



East Durham Trust
Moving our community forward



No More Nowt Happens: Monitoring Report 2019



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1. Background and Context

Since 2014, East Durham Trust has been a key partner in the delivery of “East Durham Creates” with specific responsibilities for engaging people in Arts participation and as of 2018 East Durham Trust became the lead organisation of the project. Part of East Durham Trust’s direct delivery of the project has included a series of “Go and See” visits, taking individuals to events and venues which were previously unfamiliar. This has included taking young people to Sage Gateshead to see the Northern Symphonia including a backstage tour, to a community café in Sunderland to see a nationally recognised spoken word artist, to Seven Stories the National Centre for Children’s Illustration and to Game On 2.0, an exhibition of computer games and concept art. All of the visits emphatically highlighted the potential to achieve outcomes with young people that go way beyond the simple enjoyment factor of a one off attendance. Additional benefits include mental health improvement, social inclusion and raised aspirations.

In terms of Arts engagement, East Durham ranks fourth from the bottom of 450 UK “districts” where there is a clear correlation between deprivation and lack of engagement.

Whilst the general youth observation of “nothing to do around here” is largely a universal phenomenon, there would appear to be some substance for this perception in East Durham. The spread of the population across mainly ex-mining settlements does not support a cultural infrastructure. For example, up until the recent emergence of a cinema at the local Retail Park, the area had no commercial outlet for film.

In 2018 East Durham Trust proposed a project to engage young people in planning, organising and staging five separate cultural events in venues across East Durham, one of the UK’s most deprived communities with significantly low levels of engagement with Arts and Culture. Two major elements of the proposed approach combined to ensure a significant degree of capacity building and a long term impact, namely:

- △ The practical level of involvement of the young people at all stages will be developmental and potentially life changing.
- △ The outcomes and disciplines involved will be new to the venues in question and are certain to engender individual and organisational learning.
- △ The proposed activity compliments our work with the East Durham Creates project, an Arts Participation initiative funded by Arts Council England.

2. Project Impact & Outline

In terms of direct impact the project aimed to:

- △ Engage a minimum of **25 young people** in the sustained planning and delivery of key events.
- △ Engage a further **25 young people** in supporting events in a volunteering capacity.
- △ Support **5 local venues** in hosting an Arts event which is additional to the traditional portfolio of activity.
- △ Have **300 local people** attend a high profile event in their local community.
- △ Of the above, over half to be attending an event of this nature for the first time.
- △ Support **5 local venues** in producing a sustainability strategy demonstrating how the activity delivered can then be repeated and continued.

- △ At least **100 people** would attend a final showcase event.

East Durham Trust co-ordinated and managed the one year programme via a project co-ordinator. The project was enhanced and supported by the East Durham Creates project, particularly in engaging with high level artists.

The timeline for delivery included:

- △ Recruitment of young people to support the project. The initial target was 16-19 year olds but as the project developed we identified those on either side of the age bracket (from 13 to early 20s) wanting to be part of the project. This was done by local media, social media and primarily through utilising community networks. There was an emphasis on recruiting previously disadvantaged young people and the inclusion of those with low levels of confidence.
- △ Engaging five community venues and effectively “allocating” cultural genres for development.
- △ Supporting the established groups to schedule, plan and organise the events, facilitating professional support and guidance (N.B. the current East Durham Creates project – a local version of the national Creative People and Places ACE project was a natural source of support).
- △ Evaluation and succession planning.

3. Launch

The project was launched at Shotton Community Centre on 28th March 2018 to an audience of **over 50 people** as part of an East Durham Creates event called a Creative Social and included a showcase of talented local young people from East Durham College. They provided entertainment ranging from music to originally commissioned pieces of theatre. The event was utilised to encourage expressions of interest from local community groups who would go on to lead on some of the arts events listed below.



Launch event at Shotton Community Centre 28th March 2018

4. Events

The young people worked alongside their community venues to identify their art forms with Music, Photography, Digital Art, Comedy and Spoken Word being chosen. They were then supported by the East Durham Trust Staff including the East Durham Creates team to secure high calibre artists and performers working in their genre. Taken individually these events were:

4.1 Trimdon Station Community Centre: Photography Exhibition

Trimdon Station Community Centre opted to develop a photographic exhibition. The opportunity was made possible due to East Durham Trust’s existing relationship with documentary and photojournalist Mary Turner who had previously worked with the Trust to develop her piece of work titled ‘Dispossessed’ which she agreed to show for the first time in the former Miners’ Welfare Hall.

Mary is a documentary photographer and writer from the UK. After beginning her career in press photography she became committed to telling the stories behind the news which led to her first major documentary project, the story of the Dale Farm Traveller community which she continues to work on today. The experience of building trust and an understanding of her subject, which is so important to communication, forms the core of her work.

Her work has been recognised internationally by bodies including the Philip Jones Griffiths Award, Amnesty International Media Award, the Sony World Photography Award, China International Photo Contest, UK Picture Editors Guild and the Magenta Foundation.

Publications and clients include The Times of London, The Sunday Times, The New York Times, The Washington Post, The Wall Street Journal, The Daily Telegraph, The Telegraph Magazine, The Guardian, The Australian, Huck Magazine, LensBlog, Gazeta Wyborcza, Le Monde and many more.



Examples of Mary Turner's work in the press

East Durham Trust facilitated a collaboration which included the first public exhibition of Mary Turner's body of work Dispossessed at Trimdon Station Community Centre.

The project engaged 8 young people in the organisation and planning of the exhibition with a further 4 young people volunteering as part of the process.

This included:

- 🔺 Events training and support from the East Durham Creates team. This included exhibition specific training and general events management.
- 🔺 Support from staff around promoting events.
- 🔺 Photography workshops with Mary Turner to create a supporting exhibition to sit alongside Mary's work in the foyer.
- 🔺 Inspiration and training via the Go and See **(see section 5)**
- 🔺 Additional events training and upskilling alongside unique volunteering opportunities for other volunteers and the centre manager
- 🔺 Improved visibility for the community centre as a place to see a high quality arts exhibition, something that they had never done before (this included the transformation of their hall into a gallery space).





Photos from the Photography Exhibition Launch Night 30th November

The final exhibition had an opening night on 30th November and the exhibition ran until 3rd December. **200 people** attended the exhibition from a range of areas both locally and from further afield.

The Trimdon group went on to provide peer support for the events that followed, particularly the Spoken Word Night, and attended 2 of the 4 as audience members (they missed the music gig as they were snowed in!).

Comments from the Young People involved:

"Stressful but fun working with one another and Mary Turner. I learnt how to organise something and think I could do it again."

"Made me happy and I felt proud of what we have achieved."

"It's made me feel better in myself as I had something to do."

"I have learnt the skills how to host an event, I have gone on to organise a charity night by myself at the centre."

Comments from the Community Centre:

"It was something new, something we'd never done before but that we'd love to do again. It was fantastic for the local community but also meant we had outsiders who travelled all the way to Trimdon to visit us. That was a huge deal for our community centre."

4.2 Creative Youth Opportunities: Comedy Night

Creative Youth Opportunities opted to organise a Comedy Night. This allowed local artist Michelle Harland to utilise her links to North East based Comedian Matt Reed.

Born and bred in Sunderland, Matt's affable style has won him fans across the UK. He effortlessly plays with the crowd with a natural rapport that is found in few comics. With so many gigs of every size under his belt, from 3000 to 30, there is pretty much no comedy situation Matt can't handle. Having played all the major clubs in the country, Matt is now also in great demand as MC for music festivals, burlesque nights and corporate occasions.

Matt utilised his connections within the comedy circuit to recruit comedians Simon Lomas (winner of Petfringe Comedian of the Year 2018), Louise Young (2017 Funny Woman finalist) and Gavin Webster who has appeared on shows like 'Nevermind the Buzzcocks' to be part of the event.

As Creative Youth Opportunities did not have a venue large enough to host a Comedy Night the young people sourced an alternative venue as part of their event planning process. This included

making considerations around capacity, bar access, staging and a PA system. After scoping various locations Seaham Masonic Hall agreed to provide their space free of charge.

The project engaged **7 young people** in the organisation and planning of the exhibition who also acted as volunteers for the event. 2 of these also participated in the Trimdon event so they were able to pass on lessons learned and increase their capacity to organise and manage events.



Photos from the Comedy Night on 16th Decembe

This included:

- △ Events training and support from the East Durham Creates team and Creative Youth Opportunities (Michelle Harland regularly plans events across East Durham).
- △ Support from staff and Creative Youth Opportunities around promoting events.
- △ Planning workshop with Matt Reed to support them with understanding how a comedy night should be run.
- △ Inspiration and training via the Go and See (**see section 5**)
- △ Learning throughout the process e.g. their initial ticket price was too high so they had to change it in order to encourage wider attendance.

The Comedy Night took place on Sunday December 16th and had over **70 attendees**. The Masonic Hall was so impressed by the young people and the turn out that they offered the venue for any future events free of charge.

Comments from the Young People involved:

“I liked being part of it but I didn’t really anticipate how organised and committed we would need to be and be able to keep to deadlines and timescales.”

“Didn’t think how useful it would be but now being part of it has made me see it.”

“I liked taking a bit more charge in a project I am interested in.”

“Becoming more organised and committed is something that we’ve had to learn for ourselves.”

4.3 Dawdon Youth & Community Centre: Music Gig

Dawdon Youth & Community Centre decided to host an Indie Music Gig, utilising East Durham Trust and East Durham Creates links to Sunderland based music organisation Pop Recs Ltd, fronted by local band Frankie & The Heartstrings. They were able to approach a variety of potential acts with the young people opting for Barry Hyde, the front man of Sunderland based The Futureheads and 14 year old Viral sensation Tom ‘Mouse’ Smith alongside a series of local support acts. Barry Hyde is the creative force and voice of the recently reformed Futureheads who received wide acclaim for their music, particularly their cover of Kate Bush’s ‘Hounds of Love’.

The group were very inspired by their Go & See trip with only one of the young people having ever been to a live music gig before. The young people took total ownership of the project taking charge of every aspect including promoting it locally, booking technical support and staging, booking support acts and selling tickets.

The project engaged **28 young people** in a variety of roles, with a core group of **16 young people** directly involved in the organisation and running of the event. The remaining **12 young people** included volunteers, performers, promoters and young people who took part in workshops.



Photos from Workshop with Barry Hyde on 23rd January

This included:

- △ Events training and support from the East Durham Creates team, Pop Recs Ltd, NARC magazine, the local support acts and Barry Hyde himself.
- △ Support from staff around promoting events. This included guidance around ticket costs and ticket selling platforms.
- △ A planning and music workshop with Barry Hyde to support their understanding of music and different aspects of performance.
- △ Inspiration and training via the Go and See (**see section 5**)
- △ A hugely positive experience for the Community Centre who had never planned or hosted an event like this before.

The event took place on Friday 1st February was sold out but was negatively impacted by bad snowy weather in the region which meant that attendance was lower than they had expected. However there were still **113 attendees**, some of which came from as far away as Alnwick to see the gig.

The Dawdon group went on to provide peer support for the events that followed, particularly the Spoken Word Night, and attended 2 of the 4 events as audience members.



Photos from the Indie Music Gig on 1st February

Comments from the Young People involved:

"This gig brought a lot of stress with it, however when it was over the final gig brought a lot of satisfaction, that all the work paid off and came together the way we planned it."

"I enjoyed the concert the most. It was right here at the community centre, and the hall looked really good."

"Before the project I couldn't remember anything!"

"I loved the gig because it was based in the community centre which is a place I feel comfortable in."

"Before the gig we didn't really know or were comfortable organising a big event but now we would try a big event again."

Comments from the Community Centre:

"During the gig Dawdon Youth and Community Centre was bursting at the seams with amazing talent. A massive thank you to the amazing young people who were tasked with organising the event. They held the flag high for young people across Seaham and showed everyone how genuinely committed, motivated and inspirational young people are."

4.4 East Durham College with Shotton Community Centre: Digital Art Exhibition

East Durham College opted to do a Digital Art Exhibition working with artist Jason Wilsher-Mills and a local community centre. East Durham Trust staff had recently taken part in an iPad workshop with Jason at a Creative People and Places conference and were able to utilise connections made through East Durham Creates to engage Jason with the project.

Jason is a UK-based disabled digital artist from the East Midlands. He initially painted traditionally, but since becoming disabled found the iPad screen more manageable. Jason's work focuses on themes of disability and marginalised communities utilising technology to enhance and realise his work.



Jason Wilsher-Mills Work

Jason has exhibited in galleries all over the world from Qatar to San Francisco with work ranging from large scale commissions to massive sculptures and he has exhibited alongside world renowned

artists including Turner Prize Award winner Grayson Perry. Some of the young people engaged in the project had been fortunate enough to visit Hull City of Culture as part of East Durham Creates Go and See programme where they experienced the culmination of a year long residency by Jason which included large scale 3D printed sculptures.



Students on Go & See to Jason Wilsher-Mills Exhibition at Hull City of Culture

The College worked interdepartmentally with students from Media, Art and Performing Arts all inputting into the project. One of the deciding factors for engaging Jason was that the group of students represented a wide variety of backgrounds and needs including a number of learners with Autism, Asbergers and Tourettes, a learner with hearing impairment and a learner who was transgender.

Although the College had capacity to host the exhibition an important part of the project was about growing community venues and their ability to host high quality arts events. As a result the core group of students were linked in with Shotton Community Centre who intended to use the exhibition to inspire their own youth groups to potentially engage in a future digital art project.

The project engaged **35 young people** in a variety of roles, with a core group of **9 young people** directly involved in the organisation and running of the event. The remaining **26 young people** included volunteers and young people who took part in workshops and talks.

This included:

- △ Events training and support from the East Durham Creates team. This included exhibition specific training and general events management.
- △ Support from staff around promoting events.
- △ Ipad Workshops with Jason Wilsher-Mills to create a supporting exhibition to sit alongside Jason's work .
- △ Additional talks for students from other courses from Jason Wilsher-Mills around making a career in the arts world.
- △ Inspiration and training via the Go and See **(see section 5)**.
- △ Additional events training and upskilling for the centre managers of Shotton Community Centre
- △ Improved visibility for the community centre as a place to see a high quality arts exhibition.

The Exhibition took place on from Friday February 15th to 22nd and had almost **100 attendees**.



Photos of the Digital Art Exhibition from 15th February

Comments from the Young People involved:

"I had a fantastic time trying something new."

"I liked how we got to decide how people viewed the exhibition. Nobody told us how we should set it up, we made all the decisions."

"We learnt everything that is involved with organising an exhibition – that it's not just about hanging work up."

"I learnt a real sense of self confidence and self expression and I would definitely do it again."

Comments from the Community Centre:

"The exhibition was a fantastic way to show our community something different. Not just that – using digital art got young people really engaged and they all wanted to know when they could do it themselves."

4.5 Wellfield School with Blackhall Community Centre: Spoken Word Event

Wellfield School chose to get involved via the English department in the organisation and planning of a Spoken Word Night working with headline act BBC Slam Poet 2018 Jess Green and a variety of regionally based poets. Jess Green has a long standing relationship with East Durham Trust, having performed as part of our Conference in 2016 and the Trust was able to use this relationship to secure both her performance and workshops from Jess.

Jess Green is performance poet and playwright who has performed at Glastonbury, Latitude, Bestival and the Edinburgh Fringe. Her first collection, Burning Books, published by Burning Eye Books was shortlisted for the East Midlands Book Award 2015 and as a poetry and music show received 5* reviews at the Edinburgh Fringe and on its national tour. Her second poetry and music show, A Self Help Guide To Being In Love With Jeremy Corbyn based around her second collection of the same name went to the Edinburgh Fringe in 2018, received critical acclaim and an endorsement from Corbyn himself who described it as 'fantastic'. A Self Help Guide is touring throughout 2019. Jess also runs Leicester poetry night, Find The Right Words which was shortlisted for Best Regular UK Poetry Event in the Saboteur Awards 2018.

Additionally the night included Door to Door poet Rowan McCabe, disabled poet Lisette Auton and was hosted by County Durham based poet Tony Gadd who runs his own poetry night in Coxhoe called Gong Fu Poetry and who provided additional support throughout the project to the young people.



Photos from Workshop and Performance with Jess Green

Although the School had capacity to host the event an important part of the project was around growing community venues and their ability to host high quality arts events. As a result the core group of students were linked in with Blackhall Community Centre who intended to use the event as a trial with the potential to host more in the future.

The project engaged **16 young people** in a variety of roles, with a core group of **7 young people** directly involved in the organisation and running of the event. The remaining **9 young people** were young people who took part in workshops. 1 of the young people was also involved with Trimdon's project which allowed for an element of peer learning and increased her capacity as an events planner.



Photos from Spoken Word Night 26th February 2019

This included:

- 🔺 Events training and support from the East Durham Creates team.
- 🔺 Support from staff around promoting events.
- 🔺 A day long workshop with Jess Green which included performance techniques, the opportunity to create their own work and training around planning their own event.
- 🔺 Inspiration and training via the Go and See – this was linked with the workshop element (see section 5).
- 🔺 Additional events training and upskilling for the centre manager of Blackhall Community Centre
- 🔺 Improved visibility for the community centre as a place to see a high quality arts event
- 🔺 Additionally the event highlighted to both the Spoken Word artists and their fans that Blackhall was a place that you can see a high quality spoken word event.

The Spoken Word Night took place on from Tuesday 26th February and had almost 80 attendees. As with previous events attendees came from a range of areas and backgrounds including the seasoned Spoken Word crowd and people who had never attended anything like this before.

Comments from the Young People involved:

“Before the project I did not know what outside my bedroom was.”

“I am more confident because of being involved in the spoken word night.”

“Taking part in this project made me feel empowered, as if I had a voice that was valid.”

“The project made me feel inspired and hopeful and more confident about myself.”

Comments from the Community Centre:

“The event totally changed my opinion of what a spoken word or poetry night was and we'd definitely do it again here at the community centre. The young people who made it happen were an inspiration.”

4.6 Overview

In total the events engaged over **560** audience members and **94** unique young people in the planning and organisation of the events *N.B. Some of the young people engaged with more than one event.*

Of the young people involved over **60** took part in workshops, sessions and formal events training involving artists like Barry Hyde and Jess Green, arts organisations like Mima, Pop Recs Ltd, NARC magazine and Wunderbar and the East Durham Creates team.

5. The Go & See Model

One of the key success factors for the initial engagement of the young people relied on implementing the Go & See model as part of each events development. The events utilised the evidence base provided by East Durham Creates that specifically targetted visits to arts and cultural venues both locally and further afield could provide inspiration for young people and give them aspirations about recreating professional events in their own backyard. For many of the young people these acted as an initial point of reference given that some of them had never experienced events like music gigs or spoken word nights before.

Each group took part in a specifically targetted Go and See Visit:

- 8 young people from Trimdon visited Great & Tiny War by Wunderbar as an unusual venue for an exhibition. The same group also took part in Cultural Spring's We Are Experimenting Cyanotype workshops and Deaf Lens Exhibition and Chris Killip The Last Ships at the Laing Gallery ahead of planning their own Photography exhibition in their Community Centre.



Photos from Trimdon Go and See Visit

- 8 young people from Seaham visited the Comedy Store at Gala Theatre in Durham ahead of planning their own Comedy Night in a Masonic Hall.
- 13 young people visited Pop Recs in Sunderland to learn about planning a Gig and Promoting with NARC magazine and Frankie and the Heartstrings before visiting Riverside to see We

are Scientists and meet the band. For many of the attendees this was the first music gig they'd ever been to. They've gone on to plan an indie music gig in their community centre.



Photos from Dawdon Go and See Visit

- 9 young people visited Middlesbrough Institute for Modern Art (Mima) and Teesside University to learn about putting on an exhibition and experience virtual reality ahead of a digital art exhibition with Jason Wilsher-Mills.



Photos from East Durham College Go and See Visit

- 20 young people took part in a spoken word workshop and performance as part of a Suffragette project with artist Jess Green ahead of planning their own Spoken Word event.

Additionally many of these Go & Sees helped to establish and build relationships both with professional organisations and performers but also within the groups of young people.

6. Press & Media Coverage

The project was widely covered within local press including the Sunderland Echo, Hartlepool Mail and Northern Echo, along with the local free newspaper East Durham Life (**Appendix 1**).



The project also received a large amount of attention on Social Media, with artist's truly embracing their roles and promoting events within their own circles to increase audience attendance and promote the project in general (**Appendix 2**).

Social media played an important role in the general promotion of the project including using it to sell tickets, ensure attendance and celebrate the young people's achievements after events. Across East Durham Trust and East Durham Creates Facebook platforms posts related to No More Nowt Happens reached over **62,000 people** and were engaged with by more than **6,500 people**. Additionally the Twitter platforms reached over **16,000 people** and were engaged with by more than **450 people**.

7. Feedback & Case Studies

7.1 Showcase Event

In order to celebrate the young people's achievements and allow an opportunity for feedback we opted to host a Showcase event on Friday 29th March at one of the host venues, Dawdon Youth & Community Centre.

The event included:

- 🔺 Film reflections showcased as talking heads from both the young people involved but also event participants and centre managers
- 🔺 Spoken word from poet Lisette Auton, who took part in the Spoken Word Night
- 🔺 A video message from comedian Matt Reed to those involved in the Comedy Night with his own reflections and gratitude
- 🔺 A performance and reflections from Barry Hyde of the Futureheads who took part in the Music Gig
- 🔺 Opportunity for feedback throughout the event via surveys and directly targetted questions positioned around the venue
- 🔺 Awards for each venue/organisation which led on the individual events
- 🔺 Spoken word from Rowan McCabe including a poem written by the young people (see below for more info)



Photos from the Showcase Event on 29th March

Additionally 9 young people took part in a workshop prior to the event brought young people from the project together to work with Door to Door Poet Rowan McCabe and reflect upon their experiences. The workshop acted as a unique way of evaluating the project and giving a voice to some of the young people who had been involved. The result was a collaborative poem which Rowan performed on the night to close the event **(see Appendix 3)**.

The event also included a paid opportunity for a young person to act as a technician, overseeing the presentation and video elements of the event.

Almost **130 people** attended the feedback event with everyone unanimously reflecting positively upon the project.

7.2 Feedback Sessions

20 young people took part in debrief sessions related to individual events and a further 22 young people took part in video feedback sessions to create the talking heads for the event.

Additionally 4 participants and centre managers also created video feedback. These feedback films are available from East Durham Trust upon request or via dropbox:

https://www.dropbox.com/sh/m8h0y4denxkkekc/AAAh0zgTP_PmEWAGkhy55ssga?dl=0

The feedback from all sources was positive. For Community Centres it was a fantastic opportunity to try something new and showcase themselves as a place that people would travel from far and wide to see great art. Many young people suggested it had made a huge impact on them, were eager to take part in similar events in the future and that they felt empowered by the whole experience.

7.3 Case Study

Chloe initially engaged with the project via her links with Trimdon Station Community Centre. Chloe has a number of underlying issues related to her home life alongside mental health issues and suffers from very low self confidence.

During the organisation of the photography exhibition Chloe took on a lead role after external issues impacted on the initial leaders ability to support the event. Boosted by her success Chloe felt confident enough to take to the stage at the exhibition and read a poem she had written about her experiences.



Chloe at events

Chloe took a real journey during the project, attending almost all of the events, creating new friendships and taking another lead role in the Spoken Word Night, again taking to the stage with increased confidence to perform her own poetry and to introduce the headline act Jess Green.

Since beginning with the photography exhibition Chloe has gone on to organise a local charity night at Trimdon Station Community Centre, arranged for Go and See visits to other Spoken Word Nights

for her local community, supported and sold tickets to other events and attended a Youth Panel as part of the East Durham Creates project on her own.

8. Lessons Learned

The project has been very beneficial in highlighting new ways of working, for both the Trust and the East Durham Creates project which it manages.

Key lessons learnt from the project include:

- 🔺 **It is possible to utilise young people and their position within community settings to short circuit the traditional leadership role of centre managers and make things happen.** Centre Managers traditionally have limited capacity to expand their offer so empowering the young people meant that events happened that would never have been in the scope of the Centres previously.
- 🔺 **It's important to inspire young people by getting them to experience new things.** The Go and See visits raised aspirations and for many provided new experiences that helped them to shape what they organised themselves.
- 🔺 **Young people are more willing to step outside geographic areas when being involved with things they are genuinely engaged with.** There were a number of examples where young people travelled between villages and towns in order to engage with projects such as a young man from Shotton going to Trimdon because he had a genuine interest in photography and young people from the College travelling to Seaham because they were eager to engage with organising a Comedy Night. In each case this created new friendships and relationships which previously would have not existed.
- 🔺 **The project gave the young people an excellent lesson in just how much work and effort is involved in events planning but that a successful event is worth it.** Many of the young people expressed being stressed or finding it very hard work but accepted that the pay off of pride and enjoyment when the event works out was worth it.
- 🔺 **Planning and organising events can have a life changing impact:** For many of the young people involved this was the first time they had been given the opportunity to lead a project. Many of them cited increased pride, a sense of responsibility, increased confidence and new social networks. Feedback suggested that the positive effects on their mental health for those young people involved was huge.

9. Sustainability

When looking at sustainability it's important to consider two main elements:

- 🔺 How the community venues will sustain their activity and continue to programme high quality arts events.
- 🔺 How to sustain the interest and momentum of the young people engaged within the project.

For the latter the East Durham Creates project offers a natural pathway for continued support of the young people with the projects third major commission will be focussing on young people as a target group. This means a number of the young people will transition into a Youth Panel, take part in the commissioning process, act as producers and participants or form part of the audience for this major artistic commission. Many of the young people have also volunteered for events as a result of their engagement with No More Nowt Happens, genuinely wanting to continue being involved in delivering arts in the community.

Additionally for some of the community venues East Durham Creates' Cultural Hubs programme (Blackhall and Trimdon) has made a transition from financially supporting a purely theatre based offer into broadening the scope of what can be programmed to include events similar to No More

Nowt Happens e.g. Spoken Word and Music. This will allow some of the venues a natural progression path and potential funding to extend or repeat activity.

Dawdon Youth and Community Centre has recently been supported to become the 7th Cultural Hub in East Durham as a direct result of their engagement with the No More Nowt Happens project because they are committed to an increased cultural offer and utilising the skills of their Youth Hub.

In addition each Community Organisation was asked to create a sustainability plan identifying the way in which they will ensure future events will happen (**see Appendix 4**).

Having seen the success of No More Nowt Happens East Durham Trust is committed to supporting future activity of a similar nature and is currently seeking funding resources for a second phase of No More Nowt Happens.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Sample of Press Coverage

Appendix 2: Sample of Social Media

Appendix 3: Collaborative Poem Written in Feedback Session

Appendix 4: Sustainability Plans

Appendix 1: Sample of Press Coverage

YOUNGSTERS ORGANISE SHOW AS PART OF EAST DURHAM TRUST'S NO MORE NOWT HAPPENS PROJECT

Mining a rich seam of poetry

By DAVID ALLISON
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Youngsters organised a major poetry event in the unlikely setting of a former Miners Welfare Hall.

Almost 100 people attended the event at Blackhall Community Centre, one of the first of its kind in this area.

The event was part of East Durham Trust's No More Nowt Happens project, which is funded by County Durham Community Foundation and supported by East Durham Creates, a project funded by Arts Council England.

The project brings groups of young people together to plan and stage events with professional performers and artists in non-traditional venues, putting an end to the idea that 'Nowt Happens' in East Durham.

The line-up included BBC Slam Poet of the Year 2018 Jess Green, whose show 'A Self Help Guide to Being in Love with Jeremy Corbyn' wowed audiences at last year's Edinburgh Fringe and who has played festivals like Glastonbury and Latitude.

Alongside Jess was Newcastle-based door to door poet Rowan McCabe and disabled rights poet Lisette Auton. The event was hosted by County Durham 'Gong Fu' poet Tony Gadd.

Some of the young people involved also took to the stage performing their own poetry and acting as co-hosts to introduce the performers.

Chief executive of East Durham Trust Malcolm Fallow said: "To get this many people out to experience poetry in a former Miners Welfare Hall is astounding.

"The crowd was such a fantastic mixture of those who love poetry and those who had never experienced it like this before."

East Durham Trust is a registered charity with expressed purpose to promote the regeneration of rural and urban areas of the effects of social and economic decline.

The trust is the flagship voluntary and community sector organisation for the area and as well as providing support to local Community groups.



WHATS ON AT BLACKHALL COMMUNITY CENTRE

The young people who helped organise the event. Inset, Jess Green performing.

Art puts focus on mining community

By Hayley Blakelock

AN EAST Durham village held an exhibition displaying photography work from young people across the area.

The Trimdon Station event displayed the work of internationally acclaimed photographer Mary Turner at village's community centre. The exhibition, titled "Dispossessed" reflected the current plight of North East mining communities through the lens of the award winning photographer whose work has been exhibited in some of the world's most prestigious galleries.

Over 150 people, including locals and photography enthusiasts from further afield, attended the exhibition which is part of a series of events that make up the "No More Nowt Happens" project funded by County Durham Community Foundation and managed by East Durham Trust.

The project also brings groups of young people together to dispel the idea that "nowt happens" in their area, encouraging non-traditional venues to put on high end art.

It was the first of five events that will be staged across East Durham which will also include a comedy night in Seaham and an Indie music night in Dawdon featuring Barry Hyde, formerly of North East band The Futureheads.

As the Trust's CEO Malcolm Fallow explained: "To stage an exhibition of work by someone of Mary's standing is a real coup and it just shows what a group of local young people can achieve if we give them the right support and resources."

"No More Nowt Happens" was inspired by the Arts Council funded East Durham Creates, a project aimed at increasing arts engagement in East Durham.



Young people of Trimdon Station Community Centre

Praise for 'No More Nowt Happens' project

YOUNG people came together to celebrate a project which put an end to the idea that "Nowt Happens" in East Durham.

Young people from across the area took part in a showcase event at Dawdon Youth & Community Centre, Seaham, in front of family and friends, to celebrate their achievements in organising five major arts events across the area.

The showcase event was part of East Durham Trust's "No More Nowt Happens" project which is funded by County Durham Community Foundation. The project brings groups of young people together to plan and stage arts events with professional performers and artists in local non-traditional venues, putting an end to the idea that "Nowt Happens."

Performers including Barry Hyde of the Futureheads, and Door to Door Poet Rowan McCabe joined the young people in a multimedia celebration that featured performances, works of art, music and more.

The project also included a major photography exhibition, a music gig, a spoken word night, a comedy night and a digital art exhibition. All events were organised and run by young people in their own communities. The events engaged an audience of more than 550 people with almost 100 young people becoming involved.

Prior to organising the event, many of the young people had never attended concerts or exhibitions but were encouraged to go and see such events to inspire them ahead of the planning stage. Many of the young people also formed friendships as well as developing their social networks, learning new skills and growing in confidence.

Malcolm Fallow, Chief Executive of East Durham Trust, said: "This project has been a revelation in that young people have really helped to put their respective communities on the cultural map."

Barry Hyde, Lisette Auton, Rowan McCabe, Malcolm Fallow with some of the young people from the No More Nowt Happens project



Appendix 2: Sample of Social Media



JASON WILSHER-MILLS @JASONWILSHERMIL · Feb 8

Looks great :)



East Durham Trust @EastDurhamTrust
Getting all set up for our @EastDurhamCol @CountyDurhamCF #NoMoreNowtHappens exhibition. The young people are exhibiting their digital artwork alongside @JASONWILSHERMIL piece at #shotton...



Rowan McCabe @RowanMcCabe · Feb 21

Really looking forward to this gig with @jessgreenpoet. At 3 quid it's a steal. Ran by some amazing young people. Anyone welcome. L



Jess Green @jessgreenpoet
Hello the North East, my love for you continues to grow and next week I'm performing at this gig which has entirely been organised by local young people and also features everyone's favourite door to door poet @RowanMcCabe.



East Durham Trust
Published by Emma Biggins [?] · 1 April at 16:50 · 🌐

⋮

It was a great event on Friday evening where almost 130 local people came to celebrate our County Durham Community Foundation 'No More Nowt Happens' project at Dawdon Youth and Community Centre. The event celebrated the achievements of the young people involved and we got to see all the hard work that they have done over this past year to organise 5 major arts events across East Durham.

We even had some special performances by The Futureheads Barry Hyde, Rowan McCabe and Lisette Auton. As well as the young people receiving a special award.







✔ Get more likes, comments and shares
Boost this post for £4 to reach up to 5,300 people.

2,231 <small>People reached</small>	413 <small>Engagements</small>	Boost Post
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👤 Mary Turner, Anne Whitehead and 24 others
5 Comments 7 shares

Appendix 3: Collaborative Poem Written in Feedback Session

No More Nowt Happens

Before the project I couldn't remember anything.
I had never been to a gig, spoken word or comedy night before ,
I had more fun than I usually do.
I did not know what outside my bedroom was.

The rock music was as loud as a Harley,
but strangely calming like the sea on a stormy day,
striking a chord deep inside.

The community centre is as comfortable as a bed of clouds,
until the children ran on the bouncy floor and the photos fell from the walls
like my hopes falling from the sky,
but still the happy atmosphere was all around.

Performing at the spoken word night was as scary as a heavy roll of thunder in
a loud but amiable storm.

After this project I realised musicians rarely show up on time,
Going to see We Are Scientists has changed my taste in music.
I keep being asked when is the next comedy night happening.

In the future I want to be a turtle
because they carry their homes on their backs.
I want to be a bassist in a band and go on tour all the time.
Poetry will be my side job,
photography will be my hobby,
We want to organise a big event again.

My confidence has grown like a sunflower.
I never had this many responsibilities,
it brought everyone closer,
It added value, excitement and made a difference to my life.
We felt achievement that was as satisfying as hot chocolate on a cold night.

Written by...

Steph Thornton, Chloe Watson, Sydney Vardy, Lydia Anderson, Francesca Rademann, Vanessa Rademann, Imogen Anderson, Zoe Horseman, Thomas Vardy

Appendix 4: Sustainability Plans



NMNH Project Sustainability Template

Community Organisation: Wellfield School/Blackhall Community Centre

How will the skills learnt by the young people be developed further in your organisation?

The young people engaged with the Spoken Word Night are now aware of the Community Centre and will be engaged with future events in a voluntary capacity. For the Community Centre it was an excellent opportunity to host a different kind of artistic event with the risk factor removed and the skills and success of the event mean that Blackhall are committed to more events like this.

Will another art event be organised by the young people involved in NMNH?

Blackhall Community Centre is interested in programming another Spoken Word Night and additional events with young people at the heart. This will include involving young people in the programming of Blackhall's Cultural Hub programme.

How will this be feasible and what funding avenues will you follow to fund future activities?

We are working with East Durham Creates Cultural Hubs programme and also considering ticket sales. Blackhall Community Centre has a strong track record of selling tickets for events and has a standard rule of a minimum of £3 per ticket.

With guidance from the East Durham Creates team we will be able to approach appropriate Spoken Word artists with the view of their involvement being kept to a financial minimum (for example Tony Gadd offered his comparing of the event for free) and nurturing the existing local talents that the project has highlighted.

We know East Durham Creates has potential funding streams that can be utilised via Cultural Hubs and Let's Create. As we are an existing Cultural Hubs there is scope to develop future cultural offers via this outlet.

How will you ensure that your business plan in the future develops your organisation as a more sustainable arts venue?

Blackhall Community Centre has committed to a Cultural offer as part of its business model and this would be another addition to this.

Blackhall Community Centre is also committed to working with young people, particularly via links with Wellfield School (the secondary school that Blackhall residents primarily feed into).



NMNH Project Sustainability Template

Community Organisation: Trimdon Station Community Centre

How will the skills learnt by the young people be developed further in your organisation?

- Trimdon will continue to develop the event planning and management skills of the young people involved as well as some of the local community centre users who were an audience of the NMNH project.
- We intend to allow the young people more responsibility in planning and running of current events in the centre. We also intend to push them to try to organise art events which do not currently happen in Trimdon such as dance and spoken word events.

Will another art event be organised by the young people involved in NMNH?

Yes we are planning to allow young people to organise a spoken word/comedy night at Trimdon.

We are currently planning taking the group on a Go & See trip to Born Lippy in April and meet the organisers to help develop this.

How will this be feasible and what funding avenues will you follow to fund future activities?

We are working with EDC on their Cultural Hub programme to fund 3 art performances at the centre using the NMNH methodology. This will be a spoken word night organised by the young people with support from Trimdon and EDC as well as young people managing a children's theatre performance and a dance event.

Additionally the team has been supporting the young people involved to consider a number of external funding applications for another photography project.

How will you ensure that your business plan in the future develops your organisation as a more sustainable arts venue?

Following the success of the exhibition we are committed to continuing to utilise our venue for cultural offers in the future and grow our capacity (and that of our youth group) to plan major arts events in the future.



NMNH Project Sustainability Template

Community Organisation: Creative Youth Opportunities

How will the skills learnt by the young people be developed further in your organisation?

Two of the young people involved are apprentices with CYO so the experience was invaluable to their learning process and growing their abilities and making them more able to make a genuine contribution towards CYO.

Will another art event be organised by the young people involved in NMNH?

The core group of young people are committed to organising another comedy night utilising the relationships developed with Seaham Masonic Hall and Matt Reed. CYO has encouraged them to consider becoming constituted and they have been receiving support to put in a potential Let's Create application to support the continuation.

How will this be feasible and what funding avenues will you follow to fund future activities?

Michelle Harland has a track record of securing funding for a wide range of arts activities including events based in a variety of venues. Additionally she has an outstanding relationship with local Town Councils who could potentially be utilised to support further activity.

Further to this the Young People have been given a number of support sessions regarding the Let's Create (see above) and are in the process of confirming options/recruiting additional young people to form the group.

How will you ensure that your business plan in the future develops your organisation as a more sustainable arts venue?

CYO are committed to growing the arts offer within the organisation and with encouraging young people to consider arts and culture as a viable career opportunity, as well as something that they do for fun. Via their Youth Panel CYO will continue to ensure that young people influence what happens not only in their own organisation but in the wider East Durham Community.



NMNH Project Sustainability Template

Community Organisation: East Durham College/Shotton Community Centre

How will the skills learnt by the young people be developed further in your organisation?

For many of the young people from East Durham College arts and culture is a potential career path so being involved with high quality artists and with organising artistic events is invaluable experience. For the College the interdepartmental element of the project was relatively new and allowed new relationships to be built and established for future projects.

For Shotton Community Centre hosting the exhibition highlighted a desire by their own local young people to get involved in similar projects that utilise digital technology to engage them with art. It also improved their skills in regards to hosting arts events.

Will another art event be organised by the young people involved in NMNH?

East Durham College is currently writing a proposal for additional funding to support more structured community engagement and work with community groups which is being supported by the Trust and East Durham Creates. This will include developing further the relationships created between community venues like Shotton Community Centre.

Additionally Shotton is currently being supported to programme similar events utilising their own local young people via Cultural Hubs and other strands of East Durham Creates.

How will this be feasible and what funding avenues will you follow to fund future activities?

The College is seeking a significant amount of funding for the proposed project mentioned above. Shotton Community Centre have a long standing record of securing funding and as a Cultural Hub will be supported by East Durham Creates to implement additional arts activity engaging with young people.

How will you ensure that your business plan in the future develops your organisation as a more sustainable arts venue?

East Durham College has a commitment to young people and particularly via this current community-based creative arts bid they are writing that will be a sustained element of their business plan.

Shotton Community Centre has an ongoing commitment to bringing arts and cultural activities into their Centre via their involvement with East Durham Creates.



NMNH Project Sustainability Template

Community Organisation: Dawdon Youth and Community Centre

How will the skills learnt by the young people be developed further in your organisation?

Young people are at the heart of the model of Dawdon YCC via our Youth Hub and we are particularly committed to empowering young people to take control. Via the CREE and our Youth Hub the skills learnt during the project will continue to support the things we do and we intend to involve them more now they have showcased their abilities at taking on such a huge responsibility.

Will another art event be organised by the young people involved in NMNH?

Following our involvement in No More Nowt Happens we have now signed up to become a Cultural Hub. We're also looking at other arts projects that could involve the young people, including a Let's Create application for a photography/filmmaking project and a partnership project with Artichoke ahead of this years Lumiere. All of these will involve the young people taking leadership roles and managing their day to day running.

How will this be feasible and what funding avenues will you follow to fund future activities?

As mentioned above funding support can be found via the Cultural Hubs programme, Let's Create and other strands of East Durham Creates. Additionally we have a strong proven track record for applying for funding so will look at alternative funding streams for some of the above projects.

How will you ensure that your business plan in the future develops your organisation as a more sustainable arts venue?

We are committed to supporting Young People and that includes giving them new skills and responsibilities. No More Nowt Happens highlighted just how capable they can be when trust is placed in them and we'll continue to utilise these skills in everything we do moving forward.