

Trustees' Report

2020-21



Welcome

In March 2020 at the beginning of the first national lockdown, we could not have imagined what was just around the corner. The covid-19 pandemic had a devastating impact on the communities we work with and required us as an organisation to entirely re-shape our programmes to respond to this global crisis. We'd like to pay tribute to our extraordinary team who, almost overnight, came together with our artists, volunteers, community members, trustees, funders and partners to create a vibrant and pioneering remote creative programme to bring our communities, many of whom have been disproportionately affected by the pandemic, vital connections, creativity and joy.

Our work has never been more important.

As an organisation, our work has always been based on sustained relationships with our communities, but navigating the pandemic deepened these further. Social prescribing became an important feature of our year, as we welcomed new people to our programmes referred by local social prescribers and community partners.

We are incredibly grateful to our core funders, Arts Council England and London Borough of Lewisham for their ongoing support, and to our other funders including City Bridge Trust, who provided flexibility with their grants during this time, enabling them to be re-directed to where the need was greatest.

Prior to the pandemic, we had already been testing ways of bringing creativity and connection to people's home, for those who could no longer attend our in person activity. From April 2020, this became our entire focus. This document describes the outcomes from the year, and captures some of the feedback and stories which have emerged from our communities. As a sector, arts and culture became a lifeline for so many people during the pandemic, and we were pleased to be collaborating both on a local and national level with peers across the arts, community and health sectors to reach communities during this time.

In amongst the enormous changes to our programmes, we underwent a significant change of leadership, as Founder and Artistic Director, David Slater, stepped down in October 2020 and Maddy Mills took over as Director. David remains involved as an Associate for the organisation.

Whilst the year was incredibly challenging on many fronts, we are extraordinarily proud of how the organisation adapted, demonstrating nimbleness, togetherness and positive energy during this time.

Paul Cann OBE (Chair of Trustees) and
Maddy Mills (Director)

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Image: Handle with Care exhibition at the Waldron Health Centre, Wei Yee Cheung, July 2021. Image credit South East London CCG



Image: Meet Me... exhibition, Festival of Radical Care at the Albany, October 2021

Trustees

Donell Atkinson-Johnson
(appointed 1 December 2020)

James Bird

Louisa Borg-Costanzi Potts

Kate Bull

Paul Cann (Chair)

Kurban Haji

Peter Jarman

Rosaline Muirhead
(appointed 2 March 2021)

Alison Rich

The Trustees present their report and audited accounts of the Company for the period ended 31 March 2021. This report is also a Directors' Report required by s417 of the Companies Act 2006. All members of the Management Committee are Trustees and Directors of the charitable company.

The Company which is limited by guarantee and has no share capital, was incorporated on 27 April 1997 and commenced to operate on 1 November 1998 when it took over the assets, liabilities and operation of Entelechy (New Moves). New Trustees are appointed by members of the Management Committee and hold office until the following Annual General Meeting at which they are formally appointed.

Trustees are selected to the Board through a process of election by the existing trustees. They receive a personal and detailed induction by the Chair, Director and General Manager.

The Company's Objects

To use arts and other social practices to enable older people and adults with learning disabilities to work with others from their communities in new and valued ways and to develop long term sustained practice with individuals and groups in South East London; and to disseminate information about working practices and procedures to audiences at regional, national and international levels.

These objects are being reviewed in 21-22 to reflect the broader reach of our programmes, and ambitions for the future.



Mission and Values

Our overarching company mission is to create a more equal society, where every individual, no matter the barriers they have historically experienced, has the opportunity to be creative and contribute to the cultural life of their local community.

We continue to work entirely collaboratively with our communities, namely isolated older people, those living with profound and multiple disabilities, and those living in care home environments, and artists to create and deliver our programmes. Our programmes remind wider society of the immense power, creativity and vital contribution that our communities make to the world.

The following 5 values live and breathe through every element of our work - both our creative programmes, and our operations as a business:

- **Inclusivity:** Our work is co-created with our communities. It is authentically inclusive to the people we collaborate with, and we strive to continue to grow in this area.
- **Collaboration:** We recognise that there is strength in numbers and the best, most pioneering projects come from deep, long-lasting relationships and partnership working.
- **Changemaking:** Everything we do is connected to our core mission to make real and lasting change for the communities we work with.
- **Joyfulness:** Whilst we are committed to all of our programmes stimulating change and provoking important conversations, this does not mean that all we do is serious! All our projects exude connection, hope and joy.
- **Innovation:** We are finding pioneering new ways of living, listening, thinking, creating and growing as a society.

The Board of Trustees engage the Director who is responsible for the overall management of the company within the policies and guidelines as set down by the Board of Directors.

At 31 March 2021, the organisation had a core team of one full-time and five part-time staff with responsibility for managing individual programme areas and management/ organisational running support. Work is further supported by a number of associate artists and freelancers.

How our activities deliver public benefit

Our main activities and who we try to help are described in this document. All our charitable activities focus on the provision of arts and creative projects that support the cultural inclusion of people who have learning disabilities or older marginalised people and are undertaken to further our charitable purposes for the public benefit. The charity’s Trustees have complied with their duty to have due regard to the guidance on public benefit published by the Commission in exercising their powers or duties.

“

The gnome is sitting on my bookshelf, he’s lovely, he means a lot to me. I settled down to paint him and got a lot out of it. He’s there and he’s cheerful, really good fun. I tell my family ‘I’ve got a G-gnome!’ I’ve really enjoyed doing it.

Member and recipient of Gnomes at Home

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Who used and benefited from our services?

We work with older people, adults and young people primarily from the London Boroughs of Lewisham and Southwark in south-east London. In achieving our objective of developing inclusive opportunities for learning disabled people the work engages with diverse groups of people who have different backgrounds and abilities. In addition to our locally based work we undertake broader regionally based work with communities across London and beyond in line with our objective of disseminating working practices and procedures to wider audiences both nationally and internationally.



Image: Gnomes at Home,
Allison Walker, Autumn 2020.
Image credit James Norton



The rain is falling,
the needles are clicking.
I peel an orange.

Review of Activities

During the 2020-21 financial year Entelechy Arts continued to consolidate and develop a portfolio of programmes and projects delivering innovative practice in line with our charitable objectives. During this period the covid-19 pandemic took place, which had a profound impact on the delivery of our programmes and the communities who we work with. As an organisation we rose to the challenges that we faced, and delivered a busy remote creative programme for existing and new members who were referred to us during that period. An overview of the company's programmes of work is outlined in the Programme of Work section below.

The company continued to receive invaluable support from Arts Council England (National Portfolio Funding 2018-22, now extended 2023) and London Borough of Lewisham (Main Grants Programme 2019-22). Additional project funding was received from a number of trusts and foundations including:



“

I have it in my diary and I look forward to meeting people. You realise you're looking forward to it. It gives me purpose. There's a lady there – oh she's gorgeous and very down to earth. It also got me going on my knitting and challenged me to have another go. Now I knit whilst listening to the news and I think of the group. The chatting which goes on is very interesting

Member, Knitting Cluster group

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Image: The rain is falling, the needles are clicking, I peel an orange. Shane Waltener, Festival of Radical Care at the Albany, October 2021



Our Year Together, Apart

Prior to March 2020, we were already testing ways of reaching communities who were housebound, struggle to attend regularly in-person or become unable to continue to attend as they become more frail. This work was accelerated during the pandemic, and became our sole output as an organisation. We delivered the following programmes:



Creative Clusters

Clusters are how we are staying connected to our members during, and beyond, the pandemic. Meet Me... is an award-winning programme of creative and social activities, where older people in Lewisham can make friends, enjoy their favourite activities and learn new crafts. During the first covid-19 lockdown, we developed our 'Staying Connected' programme with new ways to stay in touch and stay creative whilst working remotely. Initially, there were lots of one to one calls, but we knew that everyone was missing their friends and the joy of being in community, together; so we transitioned to deliver the main programme via group phone calls to landline or mobiles phones in small group calls 'Clusters'. Every Cluster is led by an experienced artist facilitator and is supported by up to 3 other people including staff and trained volunteers. Each group has a different creative focus including Choir, Poetry, Movies or Craft. In a typical Cluster, the artist and volunteers join the call first, and then phone each group member, welcoming them individually. Groups are typically 8-10 people. All calls are free to participate and set up so no one incurs extra phone bills. Everyone has the chance to talk and share (or sing!), as well as leaving space for natural conversation. 6-weekly 'Big Little Meetings' enabled ongoing co-creation by bringing everyone together in small groups to evaluate, plan and co-create across our communities.

Images:
Ambient Jam zoom session
Creative Clusters
Doorstep Tea Dance with
Ida Barr
Doorstep performances

Ambient Jam

During the covid-19 lockdown, we also re-shaped the Ambient Jam improvisations with artist-members who have multiple and profound disabilities. We developed a programme of Ambient Jam Zoom improvisations, with artist-members supported by family or support workers in their homes, and freelance artists working with movement, film and music. Freelance artists created personalized 'Sonic Letter' videos from their homes. In turn, members led the start of the improvisation, for example one member-artist sung back to everyone the song from one the Sonic Letters she had received. In this way, our personalised micro-film letters weave back into the group work and inform a larger event.

Gnomes at Home

Between July - September 2020 we distributed 250 gifts to isolated older people living across south east London, taking referrals from social prescribers and community contacts for people who were older people who most lonely during lockdown. Gnomes at Home was an in-the-palm-of-your-hand, tiny garden initiative designed for windowsills and ledges. Intended as a creative 'conversation starter', this was an opportunity for some of the people who have been most marginalised through covid-19 lockdown to re-connect to one another and the natural world. It provides a nuanced sense of community, helping us further examine the power of small gestures and how we frame the language and landscapes of care. Gnomes at Home arrived in a box. Each one was hand-delivered and contained an unpainted, hand-cast gnome; brush pens; a crowd-sourced succulent plant; stamped postcard and writing prompt; and, a letter from the Meet Me on the Radio. There were exchanges via postcards, phone calls with each individuals and further connection through Meet Me on the Radio.

Rhythms of the Day

A new creative sound project delivered to a member's home, designed and created by Malcolm Buchanan-Dick, Allison Walker and in collaboration with members of Ambient Jam. Rhythms of the Day was designed specifically with and for people who are living with complex disabilities, visual impairments and dementia including members of Ambient Jam. Each box was hand delivered, containing a portable speaker, USB stick with soundtracks, paper fans and set of wonderful, curious instructions! The project aimed to transform our everyday environment into a playful, joyful and unexpected experience.

Sonic Letters

These Ambient Jam video letters were created in the form of short films using sound, music, movement of light, dance, clowning, spoken word and painting. Each film was inspired by our members and their own unique ways of communicating and connecting. For members with visual impairment, we begun to explore ways to audio describe the visuals of a letter. Artists have had to learn new digital skills and push their boundaries in using new media to communicate and connect. Some letters explored the theme of light and how it moves. Creative digital letters have improved the communication pathways between us and families and circles of care.

Meet Me on the Radio

A weekly radio show co-produced with the Albany, featuring sonic journeys through Lewisham, news and sounds from the Albany garden, creative activities, provocations, and conversations with members and artists. It is broadcast every Tuesday at 11.30am – 12 midday on South London community radio station Resonance FM and is produced in partnership with Soundcamp, an artist collective exploring audio experiences. This regular show has been hosted and created with Meet Me members over the phone with regular features from Clusters or other programmes, which has given a vital platform for the voices of older people during the pandemic, as well as keeping members connected when they can't meet regularly.

Winter Doorstep Tea Dance and Gift Parcels

In the days before Christmas 2020, Entelechy Arts volunteers, artists and team visited every member with a gift box, a loving smile and often a song. Inspired by our 21st Century Tea Dances, familiar faces visited people across Lewisham with 3 days of pop up performances taking place from Ida Barr (Christopher Green), the Meet Me Choir (Rachel Bennett and Tim Gardner) and Ambient Jam (Lizzie Ogle and volunteer George Fogle). Entelechy Arts and Meet Me volunteers also helped to deliver festive gift parcels to everyone, including care homes residents, containing a poetry book, CD of Meet Me on the Radio, creative prompts and homemade jam from the Albany Garden. 63 festive parcels were delivered with an additional 140 poetry booklets sent to people who had previously received a Gnomes at Home box. For some volunteers, who've started supported the programme during the lockdown, it was their first opportunity to meet members in person. One new volunteer said: "The highlights for me were the chats we had with [the members]. We talked about random things and it felt that they were willing to talk, so it was nice to pay attention, listen and engage... They received us with such a big smile" Chris Green told us about what happened "Ida is the People's Pensioner and loves nothing more than a chat and an impromptu song. She loved seeing her old companions very much but also passing a seasonal time of days with the postman, the Amazon delivery driver, the fella taking his poodle for a walk, and having a joke or two with the Dial-A-Ride driver. It was so lovely to see people light up when this huge dose of theatrical joie de vivre appeared before them unexpectedly on their doorstep. There were many affirmations of what a good thing this was, and how nice it was to actually be face to face. It was truly memorable and a delightful way to entertain each other, connect and remember collective joy."

Poetry by postcard

In 2020, poets in Coventry and London had a series of exchanges with isolated older people by post and by phone. They talked about their hopes, recent and past experiences and then forged two beautiful new poems. Remi Graves spoke with isolated people living in Lewisham who are supported by domiciliary care through Eleanor Healthcare. Joelle Taylor received postcards on 'Hopeful Visions of a New Normal' from residents and staff from two Coventry care homes. From these exchanges, each poet forged their own response about hope, memory and beauty.

“

Because of her limited communication I say 'La la la la' and get the laptop out and she knows the session is coming. She is happy to get ready for the session. This zoom is the highlight of her week, connecting with her friends. It's a very warm environment so it makes me smile as well when joining! It has also really helped us during this time.

Carer for a Member, Ambient Jam

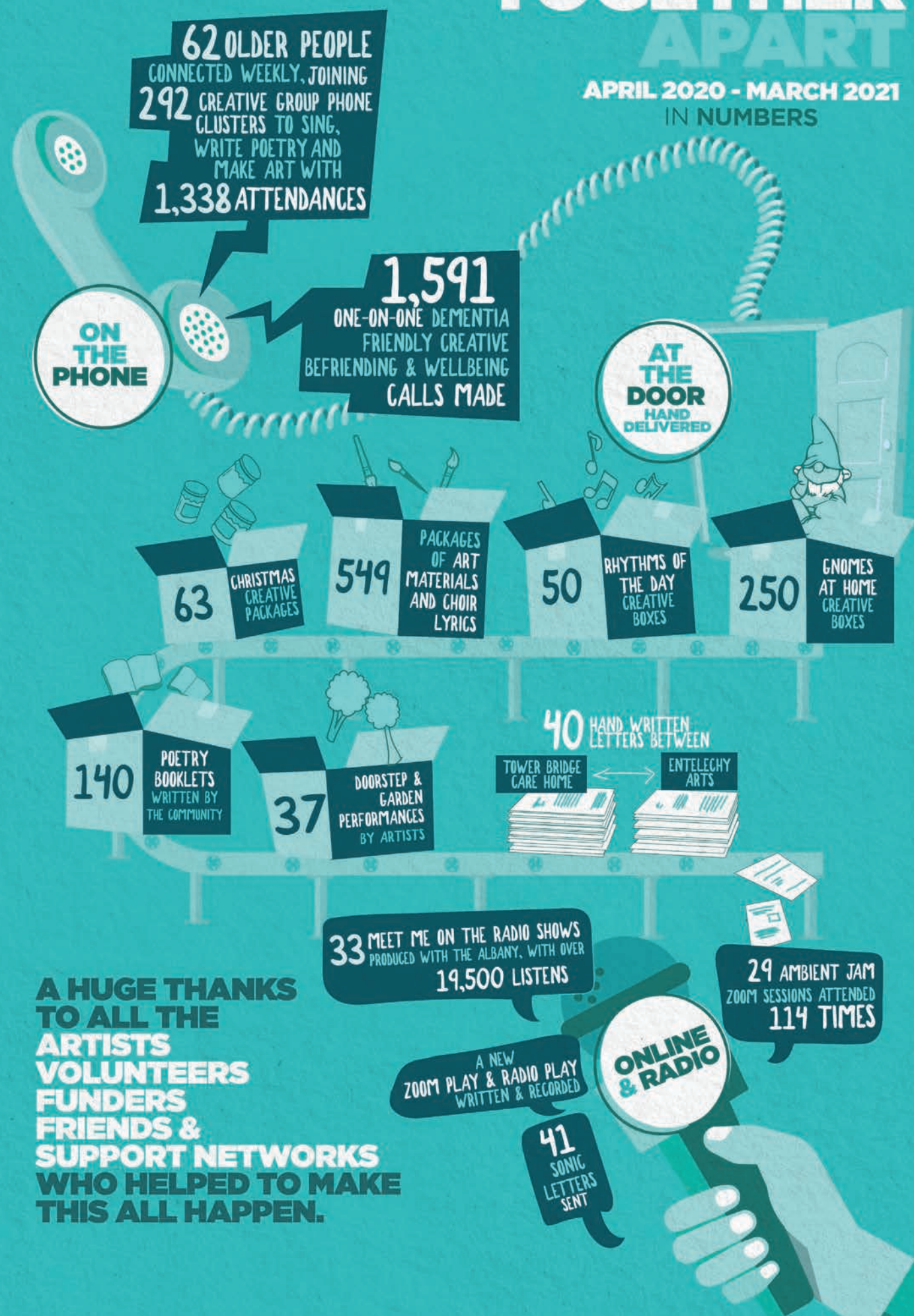
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Image: Meet Me on the Radio in partnership with the Albany. Image credit Donkey Studio.



OUR YEAR TOGETHER APART

APRIL 2020 - MARCH 2021
IN NUMBERS



Albany Connects

Run in partnership with The Albany, Albany Connects was a door to door delivery service enabling creative exchanges between people who may be experiencing isolation during lockdown. Parcels were delivered by staff via an electric cargo bike and included anything from plants and cuttings from the Albany garden which can be grown and re-gifted, doorstep performances, poetry, messages, drawings, or even a painting created in response to a prompt from an artist – anything that makes someone smile!

Walking Through Walls

Residents and well-being coordinators of Tower Bridge Care Home corresponded and collaborated with artists through letters, poems, video and sonic letters. 'Trocadero Tales' brought the past alive through music, memories and archive celebrating Elephant and Castle's famous Trocadero cinema, dance and concert hall. Trocadero Tales was also about uncovering the places where people gather and, for residents in lockdown in their care home, had additional significance about city planning and place-making.

One-to-one dementia friendly calls

Weekly phone calls have continued with people who most need it. From the beginning of the first lockdown to August 2020, we made individuals wellbeing calls to every member, until most people were part of a remote group such as Clusters or Ambient Jam Zoom. For those who are most vulnerable or when a group cluster call might be a bit confusing, artists have continued weekly one-to-one or small group phone calls or video calls. Reaching beyond befriending, these are creative spaces often using music to connect and to explore something in the world beyond ourselves.

Birthday cards and songs

We endeavoured to remember everyone's birthday and send a card – or in a few instances we managed to make a couple of doorstep or garden performances to mark some of the 'big' birthdays, when restrictions have allowed it.

Research project with Queen Mary University

In March 2020 we announced that we'd been awarded funding for new academic research, in partnership with Queen Mary University of London. "Distanced Arts: Investigating the design, delivery, and impacts of Entelechy Arts' Staying Connected Programme" is a Covid-19 Rapid Response project, funded by the Arts and Humanities Research Council.

Whilst we are committed to returning to in-person activities as soon as we can, we also know there will always be a need for remote programmes. As such, we will be taking forward some elements – we would like by March 2022 to have evaluated the long term potential for a remote programme and have built this into our fundraising plans.

“

It's good to know there are people out there who know we still exist."

Cluster member

"For me it's keeping me going. We all talk on the phone...I'm grateful to you...don't give up!"

Cluster member

”

Covid-19 has had a disproportionate impact on the vulnerable communities we work with.

We regularly ask for feedback from our elder communities, with 'Big Little Meetings' by telephone every 6 weeks. 50% of these members have left their house only a few times since March 2020; most are digitally excluded at a time when opportunities to connect rely on technology.

“

I don't go no-where, as there's no-where to go"

Cluster member

"Mostly indoors, we previously stayed at home for 3 months. Only occasionally shopping. And hospital"

Cluster member

”

People's sense of agency and choice has been removed, reducing confidence. They miss in-person activities but some are nervous about resuming face-to-face activities and taking public transport. This is exacerbated by the fact that many people have lost mobility and fitness, and become more frail during this period. Some are anxious and dealing with bereavement and loss. Many care homes have had an incredibly traumatic year – residents have experienced illness and loss, are disconnected from relatives and friends, have missed creative activities, and seen first hand the devastating impact of the pandemic on their institutional setting, and home.

For our Ambient Jam communities (including people living with PMLD), communication via zoom has been a challenge particularly for those who have visual impairments. We have worked hard to make the sessions sensory, but this is understandably limited, and no replacement for our usual in-person sensory programme.

During this year, in addition to its core creatives programmes the organisation has continued to contribute to wider policy and partnership through 'thought leadership'. This includes through the newly established 'Thriving Communities' network in Lewisham, which Entelechy Arts took a leading role in bringing together organisations across Lewisham are exploring and sharing opportunities and funding opportunities for Social Prescribing. In partnership with the Albany, we are often share resources with the Albany and others to support organisations to be more accessible, especially more dementia friendly. Most recently this has involved being consulted by the GLA on the Mayor of London's dementia friendly venues initiative. Entelechy Arts staff and members are often invited to share at local, national and international events and conferences, including contributing to Boundless Creativity roundtables with DCMS and AHRC, presenting as part of the Arts 4 Dementia conference plenary and as part of a British Council Japan exchange. We are pro-active in connecting with peers in Lewisham (such as VSL/ new Lewisham Befriending Network), attending and contributing to conversations around how to make culture more accessible for communities and integrated with other sectors within the borough. We are currently undertaking 18 months of AHRC-funded research with Queen Mary University to explore the creation, delivery and impact of our remote creative programmes during the pandemic. Findings from this will be disseminated at public events in 21/22 and 22/23.

2021 – 2022 Future Developments

The 21/22 period is one of planned transition; programmatic changes as a result of the pandemic and the recent change in leadership mean we are now entering an exciting phase in the company's development and are deeply considering the future of the organisation.

Entelechy Arts is committed to working with communities who experience barriers to engaging with the cultural life of their local community, and creating excellent, pioneering and life-changing artistic work, and creative practices. This includes making opportunities for personal creativity, which are entirely person-centered, creating truly democratic, equal and accessible environments for artistic exchange. This also includes working with partners across the cultural, health, community and care sectors to make lasting change to systems that surround communities who have previously been disproportionately affected by health and socio-economic barriers. Our work has a longer term positive impact on placemaking, strengthening local communities, breaking down barriers between people who live, work and spend time nearby each other, changing perceptions and creating new opportunities for creative conversations and exchange.

We know the Covid-19 pandemic means we will continue to work with a degree of uncertainty as we respond to the needs of our communities and the parameters in which we need to work. Ambitions for the next financial year include; returning safely to in person activities, without leaving any members behind who wish to remain engaged on a remote basis, testing the franchise model for Ambient Jam with a pilot of the programme to take place in Wales, pilot a new project with Greenvale School, begin Ambient Jam Collective's Residency at Goldsmith's Centre for Contemporary Art, re-start our in-person works with care homes, produce Theatre of Wandering for Coventry UK City of Culture, and continuing our important role in contributing to conversations around policy in the arts, health and community sectors. Our work will continue to engage with industry and governmental priorities, including ACE's 10 year strategy Let's Create. Whilst it is critical that we remain ambitious, we are also aware of the funding climate and the challenges particularly in relation to the competition for funds that will manifest as the effects of the pandemic settle. As such we will continue to work closely with the Board, staff team, artists and partners to support the organisation to flourish in these circumstances.

Image: Homecoming, Glorious Age.
Image credit Donkey Studio.



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