members and as volunteers.

Press coverage:

<https://lyme-online.co.uk/lifestyle/entertainment/cast-of-lyme-regis-community-play-get-together-for-first-read-through/>

<https://lyme-online.co.uk/lifestyle/entertainment/lyme-and-the-sea-a-true-celebration-of-community/>

7) Opera Circus

Summary

A project working with disadvantaged young people in Portland, creating a multi-disciplinary performance exploring issues that effect young people. This supports long term project 'The Complete Freedom of Truth'

Grant

£10,126 awarded in June 2021 (A grant from Erasmus and a crowdfunder campaign run by the young participants, generated further funds for remaining project costs)

Expenditure

Project management, freelance artists including emerging young artists, workshop and equipment hire, youth worker and other professional support to enable work with refugees

Beneficiaries

65 community participants, 14 artists, 200 audience

Project Delivery

We worked mainly with the Drop in Youth Centre, some young artists from the island and our partners b-side with support from Island Community Action. From March – June 2022 we led a monthly, day long music & music production workshop with some of the young people and youth workers who were joined during the process by some home schooled children and their parents. We worked with around 30 young people in total and two international partners, music producers from Copenhagen and a youth cooperative Termokiss from Kosovo. A number of other organisations also asked if their young people could participate and this included 7 refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Eritrea, 4 young people from the Act for Change youth programme, and two members of EYAB (the youth wing of Diverse City), and young people from Weymouth.

We worked a wide a variety of local community groups from the Permaculture Gardens to the roof of the Quiddles café, from the enclosed garden and car park to the Community Theatre, Portland Council community venue, two church halls and the beaches. From the outset the project integrated into Portland's community. We were able to grant bursaries to 4 young artists to help them participate in the project work and to give them opportunities to work alongside professional artists concentrating on learning about facilitation & participatory arts practices. We were able to fund 4 youth care workers and one specialist in mentoring, mental health and well being to ensure that all these aspects of the project and the young people's involvement was as safe and cared for as possible



Music and Parkour Rehearsals on the roof of Quiddles café and at Permaculture Gardens



Through the Erasmus + programme grant we organised an 8 day residency in Pristina Kosovo in April 2022 and followed up with the arts residency on Portland during refugee week. The main themes explored were Climate Emergency, Migration, Inclusion and Belonging, and Covid - the young people's mental health and their resulting fears, frustrations, insecurities and the effects of isolation and what they had lost in the two years from 2020-2022, very high on the agenda. The art forms chosen were Performance Parkour, Spoken Word and Poetry, Contemporary Movement and music, both acoustic and digital. Photography and film making were also used. The young people wanted to plan, organise and deliver the whole process themselves.



The art forms were performed across the Island from the Masonic car park, to the roof top of a local café by the beach and the Royal Manor Theatre. The final sharing of the performance work started at 4pm at the Masonic Car Park with a show devised by our Parkour partners Prodigal/Urban Playground Team. "On the Strandline" explored issues of Climate and Rising Seas. Two performances were given with an audience of around 200.

The next part of the evening took place at Royal Manor Theatre. A young man with Asperges had taken part in a film using visual techniques to describe what it's like to have Asperges and how the world treats you as a result. This was screened for the audience and there was then a Q and A in which the young actor answered many questions. As a result he is now in discussion with a local youth theatre company about joining them as an actor on a regular basis.

Music, song and spoken word then took over in the theatre, which had been written and created during the week. One piece of music started with Spanish song with improvisations from a variety of instruments and percussion and eventually other voices gathering young people and others as it travelled including from Syria and Eritrea. We had young people and others from the community from a multiplicity of countries and ethnicities Greek, Danish, Portuguese, Albanian, Kosovan, Ukrainian, Bosnian, Eritrean, Afghanistan, Syrian, Italian and of course the UK, in particular Dorset. This allowed us to recognise Refugee Week with a global presence through art and with people who had experienced the trauma and horror of being forced to leave their homes.

We always work towards an inclusive audience and sometimes yes there are challenges. Portland because of its geography is difficult to move around and public transport is huge. In the end we bought 14 weekly bus passes and shared them with different smaller groups and we rented a 17 seat bus with driver who at certain times of the day and evening would drive people up and down in order that they could participate in activities.

We cannot stress enough how much damage has been done by Covid and the effects of isolation caused by the lockdowns. Reports and research are beginning to reveal that children and young people in particular have been affected. These include a massive increase in mental health problems, lack of social skills and communication problems, and a sort of general disinterest and lack of curiosity. The young people made comments about opening up horizons, the importance of creativity and culture, making them challenge themselves, creating

greater awareness of others, etc. There have also been connections that are growing between different young people, individual artists and groups. A young Afghan refugee said that his time on Portland had completely changed his perspective for the better.

"Thanks so, so much again for organising the residency, I can barely put into words how important both these residencies have been for me"

"Thank you for opening new horizons for young people through your work, enabling us to connect and share our knowledge with each other. I had never seen more sincere and warm smiles and everything seemed as if it had been created and we had known everyone for years"

"Personally, I got a lot from this project and I hope that I used it for good where I have the opportunity and I tried to share my love and knowledge with others."

"I am doing perfect. The TCFT project was kinda a turning point for me. I'm doing very fine, Never felt better. It is all because you took my hand and introduced me to those TCFT family. I was lucky"

We have interviewed around 10 local young people in depth and on film and will be using these interviews to create a full length documentary about youth activism, community involvement through arts and cultural activities interspersed with extracts of rehearsals, work in progress and performance. Some of these local young people were also part of the visit to Kosovo and will be part of a youth arts residency in Bosnia in August (all separately funded.)



8) Wimborne Community Theatre

Summary

A community theatre production in Wimborne town centre, performed on or beside the River Allen & the River Stour, involving several participating groups and artists, working collaboratively on themes relating to place, personal and mythical stories/memories and river ecology

Grant

£13,000 awarded in June 2021

Expenditure

Project management, artists/consultants, BSL interpreter, access worker and 2 membership bursaries & travel costs for low income participants

Beneficiaries

11- community participants, 10 artists, 350 audience

Project Delivery

Secrets of the Stour was a culmination of several years of research on the theme of river ecology and local stories about Wimborne's rivers Allen and Stour. We held a smaller pilot production, Timeless Stream, at Walford Mill in October 2021, focusing on creatures and flora living in The Allen, as a pilot to this main production.

Secrets of the Stour was developed by WCT in partnership with Millstream theatre (who work with actors with learning disabilities) and other professional artists. Groups began by workshopping independently then worked collaboratively over the months leading up to the show, which resulted in a more integrated company of actors. Devising and rehearsals were led by Tony Horitz (Artistic Director of WCT) and Tam Gilbert (joint director of Millstream) in town centre venues as well as on site. They were assisted by Holly Cassidy, an emerging theatre artist based in Bournemouth. Joe Hancock (guest artistic director) supported Tony with dramaturgy discussions and led sessions with the whole group focused on interactive promenade theatre. This helped the group consolidate their ideas and frame them in the archetypal story of the hero's Journey.

Composer, Karen Wimhurst, arranged music and original and traditional songs for the show, and rehearsed and performed them with a new choir and musicians. Artist, Heidi Steller, assisted at two Makers and Community Workshops, and decorated the Shrines which were installed in the central field. Participants made clay talismans that were handed out to audience members to wear as they went with Jay on their journey. Adrian Newton, sound artist and ecology professor, advised in the research and development phase as well as producing a Sound Walk (included people's memories collected by WCT over recent years) which the audience took at the end of the play. Speakers were hidden in undergrowth along the riverside path and the sounds (natural as well as spoken) produced an evocative atmosphere in the dusk.

In preparation for the show, Tony visited QE School to ask the young people about their feelings during lockdown. Several talked about desire to go outside while others talked about wanting to stay in their rooms. A sense of discomfort was indicated and we developed this theme in the story of two young siblings with very different needs. Members of the cast have spoken about the sense of inclusive community that this kind of project creates, a sense of belonging and mutual support. People supported and encouraged each other, and even when we came close to cancelling the show in the days before the show (due to Covid and a range of other unforeseen challenges), the actors were committed to continuing and participated with positivity and passion.

The show was performed in fields adjacent to the river on land owned by Sir William Hanham of Dean's Court, who is keen to raise awareness of the value of rivers for the community and wildlife that inhabits them. It was a promenade in which the audience were led on mysterious journey with two young siblings, attending a commemorative event on the river in memory of their grandfather, a local teacher and fisherman. The landscape through which the play journeyed involved moving from a river shore, through 2 fields, passing around a neolithic mound (or motte and Bailey) to a final river shore scene where the mysterious character leaves on a boat. Information about the ecology of the land was embedded within the production, in the themes and script and in the game show in the Shrine scene which took place in a large meadow. Paths were cut in a circular shape through long grass and the audience were led by a procession of actors playing music and singing into a central area where four shrines commemorated the seasons, creatures and flora living in that river area.

The Top Up grant supported the Audio Description and BSL interpreter. As always, we advertised the provision of BSL interpreter, through local networks - including Bournemouth Deaf Club. For those with visual impairments, we wanted to move away from the traditional method of an audio describer giving information

through a headset, and used our grant for visually impaired emerging artist Tam Gilbert, to work with the directors to develop, test and explore new ways of using AD creatively. By embedding AD into the script and wider production from the start, it is no longer an add-on, for visually impaired audiences, but is an intrinsic, invisible layer. Tam also worked with one of our members to create a tactile model of the set which we used as a Touch Tour before the performance. Our actors and Creative Team learned a great deal from our experimenting. Although we had visually impaired audience members booked, sadly, there were cancellations due to illness. For future productions we would try to develop more partnerships and offer further opportunities to VI groups and organisations to increase attendance.

Audience comments (still being gathered):

"We were there last night and it was fabulous - well done all! What a unique and lovely way to learn about our River...!"

"I know that all of the children thoroughly enjoyed taking part and would have gained a great deal from the experience."

"We were all captivated at each stage, including the highly moving ending. You made the evening educational, participatory and highly engaging for those children who stayed... I also thought it was heart-warming to see such an inclusive approach to local theatre, which sent a powerful message about the skills and potential of those with learning disabilities. Once again, a big thank you and well done."

"Beautiful and magical, and sharing a really important message in a very accessible way."

"A new concept of theatre, and very moving. Everyone loved it and joined in - it was perfect in every aspect, the puppets, the acting, the costumes. And the setting was wonderful"

Wimborne Community Theatre
original theatre in unusual places

and

Millstream Theatre
at the Museum of East Dorset

Present

Secrets of the Stour

A site-specific production in a hidden part of Wimborne

Journey from Julian's Bridge across the meadows beside the River Stour as we follow two young characters setting out on a quest to discover how our river runs through us...

Artwork by Heidi Stoller

JULY 6, 7, 8, 9 at 7.30pm. Gates open from 7.15pm
JULY 8 – BSL Interpreted performance

Booking Essential

Tickets: Adult £10 | Child/young person £5 | Family (up to 2 adults/3 children) £30
Suitable for children aged 6+.

Tickets can be purchased via Eventbrite (<https://tinyurl.com/4483rkmm>) or scan QR code

Dorset Community Foundation | Dorset Council | Dorset Arts Council | Dorset Museum of East Dorset

Secrets of the Stour reflects a sense of place intertwined with personal and mythical stories which shine a light on how crucial our river ecology is for us.

Secrets of the Stour, the second part of Wimborne Community Theatre's "Our Rivers Run Through Us" project, has been developed by members of WCT, written and directed by Tony Horitz, in collaboration with artistic director Joe Hancock, Millstream artistic director Tam Gilbert, musician and composer Karen Wimbush and sound artist Adrian Newton.

www.wimbornecommunitytheatre.co.uk | www.bumthecurtain.co.uk

The performances will take place on privately owned land along the pretty River Stour. Because some of the terrain will be uneven and may be difficult for some walkers and wheelchair users, an accessible vehicle will be available to take up to 8 people (wheelchair users and those with limited mobility). Limited parking for wheelchair users and those with reduced mobility is also available at the gate.

If you would like to book parking and/or a place on the accessible vehicle, please contact Rachel of White Sheep Projects (rachel@whitesheepprojects.co.uk) to confirm availability before booking your ticket online.

Full directions, parking details and other information will be available on booking, but please note that parking will be in town Centre car parks. Most of these are a 5–10 minute walk to the venue.

Photo by Adrian Newton