

London Borough of Culture 2025

Evaluation
Impact and
Learning Report



**WELCOME TO
WANDSWORTH**
London Borough of Culture

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MAYOR OF LONDON

London Borough of Culture is a Mayor of London initiative.

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Executive Summary

Welcome to Wandsworth 2025 was Wandsworth's year as London Borough of Culture, a year in which more than half a million people took part in cultural activity shaped by local communities. This report highlights just a small fraction of the total activity that took place during the year. But the message is clear: Welcome to Wandsworth had an extraordinary impact on residents and the artistic and cultural life of the borough.

People were at the heart of Welcome to Wandsworth's impact. Over the course of the year, 1,243 events were delivered by 3,020 artistic partners and 1,084 volunteers, working alongside staff from local arts, culture and heritage organisations, as well as the Council itself. Welcome to Wandsworth reached every school in the borough, engaging more than 48,000 children. The programme was moulded by 18 Local Champions: an innovation for London Borough of Culture that put local community representatives at the heart of decision-making. The result of this inclusive approach was a programme that reflected the makeup of Wandsworth's population, and that had a measurable impact on them, with 90% of participants reporting that taking part in a Welcome to Wandsworth activity or event helped them to feel connected to their community and had a positive effect on their wellbeing.

This report charts the impact of Welcome to Wandsworth on the borough's people and organisations. Activities and events ranging from large, multi-day outdoor festivals to small group workshops engaged 517,916 **residents and visitors**: more than three times the target of 180,000. The programme provided opportunities for **participants and volunteers** to come together and to take part in performances and workshops that brought together people of all ages and backgrounds.

Meanwhile, 3,020 **artists and creatives** (also exceeding the target of 2,552) delivered activities and events, created new work, engaged with new partners, and found opportunities to develop their knowledge, skills and practice, often in ways that were carefully grounded in local communities and traditions.

Wandsworth Council's **internal stakeholders and staff** engaged not only with new artistic and creative partners, but with new audiences and sectors, devising and developing new ways of collaborating and increasing the confidence of staff and external stakeholders alike.

Welcome to Wandsworth led to the creation of 627 jobs and generated an estimated £51.1m in social value. The outcomes were strongest in areas with the potential for long-term benefit: education and skills development, wellbeing, and community connection. These outcomes demonstrated the very real **economic opportunity and impact** of a year-long programme of artistic and cultural activity.

The successes of Welcome to Wandsworth point to potential ways of building on the many lessons learned to ensure that the impacts outlined in this report can be lasting ones. Welcome to Wandsworth succeeded when community engagement was meaningful and built over time, and when opportunities for participation were central to the design of activities and events. Such a collaborative approach also demanded and fostered flexibility and adaptability, and an approach that prioritised strengthening cultural infrastructure through relationship building and collaborative design and delivery.

This report concludes with a series of 13 case studies that sample the breadth, depth and variety of Welcome to Wandsworth. They reveal the voices of Wandsworth's people – artists, audience members, volunteers, business owners, students, staff and visitors – and serve as a reminder that Wandsworth's year as London Borough of Culture was about more than activities and events. It was about bringing people together to experience, enjoy, make, share, and grow through a remarkable year of cultural activity.

Foreword

Sir Sadiq Khan

The Mayor of London

Few cities on earth can rival London for culture. Our creative energy pulses through our city, and in many ways, is what makes London, London. Our music, theatre, fashion, film and art attract millions of visitors to our capital each year and generate £64 billion for our economy. But of course, their value goes far beyond pounds and pence. Culture brings an enormous amount of joy and colour to our lives – offering us the chance to discover new passions and talents, find like-minded communities and celebrate who we are.

We know the importance of culture. Yet, too often, our capital's incredible cultural offering hasn't been accessible to all Londoners. Enjoying culture, or having the chance to pursue a creative career, shouldn't be the preserve of a privileged few. Culture must be for everyone.

That's why, almost ten years ago, I created the London Borough of Culture with a simple ambition: to bring culture to the doorstep of every Londoner. Since then, we've reached over three million Londoners across our city, enlisted the help of more than 5,000 artistic partners and created tens of thousands of exciting opportunities for young people to share in our cultural riches. Our work has acted as a catalyst for creativity, bringing boroughs and communities together and serving as a springboard for local cultural life.

This year in Wandsworth has been no exception. As a lifelong Tooting resident, I may be biased, but the last twelve months have shown our borough – and our capital – at its very best: diverse, creative and overflowing with community spirit.



More than 1,200 events took place across the borough, made possible by over a thousand committed volunteers and enjoyed by nearly half a million people. 89 educational settings, including all primary and secondary schools, as well as hospital schools, sixth forms and pupil referral units got involved, with an astonishing 48,500+ children and young people taking part in cultural activities.

Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture was packed with unforgettable moments: Strictly Wandsworth brought together 20 local dance organisations and 150 dancers in a spectacular celebration of movement; Wandsworth Arts Fringe showcased the borough's extraordinary home-grown talent; Battersea Park welcomed the one and only Jools Holland; the iconic Clapham Grand celebrated 125 years; and Liberty Festival put disability-led art and culture centre stage.

My huge thanks go to Wandsworth Council, our artists, schools, community groups and volunteers – and above all, to the residents who embraced this year with such enthusiasm.

Wandsworth's year as London Borough of Culture may be ending, but its legacy will be felt for years to come – in the doors opened, the connections made and the imaginations awakened. Most importantly, it's shown a new generation of Londoners that culture isn't something distant or out of reach, it's right here on their doorstep, and it belongs to all of us. I look forward to many more years of celebrating our city's fantastic culture, as we seek to build a better, fairer and more prosperous London for everyone.

Foreword

Councillor Robert Morritt
Leader of Wandsworth Council



Wandsworth's year as the London Borough of Culture has been a real showcase for our community. Since becoming Leader of the Council earlier this year, I've realised that what Wandsworth does best is not glitzy displays but coming together as a community and getting on with the job of being a great place to live and raise a family.

From our very first major event – Strictly Wandsworth hosted by Oti Mabuse – Wandsworth focused on delivering brilliant events with local people at their heart. As well as big names, Strictly Wandsworth featured hundreds of local dancers and a mass dance finale that everyone could take part in. What followed was a programme of more than 1,200 events, activities and projects, celebrating our residents and communities and demonstrating the power of art and culture to bring us together. Over half a million people attended a live event during the year, and almost 50,000 children and young people had the chance to take part through our schools and young people's programmes.

The year ended with an incredible day at Battersea Power Station headlined by Basement Jaxx, featuring hundreds of local people. It showed how, working with our cultural sector, key partners and, most importantly, local people, Wandsworth is a force to be reckoned with.

We're busy delivering homes and attracting the investment that will bring jobs and opportunities. We know that culture, in its broadest sense, is central to how we shape the growth of our borough so that it becomes an integral part of our residents' lives. This report shows the positive impact of our year as London Borough of Culture on our residents, including projects to support health and wellbeing, and opportunities and internships for young people.

Wandsworth has a rich heritage and a bright future thanks to all those who have and will live here. I want to thank everyone who organised an event or volunteered to help run or take part in one. If you came along and enjoyed what Wandsworth has to offer, thank you.

Overview



Welcome to Wandsworth 2025 was our year as The Mayor's London Borough of Culture, a year where culture sparked joy, and made us feel happier, healthier and more connected to each other.

We brought people together to enjoy the rich mix of traditions, festivals, food, and arts that make our borough so special.

Our London Borough of Culture year was about creating something we were all proud of and building connections to last well into the future.

Context

Wandsworth bid for London Borough of Culture because we believed culture could be a powerful force for tackling some of the borough's most significant challenges. While Wandsworth is one of London's most creative, diverse and fast-growing boroughs, residents told us they were facing increasing pressures linked to loneliness, poor mental health, health inequalities and the lasting impacts of the pandemic and cost-of-living crisis. Through extensive engagement with residents, artists, community organisations and young people, a consistent message emerged: culture and heritage play a vital role in improving wellbeing, building resilience and strengthening community connections.

Our ambition was to create a people-led programme that reflected local voices and aspirations. The bid positioned arts, culture and heritage as essential tools for improving health, happiness and equality of opportunity, bringing together residents of all ages and backgrounds through shared experiences and creative participation.

We saw London Borough of Culture as a catalyst for long-term change. The programme would accelerate collaboration between the council, NHS partners, cultural organisations, voluntary groups and local communities, helping to embed culture within wider approaches to health and wellbeing. Building on emerging creative health initiatives, cultural social prescribing and strong cultural partnerships, it provided an opportunity to test new models of working and demonstrate the value of culture as a preventative intervention.

Most importantly, the programme was designed to leave a lasting legacy. By increasing access to creative opportunities, supporting under-served communities, developing a more diverse creative workforce and strengthening partnerships across sectors, we aimed to create sustainable change long after the year ended. Our vision was for culture to become a central part of how Wandsworth supports healthier, happier and more connected communities, while providing a model of partnership and innovation that could inspire boroughs across London and beyond.

Our aims

Our year set out to be a catalyst for change. We wanted to harness the incredible power of culture to:

- **Connecting our community:** Our cultural programme, created with, by and for local people, artists and organisations, was designed to offer the people of Wandsworth an opportunity to build a year of events that resonated with them. We wanted residents to feel closer to their neighbours and the place they live in – building something lasting: memories, relationships, and a stronger, more connected community.

- **Improve health and wellbeing:** We wanted Welcome to Wandsworth to supercharge our health and happiness. We wanted our residents to discover how arts and culture can spark joy, improve social wellbeing and have immediate and longer-term health benefits, through shared experiences like joining a local choir, dance class, or volunteering.

- **Develop creative careers and aspirations:** Known for our vibrant and diverse communities, the borough has a proud cultural heritage as home to iconic cultural spaces including Battersea Arts Centre, Tara Theatre, Tooting Market, the Clapham Grand, the Royal Academy of Dance, the Royal College of Art, Battersea Power Station to name just a few alongside newer cultural spaces and organisations (such as our cultural anchor tenants London Children's Ballet, World Heartbeat Music Academy, Chocolate Films, Theatre 503, Matt's Gallery and Blink Dance Theatre). We wanted to stage a year to remember, spotlighting Wandsworth as a hub of creative energy that is lighting up London and serves as a launchpad for our creative talents to shine on national and international stages.

- **Make Culture in Wandsworth more accessible than ever before:** We wanted Welcome to Wandsworth to embed creativity into the heart of our neighbourhoods, streets and housing estates, focussing on free events for everyone and offering subsidised tickets for residents with limited income for events with tickets over £3.

About this report

This report provides an overview of our London Borough of Culture year – although it can only offer a glimpse into what happened. It gives an insight into the scale of activity throughout the year and the difference that Welcome to Wandsworth made to our audiences living locally and those from further afield, our creatives, the project participants, the volunteers and Local Champions, and our council staff.

The report was developed by our evaluation partner, the University of Roehampton, in collaboration with Santra Consulting, and brings together data, reflections and feedback from the many people involved throughout the year. The first half of the report gives an overview of the activities and events that took place and their impact. The second half of the report dives more deeply into 13 case studies – these give a snapshot of a few of the events, projects or aspects of the overall London Borough of Culture programme – exploring the change that London Borough of Culture made, as well as what we learnt for the future. Together, they showcase the breadth of experiences and the many ways in which our programme sparked joy and made us feel happier, healthier and more connected to each other.

¹ Across the year, data was collected via a range of online and paper surveys. Including: Audience survey (1926 responses), Participant & Volunteer survey (444 responses), Artists Survey: 235 responses, Producer survey (135 responses). Case studies were produced based on interviews and focus groups with 47 participants or project stakeholders.

Our Year in Numbers

Scale and reach



517,916
audiences and
participants
(in-person)

£51.1m
in social value
generated



Over **£9.4m** spent locally
by audiences

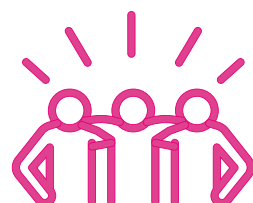
134,210
digital
engagements



48,593
children and
young people
engaged in and out of school



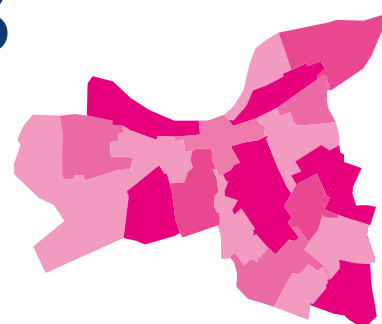
3,020
artistic
partners



8.34m+
Public artwork views



1,243
activities or
events
delivered,
covering all
wards in the
borough

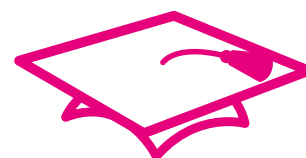


1,084 volunteers



18 Local Champions

89 educational settings, including all state primary and secondary schools, as well as some sixth forms, hospital schools, private schools, infant schools and both pupil referral units



Impact



891 creatives
took part in free
professional
development
opportunities

97% of audience
members said their
access needs had
been met



91% rated
good/very good
experience



92% of participants and **86%** of audiences said London Borough of Culture activities had a positive effect on their sense of wellbeing



Audiences reflected the borough's population, with **37%** of audiences identifying as Global Majority

47% of audience were local residents

53% were visitors from outside Wandsworth

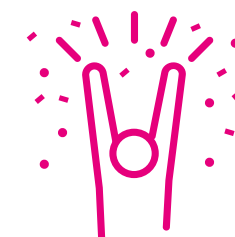


562 media mentions,
including coverage in
The Times, The Evening Standard,
BBC London TV and Radio, ITV News,
TimeOut London, and BBC Breakfast

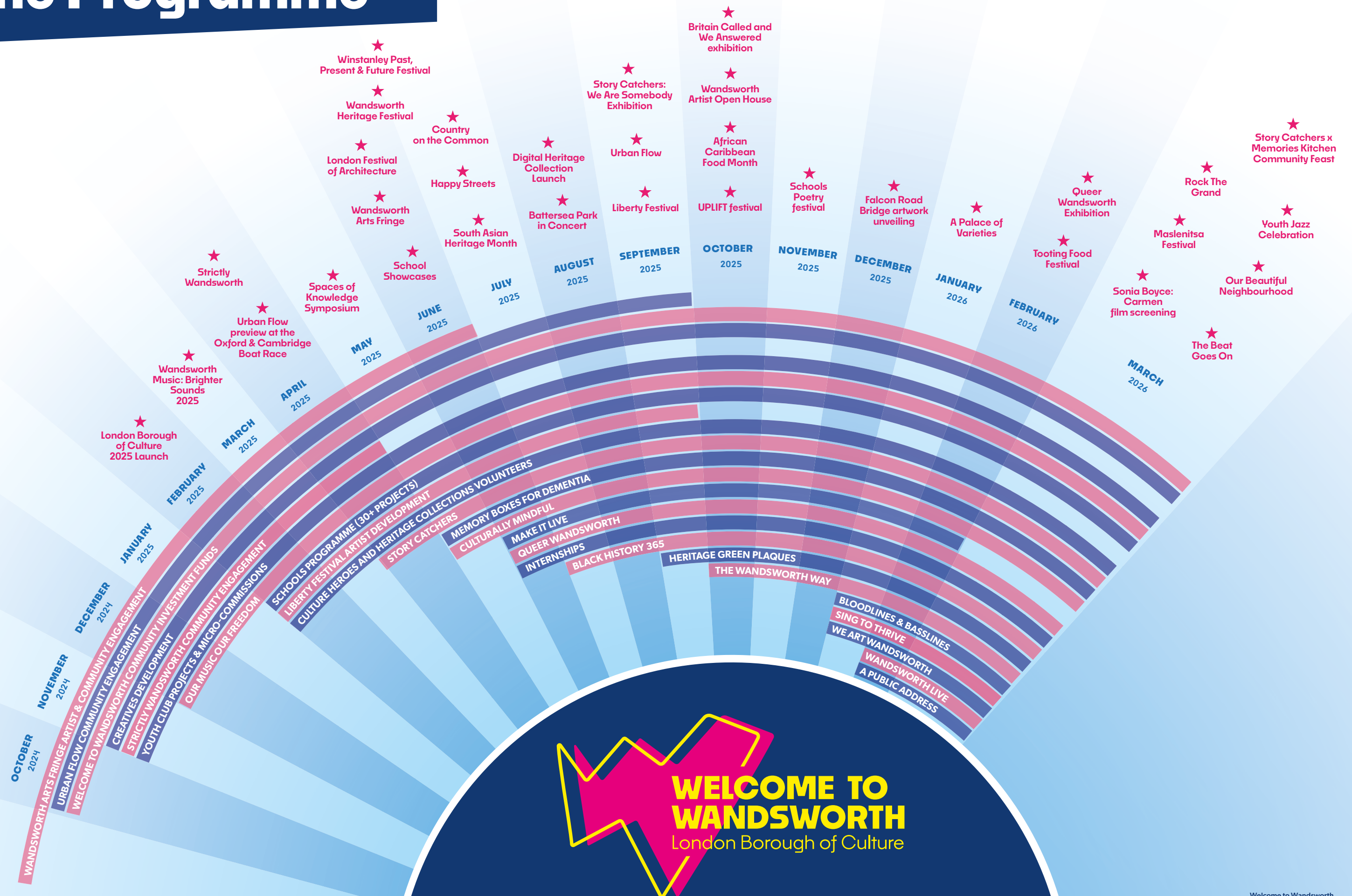
93% of participants agreed
that the activity or event had
enhanced their sense of
community in Wandsworth



90% of participants said
that it had helped them to
feel connected to people in
their community



The Programme



Our Residents and Visitors



We wanted Welcome to Wandsworth to be an invitation to come and experience the best of culture in Wandsworth, a year of celebration to shine a light on the many local and global influences that make our borough so special.

We wanted to showcase the powerful mix of traditional and modern culture shaped by our residents and, most importantly, invite everyone to enjoy it.

People did not pass up the opportunity: in total, 517,916 adults and 48,593 young people engaged with our programme in person - over three times our original target of 180,000.



Flagship outdoor events such as Strictly Wandsworth, Wandsworth Arts Fringe, Country on the Common, Battersea Park in Concert or The Beat Goes On attracted huge and diverse audiences from across the borough, London and beyond. Major exhibition events, such as Wandsworth Artist Open House, Our Beautiful Neighbourhood, Story Catchers, Dame Sonia Boyce's Carmen, We are Somebody or the Queer Wandsworth exhibition had significant engagement, while focus months like South Asian Heritage Month or the African Caribbean Food Month drew together communities to a variety of events.

The Our Music Our Freedom podcast series, The Wandsworth Way (a 40-episode radio drama written by local emerging writers and delivered by a community cast), the Strictly Wandsworth online tutorials, and other online content engaged another 134,210 people digitally.

People came along to events because they wanted to participate in activities locally (31%), spend time with friends and family (28%), and try something new (26%). They valued the opportunity to get out of the house, enjoy cultural activities on their doorstep and participate in events that were local, accessible and welcoming.

76% of audience members attended with someone else. Many of them highlighted the joy of spending quality time with friends, children and wider family and seeing loved ones happy and engaged.

Attendees from inside Wandsworth defined as those from postcode areas that are at least partially located in Wandsworth (SW4, SW8, SW11, SW12, SW15, SW16, SW17, SW18, SW19).

"As a young South Londoner, it's really amazing to not have to travel 1.5 hours and spend £10 on the tube to engage in art and music events"

Audience member, Bloodlines and Basslines

Many respondents also appreciated the chance to try something new – from discovering new art forms and attending performances in unfamiliar venues, to exploring different cultures, creative activities and workshops. Indeed, more than half of all respondents said that they were attending a new kind of activity or event for the first time, and almost 3 out of 10 were encouraged to attend more cultural activities because of the Welcome to Wandsworth programme.

But our programme also had appeal beyond the boundaries of Wandsworth: 53% of all attendees came from outside the Borough of Wandsworth (and 23% from outside of London) – a testimony to the high quality of the programme.

Audience feedback shows that many people felt genuinely represented and valued seeing their identities, cultures and experiences reflected in mainstream cultural spaces through targeted and culturally relevant programming, including events connected to Black History Month, [African Caribbean Food Month](#), CelebrASIA, Eid celebrations, South Asian Heritage Month or [Liberty Festival](#). Across all events, 37% of our audience members identified with a Global Majority ethnic background - even higher than the Borough of Wandsworth's proportion of 32%.

The programme also had strong inclusion of LBGTQIA+ audiences, as 22% of survey respondents identified with these communities. Some of them described "feeling seen", welcomed and included in spaces that celebrated diverse communities and identities:

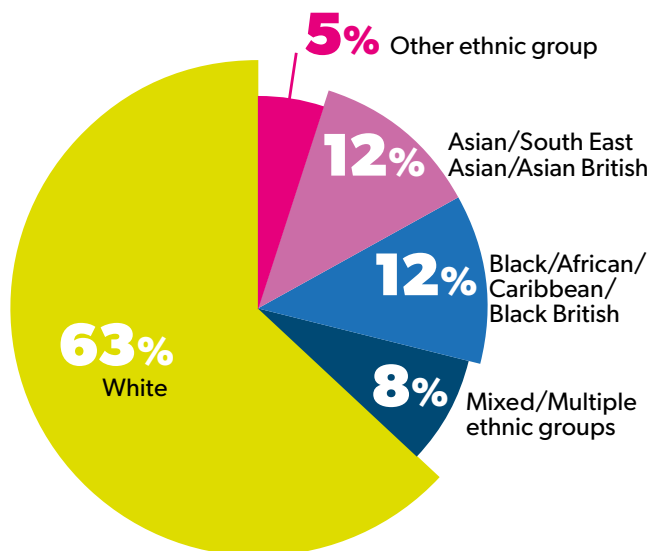
"Amazing sensory show from start to finish. My 12-year-old with severe PMLD [Profound and Multiple Learning Disabilities] loved it and laughed all the way through.

The staff were fabulous and their intensive interaction were wonderful and incorporated so well into the session. Cannot recommend highly enough."

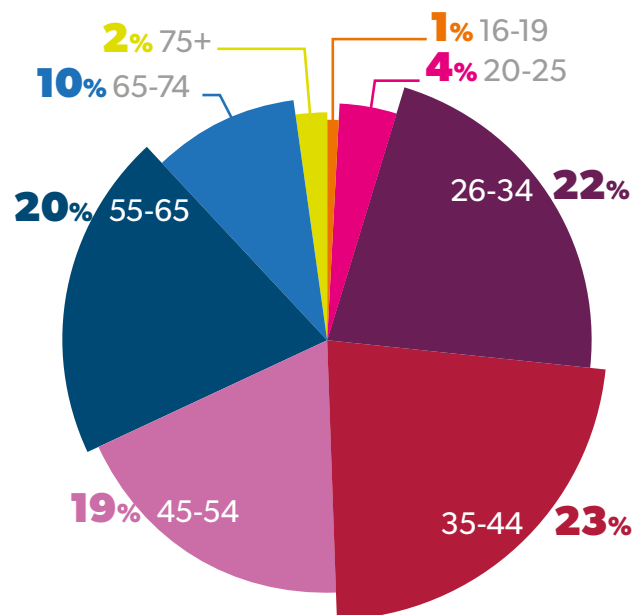
Audience social media feedback, When The World Turns at Liberty Festival



Ethnic profile of audiences



Audience age profile





"I'm going through a difficult time so, just to get out right now and attend something I love (comedy), was a huge boost."

Audience member, Rosie Jones Comedy

In addition, at least 8,346,783 people have engaged with the various artworks that have been installed across the borough as part of London Borough of Culture, the most high-profile has been the permanent installation under Falcon Road underpass.

Audience members consistently described the cultural programme as high quality, with 91% rating their experience as 'very good' or 'good'. Their comments praised the professionalism, creativity and emotional impact of events across the borough, highlighting the "great talent on stage", "beautiful dancing", "excellent play[s]" and "innovative and amusing" performances. Respondents also frequently commented on the programme's strong curation, engaging workshops, insightful discussions and high production values.

"It gave me something to look forward to, impressed me with the quality of performance and made me laugh and cheer and feel so happy."

Audience member, C.B.D Night

Our programme was designed to be accessible to all, ensuring that all residents – no matter their specific physical, financial or sensory needs – can participate fully in local arts, cultural events, and community life. Wandsworth Council's Access for All scheme provided subsidised tickets to residents with limited income and disabled audiences were well represented at our events.

Throughout the year, the access needs for our disabled audiences were paramount throughout all programming strands. Across our events, 18% of audience members reported having a disability or long-term illness (which is broadly representative of the UK population) and an incredible 97% told us that their access needs had been met. Liberty Festival, the Mayor's flagship disability-led event, enabled LBOC to shine a spotlight on a wide range of specially commissioned cultural programmes and attracted over 2,000 attendees with embedded accessibility provisions throughout programming – and 60% of all audiences at the festival made use of access provisions.

The programme also successfully engaged audiences from a wide range of age, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, as confirmed by our audience survey.

"This event got me out of the house, even though it was a struggle to leave home.

I enjoyed moving my body, getting some fresh air, spending quality time with my daughter, and it made me feel less stressed and isolated. We had a lovely day out"

Audience member, The Beat Goes On

Our Participants and Volunteers

Our Welcome to Wandsworth programme did not only feature concerts, performances and shows to attend, but plenty of opportunities to 'get stuck in' – through sustained creative engagement, co-creation and community involvement.

Major projects such as Strictly Wandsworth brought together 20 dance organisations and 150 dancers in a borough-wide collaborative project, while Urban Flow engaged community performers in an 11-month programme of workshops and rehearsals culminating in a large-scale public procession, and Wandsworth Arts Fringe provided an 11-month creatives and artists support programme as well as an ongoing outreach programme.





“ It allowed me to explore my creativity and do something different, given me a different head space.”

Participant, ZineMela

Numerous programmes, for example Liberty Festival, South Asian Heritage Month, African Caribbean Food Month and We Art Wandsworth, all combined performances with workshops, community-led activity and culturally specific participation opportunities that encouraged residents to actively contribute, celebrate identity and build social connections. Creative health initiatives such as Culturally Mindful embedded artists within healthcare and community settings to support wellbeing through longer-term engagement, while the Story Catchers project trained young people in oral history techniques to collect older residents' stories about food and identity.

Our team of 491 amazing Cultural Heroes volunteers were a vital part of delivering London Borough of Culture and created unforgettable moments through family and community volunteering. Our volunteers were also joined by 593 volunteers from partner organisations, and together they contributed at least 4,853 hours across events and activities borough-wide, ensuring that we built lasting memories and strengthen our community spirit. This includes volunteers supporting the Wandsworth Heritage Festival.

Like our audiences, our participants and volunteers represented a diverse range of voices, backgrounds and lived experiences.

Our survey of participants and volunteers shows that 3 out of 10 were older participants or volunteers (aged 55 or over), and 17% represented younger people aged 16-25. Just over one in five of our participants and volunteers indicated

that they had a disability or long-term health condition and across all participants and volunteers, 95% reported that their access needs had been met. 41% were from an ethnic Global Majority background and 18% identified as part of the LGBTQIA community.

Similar to the events programme, the participation and outreach programmes were designed to be customised to meet the specific needs of our diverse communities, such as our visual arts programme Make it Live which alone engaged 302 learning disabled participants.

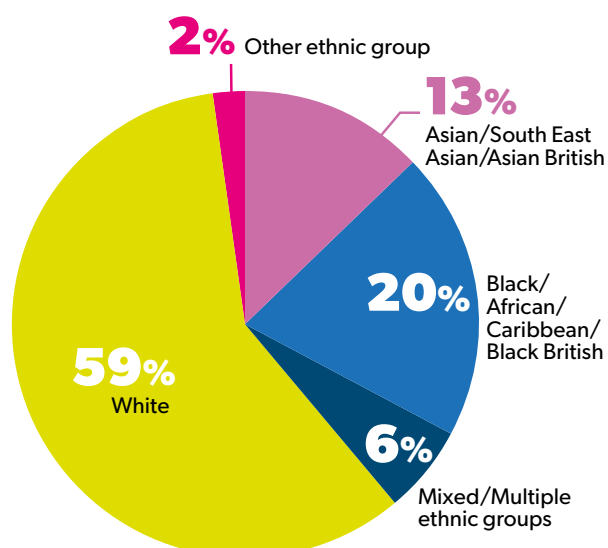
Participants and volunteers were motivated to get involved with our London Borough of Culture year because they wanted to spend time with friends or family (22%), because they wanted to take part in something they enjoy (18%) and because they wanted to participate in an activity in their community or local area (16%).

42% of participants and volunteers said that they had attended more cultural events this year because of London Borough of Culture and almost 6 out of 10 had not attended a similar event or activity before, with some stating that “getting me out to try something new felt good”.

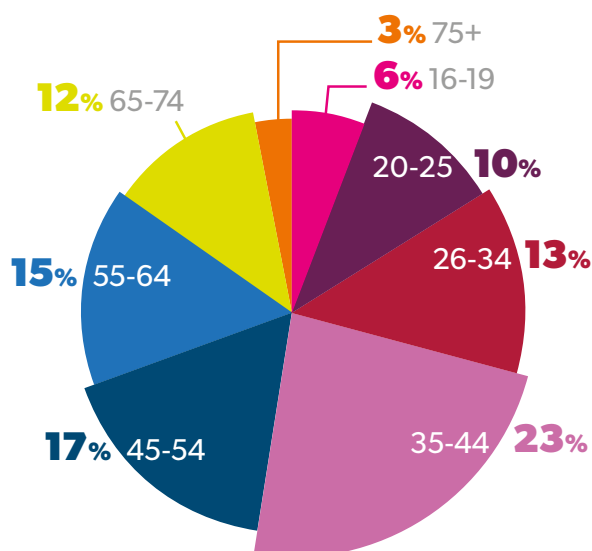
“Being surrounded by kind, open and friendly people makes me feel accepted, relaxed and a part of a community.”

Participant, Maslenitsa Festival

Ethnic profile of participants and volunteers



Age profile of participants and volunteers



An overwhelming 98% of all surveyed participants and volunteers enjoyed themselves, rating their event experience as 'good' or 'very good'. They described their participation as joyous, fun and uplifting, providing opportunities to "express themselves" and explore creative activities:

While many considered participating or volunteering as a great opportunity to spend quality time with friends, family, colleagues or neighbours, respondents also valued the chance to socialise and meet new like-minded people. Several mentioned that they had made new connections or friends, including some living close by.

The opportunities to engage and get involved in our programme throughout the year had a clear positive impact on participants' and volunteers' sense of belonging and community connection.



93% agreed that the activity or event had "enhanced their sense of community in Wandsworth" and 90% agreed that it had "helped them to feel connected to people in their community". These figures are markedly higher than for the general audiences, reflecting what research tells us about the community benefits of sustained cultural participation.

Participants and volunteers also reported strong wellbeing outcomes, with 92% of all respondents noting a positive impact. Respondents felt that participation had "enhanced my mental wellbeing", "lifted my mood" and "relieved a lot of mental stress for me", feeling "full of energy" after the activity ended. Others noted that the activities had made them feel happier, calmer and relaxed. As one participant noted, "to immerse in art is therapeutic."

As highlighted in the [Story Catcher](#) case study, younger participants in particular grew in confidence as a result of their involvement with London Borough of Culture projects. Through trying new activities and developing skills, they enhanced their "self-esteem and confidence" and "pushed themselves to do something outside their comfort zone":

In contrast, some of our older participants and volunteers foregrounded the "sense of purpose" or "sense of achievement" they gained from their involvement, feeling valued and proud of contributing or achieving something meaningful.

"It's given me a lot more confidence to participate in group discussions, as well as interview strangers. Has improved my fear of public speaking too." *Young person participant*

Local Champions

Our Local Champions initiative was a pioneering model within Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture. For the first time in Wandsworth, residents got directly involved in decision-making around cultural programming and funding – processes that are traditionally led by council officers and elected members. As the [Local Champions](#) case study shows, our 18 Local Champions, aged from 15 to 87, acted as a bridge between the council and our communities, with many coming from backgrounds whose voices are less frequently amplified such as carers, young adults with experience of having been fostered and those living on universal credit.

Like volunteers, many were motivated by a desire to “give something back” to their community and valued the opportunity to contribute to something larger than themselves. However, while volunteers primarily supported delivery and acted as the “friendly face” of events, being embedded directly into decision-making processes gave Local Champions a stronger sense of responsibility, advocacy and influence over the London Borough of Culture programme. Their involvement helped build better relationships between our residents and our council, making decision-making more open and showing how valuable people's real-life experiences are in improving public services.



Children and Young People

Some of our most ambitious targets for this year focussed on involving children and young people – and we exceeded them all. Throughout the year, we worked with 89 educational institutions, including primary, secondary, sixth forms, Pupil Referral Units and SEND schools and four of the borough's fee-paying schools. The [Our Beautiful Neighbourhood project](#) alone involved exploring the themes of nature, biodiversity and place through visual arts and culminating in public exhibitions and an art trail in venues across Wandsworth.

Over 30 different school initiatives were delivered, catering to different age groups and artforms, including the borough-wide poetry programme and Schools Poetry Festival, author events and journalism programmes, school microgrants, school performance showcases, music therapy, and targeted SEND and specialist school activity. These activities often culminated in public exhibitions, performances and community events attended by wider audiences across the

borough. Schools also participated in major borough-wide events including Strictly Wandsworth, where pupils learned choreography alongside community groups. In total, 26,946 children and young people engaged in our programme through school, and schools took part in between 1 and 9 different programmes, with the mean average being 5 per primary school and 3 strands per secondary school. While this engagement figure includes some audience attendances at events, it mostly represents participatory activities.

In addition, 21,647 young people engaged outside of school – through youth clubs, community centres, and through such as the UPLIFT Festival and London Borough of Culture Playwriting Competition for young people aged 14–19, under-5s library programmes, microgrants for youth clubs, Young Reporters, Young Producers, Rock the Grand, Youth Jazz Celebration, work experience placements, creative industry mentoring or as audiences to events.



“Interviewing participants and documenting their stories for the archive felt purposeful... it felt grounding to contribute to something that preserved people’s histories within the borough.” Participant, *Story Catchers*

In order to ensure that London Borough of Culture leaves a lasting legacy on younger residents’ lives, a number of programmes were delivered that spanned a number of weeks or months to enable young people to develop and enhance their skills and knowledge, as well as provide employment and leadership opportunities. Over the course of the year, 2,827 young people participated in these programmes such as the media clubs, the **6-month paid internships**, **Story Catchers**, youth club dance programmes, youth theatre programmes and young producer schemes.

These projects helped children and young people to build confidence, develop skills and create opportunities for creative expression. A teacher recounted that “some of our students were very engaged and spoke out loud to an audience for the first time.” (Media Club)

Young people also valued being trusted with meaningful roles and responsibilities within projects, helping them feel heard and included.

Creative workshops, performances, and community events enabled young people to meet peers, make friends, and feel part of their local community.

One participant explained: “It made me meet new people and work on my social skills.” Alongside these social benefits, creative activities gave young people opportunities to express themselves, explore new interests, and take pride in their achievements through music, media, storytelling, and performance.

Our London Borough of Culture programme created opportunities that many children and young people may not otherwise have accessed, and many expressed a strong desire for these opportunities to continue beyond the programme. One respondent noted: “I have had the opportunity to participate in many more cultural events than normal due to London Borough of Culture,” while another commented that “It’s definitely been positive in the opportunities it has given younger people in the borough.”



Our Artists and Creatives

Welcome to Wandsworth was a chance for creatives and change-makers to collaborate on exciting projects that celebrate dance, music, theatre, art, and more. We wanted to showcase the ideas, creativity and energy that make Wandsworth stand out.

Known for our vibrant and diverse communities, the borough has a proud cultural heritage as home to a range of iconic cultural spaces.

Our London Borough of Culture year spotlighted Wandsworth as a hub of creative energy that is exciting London and served as a launchpad for our creative talents to shine on national and international stages.





“My skills definitely developed as a result of organising this activity. Coordinating the Windrush Tea Party strengthened my leadership, communication, and organisational skills, and helped me to think quickly on my feet when challenges arose”

Organiser, Windrush Tea Party at STORM Family Centre, July 2025 (Black History 365)

A key achievement of our programme has been the scale of artist and partner engagement. Throughout the year, Welcome to Wandsworth worked with 3,020 artistic partners, clearly exceeding our target of 2,552. This demonstrates both the breadth of the cultural network involved and the success of outreach and partnership-building activity.

Our programme offered extensive professional development and employment opportunities to artists and creatives. Producers and artists reported gaining experience in leadership, event management, budgeting and large-scale coordination, often through delivering complex community-focused events for the first time, the [Our Beautiful Neighbourhood](#) case study being a good example.

Many artists and producers also described the programme as personally affirming and professionally energising, increasing their confidence and inspiring future ambitions. Several highlighted the long-term professional value of the work, noting that they had experienced “a gorgeous learning

curve”, felt “inspired and recharged”, and had “built confidence to work with other organisations” through participating in the programme.

We also delivered targeted training and business support initiatives. As part of our focus on Creative Employment, over 891 freelance creatives engaged in training and development activities, including marketing and fundraising.

The Wandsworth Re:Create networking events alone involved over 170

Wandsworth-based creatives, while 90

artists and creative businesses benefitted from one-to-one business support spanning 2024-2025 and 2025-2026. Those participating in Re:Create described the mentoring opportunities as highly personalised, practical and transformative, helping them to clarify their business direction, develop new income streams, strengthen their professional identity, and build supportive local creative networks.

Artists also received training to support their work with specific communities. For example, at least 24 artists receiving Dementia Awareness training or 32 artists benefitting from Mental Health Awareness training. The training, alongside the experience of working with communities, developed artists’ and producers’ skills in facilitation, outreach and working collaboratively with communities, young people and non-professional participants.

“My mentor approached my business with a totally new perspective, giving me ideas I never would have thought of alone. To have someone invest their time in helping you to build your business, and communicate their thoughts with such generosity and care, was truly amazing.” Artist, Re:Create

Survey respondents reflected on how co-producing events with young people “developed [their] own producing skills”, while others highlighted growth in “workshop structure and facilitation skills” and learning how to work “with non-performers at scale” in ways that would shape future community-led programming. They found the experience personally rewarding, noting the value of seeing initially sceptical participants become enthusiastic as they learned how to organise projects effectively within large and diverse urban communities.

As our **Culturally Mindful** case study sets out, specialist training programmes supported Global Majority artists working in healthcare settings and received exceptionally positive feedback from participants, who described the programme as “an absolute game changer”.

Our programme also provided structured mentoring, practical experience and professional networks for the next generation, particularly for local people aged 18–25. This includes our **paid internships programme** with arts and cultural organisations across Wandsworth, the Young Producer scheme delivered by Emergency Exit Arts and the Music Producer initiative delivered by OndaBeat, the WAF reviewers, Action Space’s visual arts workshops for emerging

learning-disabled artists, oral history training delivered by On The Record CIC as part of the **Story Catchers** project and the Young Journalists project.

Across the programme, Welcome to Wandsworth prioritised opportunities for emerging artists and those from diverse backgrounds: 18% of respondents to the artist survey described themselves as emerging artists and 37% were aged 34 years or below. 38% of artists were from a Global Majority ethnic background. One third of artists identified as LGBTQIA+ and a similar proportion (37%) were or would have been on free school meals growing up.

Drawing on survey responses, 45% of artists reported having a disability or long-term illness, which is higher than the proportion of people with a disability within the UK population. Across all events, 92% of all artists told us that their access needs had been met, while the Liberty Festival stood out as a model of disability-led inclusive cultural practice and a celebration of d/Deaf, disabled and neuro-divergent artists.

“The internship has given me real insight into what working in a recording studio environment is like. From workshops and recording sessions to organising events and collaborating with other companies, it’s been an eye-opening experience that’s helped me grow both creatively and professionally.

Paid opportunities like this are rare and often gatekept, so being able to gain hands-on experience in something I’m genuinely passionate about is amazing.”

Emerging artist, Intern programme





Liberty Festival (as discussed in its case study) involved 50 disabled creatives and 20 access providers, all paid to deliver a bold and inclusive programme, with positive professional development outcomes for the participating artists.

Through the Make it Live commission, ActionSpace also supported learning disabled artists in developing their visual arts practice, as well as helping to identify and create pathways for the next generation of Wandsworth-based disabled artists.

Participating in our programme also strengthened artistic collaboration and innovation. 46% of our artistic partners reported working in new places or spaces, while 41% had worked with new or different partners or communities. The programme also enabled many of them (41%) to work in new ways. Qualitative feedback shows that Artists were able to experiment with new creative approaches, materials, formats and disciplines, helping many to expand or refine their artistic practice.

Major projects such as Strictly Wandsworth, Urban Flow, Liberty Festival, African Caribbean Food Month and Culturally Mindful created opportunities for co-creation between professional artists, community participants, schools and cultural organisations. Almost one third of participating artists had developed or created new collaborations or partnerships to deliver a London Borough of Culture event or activity.

“It gave me the opportunity to build on my extensive previous experience in arts education - working directly with museum objects and giving a more interactive element to the workshop frameworks.”

Producer, Heritage Resource Workshop



Projects like [Strictly Wandsworth](#) or [The Wandsworth Way](#) were “about layers of collaboration, some visible, others quite nuanced,” according to one of the scriptwriters interviewed as part of The Wandsworth Way case study. Another producer involved in the Urban Flow project explained: “I hope that it has fostered networks and that each partner has learnt new ways of working from each other.

The programme also strengthened partnerships between organisations and helped some artistic teams develop new ways of working collaboratively across sectors (15%). In some cases, these collaborations are set to be longer lasting, with 15% of artists expecting the collaborations to continue beyond the original events.

Wellbeing and community impact were at the core of our programme and this also shaped artists’ experiences: 98% of all artists felt that their projects had positively impacted on the wellbeing of audiences and participants. But they also reported wellbeing benefits for themselves, as 98% reported that they enjoyed the experience. Qualitative feedback suggests that they felt valued and well supported by organisers, directors and collaborators. Their work also contributed to a sense of community, with collaboration and shared experiences playing a major role in wellbeing.

Artists described feeling more energised and creatively inspired through participating in the programme. Positive feedback from audiences, teamwork and creative experimentation also helped build their confidence and encouraged them to keep developing their work.



“The artists feel recognised and appreciated in Wandsworth. It helps local artists to feel that their work is of significance. It strengthens the artists connection with the borough.”

Producer & Artist, Museum interventions



Our Internal Stakeholders and Staff

Delivering the London Borough of Cultural programme has also made a difference to Wandsworth Council itself. The breadth and scale of the programme was exceptional and created opportunities for the council to engage with new audiences and sectors: from young people in schools to small businesses, it created opportunities that “might otherwise not have been available”.

Thus, it demonstrated our ability and our confidence to deliver large-scale cultural programmes, as well as raising the council’s profile and visibility.





“ It raises the Borough’s profile quite significantly with all the activity that’s gone on throughout the year. And so that’s been a real plus: raising the reputation and profile of the council.” Council Staff Member, Growth and Place Directorate

Delivering the ambitious programme enabled council teams across different directorates to develop new skills, with some staff highlighting the professional development opportunities that they would not have had otherwise:

One area of learning is around accessibility and inclusive practice. The Liberty Festival partnership challenged assumptions and prompted reflection on our organisational practice. This has led to a stronger focus on, and greater awareness of, accessible practice in our ways of working. As a tangible output, a best practice document was produced to support staff in delivering inclusivity and accessibility objectives.

Throughout the London Borough of Culture year, we have worked much more closely across different council services and portfolios that do not normally work together. Examples included collaboration between Arts and Culture, Children’s Services, Economic Development, Public Health, Libraries, Communications, Planning and Finance teams – resulting in “good cross working across different teams within the council”, including “a bit more flexibility in budgets and moving things around to create more activity and more impact.”

By collaborating across teams, we were also able to demonstrate the benefit of creative approaches to other, non-cultural services. One example is the Public Health team, where staff began adopting cultural and creative methods in their own work:

London Borough of Culture projects have since become embedded: “that narrative around creative health and wellbeing [...] has been weaved into ways of working.”

Welcome to Wandsworth also helped us to reach out more widely and work more closely with partners across the Borough: from cultural organisations to residents acting as Local Champions, and from local businesses to the voluntary sector, it has “really strengthened our relationships”.

“ the amount of development, the experience that staff members have had over the past year... look at what we achieved, look at what we can do again in the future.”

Council Staff Member, Chief Executive’s Group



External partners similarly felt the benefit of new networks and collaborations, with one external delivery partner noting a “clear shared commitment to delivering something meaningful for residents”, highlighting the partner organisation’s pride and pleasure in playing a part of that.

We and our partners believe that the relationships formed through the London Borough of Culture programme are set to continue into the future – for the benefit of Wandsworth.

Overall, Welcome to Wandsworth has left a strong organisational legacy for Wandsworth Council. It has increased our confidence and capacity to deliver large-scale cultural programmes, developed staff skills, embedded creative and inclusive approaches across services, and strengthened collaboration between departments, cultural organisations, community groups, businesses and residents. However, the programme also created some pressures on our staff capacity, with some teams investing more staff time than anticipated at the outset. It also leaves us with the challenge of sustainability, as we explore how to continue our brilliant programmes without the dedicated London Borough of Culture resources.

“There are a number of other colleagues working in public health who have started to think about how we can use and talk about health from a cultural perspective.”

Council Staff Member, Growth and Place Directorate

A good example of this is the African Caribbean Food Month, led by the council’s Economic Development team. As one council staff member reported: “It took us away from just working directly with businesses. We began communicating and engaging with community groups that we probably wouldn’t have engaged with if we weren’t running the African Caribbean Food Month.”



“We’re really proud of what’s been delivered collectively. [...] Beyond the numbers though, what feels most important is what’s been set in motion: the relationships built, the ideas tested, and the opportunities created that can continue well beyond this year” **Partner organisation**

Supporting Jobs, Creative Businesses and Investment

As well as delivering cultural, community and wellbeing benefits, **Welcome to Wandsworth** made a significant contribution to the local economy.

Social value consultancy RealWorth's independent report calculated that between April 2025 and March 2026, the London Borough of Culture Programme created an estimated **£51.1 million** in total social value.*





Of highest value (per person) were the employment opportunities created through London Borough of Culture programmes, which helped create at least **627 paid employment opportunities across the borough**.

Of these, **111 roles** were created through projects managed by **Wandsworth Council** and **516 by London Borough of Culture partners**. The vast majority of these opportunities supported the freelance creative workforce, with freelancers making up **80% of council-created roles** and **95% of partner-created roles**. Importantly, at least three partner-funded roles have continued beyond the programme and have become permanent positions. These employment opportunities generated an estimated social value of **£2,957,000 (£4,694 per person)**. For artists and creatives, who benefited from professional development opportunities, commissions, networking opportunities, increased visibility, skills development, or enhanced employment prospects, the social value was **£1,226,000 (£507 per person)**.

The **participation** element of the programme (including the volunteering) also generated significant social value **£36,818,000 (or £351 per person)** highlighting that those most actively involved experienced the greatest social benefits. This reflects Welcome to Wandsworth's emphasis on participatory activity, volunteering opportunities, co-creation programmes, and community-led cultural engagement.

The **£10,088,000** of social value generated for **audience members (£49 per person)** also demonstrates the wide reach of the programme, extending benefits beyond direct participants to residents and visitors who attended events.

The strongest outcomes were seen in education and skills development (**£14.2m**), wellbeing (**£14.2m**) and community connection (**£11.5m**). Thousands of people reported gaining new skills, feeling more confident, improving their mental wellbeing and developing a stronger sense of belonging in their local area.

The programme also provided a direct boost to Wandsworth's creative sector. Through London Borough of Culture funding, an additional **£325,804 was awarded to local artists, organisations and community groups**, helping creative projects and ideas flourish across the borough. Special thanks to the **Wimbledon Foundation** who invested **£125,000** into the London Borough of Culture programme. Alongside this, the programme attracted substantial external investment, securing **more than £5.5 million in match funding** that brought new resources and opportunities into Wandsworth.

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A standout example of this impact is **Re:Create Wandsworth**, a business support programme for creative freelancers, artists and small creative businesses. Funded by Wandsworth Council and the UK Shared Prosperity Fund, Re:Create combined one-to-one mentoring, online business skills training and networking opportunities to help participants build confidence, resilience and stronger local connections. The programme supported **50 Wandsworth-based creatives in 2024-25** and **40 in 2025-26**.

Creative United's evaluation found that participants from the 2025-26 cohort reported an average increase in income of **£8,666** after completing the programme, generating an estimated **£180,266 in additional earnings** across the cohort. This equates to a return of **£3 for every £1 invested**. Using Creative United's social value framework, Re:Create generated an estimated **£497,812 in social value**, equivalent to **£7.45 of social value for every £1 invested** in the programme.

Beyond the direct benefits to creative workers and organisations, Welcome to Wandsworth also helped drive spending in local businesses. Research from major cultural events consistently shows the positive effect of cultural activity on local economies, supporting high streets, hospitality businesses and wider regeneration.

Survey data collected from audiences attending seven³ London Borough of Culture events showed that visitors spent an average of £18.19 in the local economy in connection with their attendance. Based on the programme's total 517,916 in-person engagements, this suggests that around **£9.4 million** was spent locally as a result of the programme. Events like Tooting Food Festival resulted in the local markets gaining around 75% more footfall traffic on those days than the previous Valentine's Day weekend, and resulting in all traders (not just the food traders who participated) benefitting from the increased footfall.

While it is not possible to determine exactly how much of this spending was entirely additional to the local economy, the audience profile suggests a substantial proportion was generated by the programme itself. More than half of attendees (**53%**) travelled from outside Wandsworth, and almost a quarter (**23%**) came from outside London, bringing new visitors and new spending into the borough and helping to showcase Wandsworth as a vibrant cultural destination.

*Using data collected by Wandsworth Council and its delivery partners, RealWorth's Social Return on Investment (SROI) analysis identified and monetised key stakeholder outcomes, applying Social Value International principles and wellbeing valuation techniques to quantify the programme's social value and overall impact.

[Read the full SROI Report here](#)

Lessons Learned

As we look back on this incredible year, we have much to celebrate. But we also faced challenges along the way and have learned lessons for the future.

One of the main challenges across the programme was to engage residents consistently across all communities and neighbourhoods, particularly those who were not already engaged with arts and culture.

Projects often required much more time than anticipated to build trust, raise awareness and encourage participation.





The scale and ambition of the programme created operational and communication challenges, particularly where projects involved multiple partners, venues, artists, volunteers and council teams. Some projects reported confusion around messaging, branding and responsibilities across partners.

Capacity and time pressures were another recurring issue. Delivery teams, artists and volunteers often worked within compressed timelines while managing ambitious borough-wide activity – in some cases affecting mental health. Many projects would have benefited from more lead-in time, especially those where relationship-building and co-creation were central to delivery.

Funding and sustainability concerns also emerged, particularly around maintaining projects, partnerships and momentum beyond the London Borough of Culture year itself.

Finally, while inclusion was a major strength of the programme, genuinely inclusive practice proved resource intensive. Successful engagement with diverse communities required skilled facilitation, accessibility support, trusted local partnerships and sustained presence within neighbourhoods.

Some of the key lessons learned therefore include:

- **Meaningful community engagement takes time and must be built through trusted relationships:** Projects were most successful when they worked through local organisations and community networks; involved residents from the outset; maintained consistent local presence; and prioritised co-creation over short-term outreach. Participation and trust cannot be developed through marketing alone.
- **The importance of participatory approaches to creating impact:** The strongest impact was achieved where residents felt represented and actively involved rather than simply attending events. Participatory approaches seem to create stronger ownership, confidence, wellbeing, community connection, and local pride.
- **Flexible and adaptable delivery is critical:** Flexibility and adaptability emerged as essential for delivering large-scale participatory programmes. Successful projects were those that adapted delivery models when needed, responded to local circumstances, revised plans collaboratively, and balanced artistic ambition with practical realities.
- **Cultural infrastructure is about relationships as much as venues or events:** Successful cultural ecosystems depend on networks, partnerships, local trust, mentoring, collaboration and social and cultural relationships across the borough as much as physical infrastructure.

Legacy



The legacy of our Welcome to Wandsworth programme goes much beyond a successful but single - year of cultural events, increased attendance and celebration. The evaluation suggests that it will leave a deeper and longer lasting impact, by:

- **Building long-term creative confidence:** Our programme has increased confidence, participation and creative engagement among residents who may not previously have seen themselves as artists, cultural participants or creative professionals. Whether young people taking part in school programmes like Our Beautiful Neighbourhood, volunteers supporting events, emerging artists presenting work publicly, residents contributing stories, or participants engaging in creative health projects, the programme did not simply deliver cultural experiences to audiences but actively developed people's confidence to participate in creating cultural programmes themselves.
- **Strengthening local networks:** London Borough of Culture created new forms of collaboration between cultural institutions, schools, libraries, health organisations, local businesses, grassroots organisations, and community venues. From the Wandsworth Arts Fringe, working through a network of both cultural and non-cultural venues to reach residents across all wards of the borough, to Strictly Wandsworth, bringing organisations together around a shared creative goal, and to Culturally Mindful, bringing artists into healthcare and wellbeing settings: the London Borough of Culture legacy lies not only in the individual project relationships, but in the longer-term 'infrastructure' of trust and collaborative working that was built across sectors.
- **Developing emerging talent:** Our programme made a substantial contribution to developing local talent and supporting emerging creatives, particularly young people, Global Majority creatives, disabled artists and people entering the sector for the first time. Through initiatives such as the Internship programme, the WAF Associate Producers Programme, appointing a disabled-led producing organisation for the Liberty Festival, and artist commissions, Welcome to Wandsworth helped emerging creative talent to build skills, networks and career pathways - thus strengthening the borough's wider creative workforce and cultural ecology.
- **Embedding inclusive cultural participation:** Our programme was shaped by its diverse audiences, participants, volunteers and artists. Many projects prioritised Global Majority creatives, disabled artists, LGBTQIA+ communities, community participants, and people with limited prior access to arts and culture. Projects like The Wandsworth Way were explicitly designed to reflect the diversity of the borough through its casting, writing and collaborative process, not simply diversifying audiences, but changing who gets to shape and produce culture.

■ **Increasing civic involvement:** Welcome to Wandsworth strengthened civic engagement and local leadership through volunteering and participatory decision-making. The Local Champions programme is particularly significant in this respect, as local residents became active contributors to programme delivery and governance. Projects like Story Catchers, Young Journalists or Young Producers also invested in youth leadership and engagement, increasing our communities' confidence to shape public life.

■ **Demonstrating how culture can support wellbeing, belonging and community cohesion:** The evidence from the London Borough of Culture year clearly positions culture not only as entertainment, but as part of a wider ecosystem of social resilience, emotional wellbeing and community care. Creative health projects like [Memory Boxes](#) successfully delivered health and wellbeing support through cultural activities, while community-led projects like African Caribbean Food Month used food culture as a means of celebrating identity, heritage and belonging within local communities. London Borough of Culture has demonstrated the role that arts and culture can play in both local and national government's prevention and early intervention agenda, helping to resolve or slow down issues that may otherwise lead to significant costs on the public purse.

Most importantly, our programme has shifted how many residents, organisations and creatives understand culture itself: not as something delivered by institutions to passive audiences, but as something collaborative, local, participatory and rooted in everyday community life.

The Mayor of London's and National Lottery Heritage Fund funding for legacy projects over 2026 provides a welcome opportunity to further build on this:

"SO grateful for this. So often projects like this end just as relationships and ideas begin to take shape, so having legacy funding creates an opportunity to build on what's already been developed. [...] There's a strong foundation here, and it will be exciting to see how that can grow and evolve over time."

Artist, Culturally Mindful



Case Studies



African Caribbean Food Month: A Feast of Stories, Identity and Community in Wandsworth

If restaurant critics usually judge a meal on flavour, atmosphere and service, then Wandsworth's African Caribbean Food Month deserves five stars for something far richer: its ability to feed community, memory and belonging all at once.

Served up as part of Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture year and Black History Month, this month-long programme transformed libraries, community spaces and local venues into places where food became conversation, culture and celebration. Across workshops, tastings, storytelling sessions and live demonstrations, African and Caribbean food was not simply presented as cuisine, but as history on a plate. And what emerged most strongly was this: people were hungry for it.

"It's more than just food"

There are restaurants that serve food, and then there are places that nourish something much deeper. Tucked into the Alton Estate in Roehampton, Chantelle's Community Kitchen may not have white tablecloths, waiting lists or a celebrity chef, but what it offers is far rarer: a place where hot meals sit alongside practical support and conversation, and the feeling that somebody is genuinely glad you walked through the door.

Founder Chantelle Bent speaks about food with the warmth of someone who understands its emotional power. "It's more than just about food. It's about community [...] really making sure they know that they matter and that they are cared for."

The kitchen itself was born from Chantelle's experiences living locally and seeing families struggling with poverty and isolation. An idea quickly became a grassroots operation offering nutritious meals, groceries, cooking classes, clothing support and practical help for residents navigating homelessness or domestic crises. Yet like all great chefs, Chantelle understands that food is emotional architecture. A hot meal can restore confidence. A shared table can create community. A familiar flavour can make somebody feel visible again. She speaks passionately about wanting people to feel welcomed, not processed: "We don't want it to feel like a food bank or a soup kitchen, we're a community kitchen. [...] People say we don't feel 'council-ly' – it just feels warm."



That philosophy shaped the Kitchen's contribution to African Caribbean Food Month: a vibrant event at Roehampton Library filled with Jamaican and African dishes, colourful displays of traditional produce, children's activities and tables crowded with residents eager to try something new. They sampled unfamiliar ingredients, swapped memories and discovered the cultural meaning behind recipes.

The response? Overwhelming. The library later described it as the best attended Black History event they had ever hosted, attracting more than 250 people from Roehampton, Putney, Earlsfield and across Wandsworth.



Caribbean food with ambition

A few miles away, Top Taste serves Jamaican dishes – Jerk chicken, curry goat, patties and rice and peas – to give customers “the experience of the Caribbean”. Owner Andre also offers a different but equally important flavour of African Caribbean Food Month: entrepreneurial ambition.

For Andre, participating in African Caribbean Food Month was about visibility as much as celebration. The programme introduced local businesses to new audiences and new opportunities, connecting restaurant owners, caterers and entrepreneurs who often work independently – and imagine bigger futures.

Like any good tasting menu, the Food Month programme offered glimpses of what might come next. Visiting events alongside other venues reignited Andre’s dreams for what his restaurant could become. He recalls visiting the Alma Pub and being struck by the packed venue, the energy and the atmosphere: “Seeing people enjoying the food in [such great] numbers really sparked my imagination again to want to achieve that.”

That aspiration – for African and Caribbean food businesses and organisations to thrive visibly and confidently within the borough – runs throughout the programme. For Chantelle’s Community Kitchen, participating in the Food Month didn’t just leave people wanting a second sitting of the sampled dishes, but also asking how they could help keep the doors open: “People were offering their volunteering [...] offering to donate things to the kitchen [...] support us if we’re having any other events.”

Stories passed down through generations

The most memorable moments were often the smallest. A young boy trying Jamaican curry goat for the first time. A parent asking for recipes to recreate dishes at home. Residents discussing how grandparents passed cooking traditions down through families. “Many dishes have stories attached to them,” Chantelle says. “Recipes were passed down to me from my parents who come from their parents.” This was food functioning exactly as heritage should: alive, shared and evolving.

Throughout the month, African and Caribbean communities were not framed as “additions” to Wandsworth’s history, but as central to it.

The programme quietly corrected an imbalance by giving space to stories often missing from official cultural narratives. Importantly, it did so without becoming overly formal or institutional. Much like the best neighbourhood restaurants, the events thrived because they felt welcoming and human.



Lessons learnt

Every successful pop-up leaves diners wanting more, and African Caribbean Food Month was no exception. Participants reflected on the need for larger venues, greater funding and more outdoor, street-level events that allow passers-by to stumble across the celebrations naturally. Andre imagines future versions spilling into public spaces: “Just pass through, have a look, have a taste.”

Chantelle, meanwhile, noted the need for practical support for grassroots organisations, particularly as ingredient costs continue to rise and demand grows year on year.

Final verdict: a borough hungry for more

African Caribbean Food Month succeeded because it understood something fundamental: food is never just food. It is dignity for families struggling to make ends meet. It is memory carried across generations. It is business owners daring to dream bigger. It is children trying something unfamiliar and loving it. It is communities seeing themselves reflected in the cultural life of their borough.

And like any truly memorable meal, its impact lingered long after the plates were cleared. “It’s opened the door for many opportunities now to go forward,” Chantelle reflected. “People want it again and again.”



Culturally Mindful

Culturally Mindful is a creative health development programme delivered across the borough, designed to support Global Majority communities through culturally relevant, arts-based wellbeing activities.

Delivered by a team of Global Majority professionals, the programme was delivered in three phases, starting with 10 training sessions for artists and host organisations, followed by artists' induction, shadowing and co-design sessions, and 8-12 weeks' artist residencies in community and health settings, with culturally-relevant psychological support for the creative health practitioners throughout. This case study focuses on the artists' co-design sessions within their health setting.

Changing Care Delivery Through Art

Wandsworth Carers' Centre (WCC), supporting unpaid carers across the borough, is one of the community settings that hosted a creative health residency. Deputy CEO Shenade Windebank saw Culturally Mindful as an opportunity to offer carers something they regularly asked for: creative activities and a space away from caring responsibilities. Through the sessions at WCC, carers took part in storytelling, visual arts, photography, and zine-making.

At the start of each session, carers often arrived "stressed and burnt out and [...] exhausted". By the end, Shenade consistently saw people leave calmer and lighter. The co-creation approach was key to this: carers shaped the programme from the outset, and the same carers returned week after week, forming friendships. At the same time, a strong relationship was built between the artist and WCC: early training built rapport and shared goals, while the artist observed WCC sessions, thus understanding carers' needs. Regular reflections allowed Shenade and the artist to refine each session collaboratively.



Culturally Mindful built organisational capability and staff confidence to safely facilitate creative health and trauma-informed practice: "We were able to hold a space that we felt was safe [...] and respond to people's expression of their experiences." According to Shenade, the programme has also reshaped how care is delivered, enabling carers to express complex emotions in non-clinical, non-verbal ways, unlocking conversations and connections that traditional services often cannot reach.

Another project host, the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability in Putney, a specialist hospital supporting patients with complex neurological conditions, had offered arts activities before. However, the Culturally Mindful residency provided a different delivery approach to arts-based therapy, following a structured eight-week arc rather than one-off sessions. According to Sian Robinson, Occupational Therapy Art Room Assistant at the hospital, this gradual progression allowed patients to build skills over time and work towards a shared end goal. Seeing their artwork evolve and contribute to a collective outcome strengthened engagement and motivation. Involving patients' families in the activities also increased the visibility of the hospital's holistic care offer.

Transforming health outcomes for participants

One of the community participants, Hajira Bibi, is a mother of four children, living in Roehampton, who studied fashion and textiles at university but has not returned to creativity since becoming a mother. She joined Humarah Mohallah ('Our Neighbourhood') – a Culturally Mindful programme based on the Alton Estate – as a way to step outside her routine, meet other women, and have a small pocket of time for her own wellbeing.

At Humarah Mohallah, Hajira found a welcoming environment. She described the sessions as a reversal of daily life at home: "At home, even my tea and my food usually get cold. I'm the last one on my list. But when I went to the sessions, they'll be serving you food, they'll be offering you snacks. It made me feel like I can also sit at the table and be fed by somebody else."

While years of parenting responsibilities meant that Hajira lacked time to engage with creativity, the project brought back fond memories and helped her reconnect with her identity as a creative. She also noticed a boost in mood after sessions, greater patience at home with her children, and a reduction in the guilt she felt about her caring responsibilities.

One of the participants in the hospital setting with Guillain-Barré syndrome (an auto-immune condition which can lead to muscle weakness and paralysis) began the programme lacking confidence and doubting his ability to participate, supported closely by his mother. Through adapted activities and ongoing encouragement, he gradually built both physical strength and confidence over eight weeks, needing fewer aids. After his discharge from the hospital, he returned to visit the group: "he also wanted to come and see his own work and how it was displayed, which was really special" (Sian).

Upskilling artists to play a vital role in health care settings

Rebecca Olajide is a paper-based artist who joined Culturally Mindful while on maternity leave, at a point when she was considering "closing the door" on her artistic practice. She was placed at the Royal Hospital for Neuro-disability, working closely with hospital staff to deliver pattern-making sessions with patients with complex needs.

For Rebecca, the programme provided both structure and motivation to return to her creative practice. In a challenging clinical setting, she adapted her work in collaboration with hospital staff: using simple tiles but retaining complex patterns allowed patients with brain injuries to fully participate while still exercising cognitive thinking, decision-making, and agency. At the end of her residency, Rebecca and the hospital team put on an exhibition of participants' artwork and produced a portable book so that patients who were not mobile could view the work. The activities brought patients and staff together in a relaxed, less clinical environment, creating space for deeper connections.

Rebecca credits the facilitation provided by programme leaders as key to building her confidence; particularly messages around artists' worth and boundaries. The cohort, made up entirely of Global Majority artists, created a community. Clinical supervision sessions offered an intentional safe space to share joint challenges. Rebecca now feels she can return to her practice with more clarity, confidence, and momentum.

Learning and legacy

For the Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability, the residency has reshaped its approaches to arts-based therapy: longer, themed blocks of sessions are being trialled, and the team has applied for funding to continue similar creative health residencies. At Wandsworth Carers, Shenade's strongest learning is that creative health needs to be shaped with the people it is meant to serve – supported by appropriate resourcing. Rebecca echoes this, highlighting the importance of a structure that affirms professional worth and provides a genuine peer community – a foundation especially important for Global Majority artists. For Hajira, the project has helped her to reconnect with her 'creative identity': she now has plans to return to fashion once her youngest children are in full-time schooling.

To embed culturally competent creative health practice across the borough, artists and host organisations were offered legacy funding to build on their London Borough of Culture residencies. Alongside this, organisations are developing toolkits, frameworks and embedded delivery models that will ensure creative health continues to grow across Wandsworth long after the projects have ended.





The Internship Programme Putting Wandsworth's Young Talent to Work

How a pioneering paid internship scheme is opening the doors of Wandsworth's arts world to the young people who live here and quietly transforming the organisations that welcomed them in.

On a quiet Thursday morning at St George's Hospital in Tooting, Sadie, a 25-year-old artist from Wandsworth, is straying from her usual routine. She is helping to run a staff choir for NHS workers. A week earlier, she was reviewing applications for arts grants. Next week, she will be liaising with a resident musician about his ward visits. This, she says, is a week in the life of a Wandsworth intern.

For Sadie, who was born and raised in the borough before spending three years working freelance in Birmingham's arts scene, the timing felt almost too good to be true. *"I came back to London not being quite sure what I was going to do,"* she says. *"And then this was there."* She was placed with the arts team at St George's Hospital Charity, a world away from the gallery settings she had known, and has not looked back. Her manager, Grace Lindley, Arts Engagement Manager at the charity, was looking for additional capacity to deliver its London Borough of Culture projects. What she got was rather more than that. *"She was just a brilliant ambassador for the charity,"* Grace says.

9 Interns placed

6 Months full-time paid work

9 Placement organisations

2 Care leavers

Sadie is one of nine young Wandsworth residents currently on a six-month paid placement across some of the borough's most celebrated cultural organisations including Battersea Arts Centre, Royal Academy of Dance, the Royal College of Art, Theatre503, London Children's Ballet, Chocolate Films, St George's Hospital Charity, Putney Arts Theatre and On Da Beat. The programme, running from September 2025 to March 2026, pays every intern at the London Living Wage. Out of the nine interns, two are care leavers. All interns are between 18 and 25 and, for each of them, this is their first professional role in the creative sector.

Libby, an intern at Putney Arts Theatre, says: *"My favourite part of the internship was getting to be creative every day. I enjoyed so many aspects of the internship but the underlying one was finally being in a position to be paid and encouraged to be creative – whether that was designing/painting sets, or making props, impromptu fixing of props or discussing costumes and logistics. I loved it!"*

A few miles away, at the Grand Hall of the former Battersea Town Hall, Shanti is equally transformed by her placement. Born in Tooting and a lifelong Wandsworth resident, she found out about the scheme through a work coach who thought it sounded right for her. *"I had no idea what it was," she laughs, "but I applied right away."*

She was placed in Battersea Arts Centre's Media and Communications team. Within weeks, she was attending weekly strategy meetings, contributing to campaign brainstorms for the Spring season, managing digital assets, and developing expertise in accessible content creation. For Shanti, this opportunity has provided a platform for refining her own practice and gaining exposure to the creative industry.

Iman at the Royal College of Art describes a similar leap in both skills and horizons: *"I think the London Borough of Culture internship will be helpful for future roles, because the things I have learned during my time here has opened me up to another field that I hadn't considered before and it's set me up for the next step...All these different skills I've obtained plus I have learnt what it means to work in an office environment and the culture around it."*

Layla El-Deeb, the Director of Marketing & Communications at Battersea Arts Centre and Shanti's line manager, is candid about why the sector needed a scheme like this. *"Teams across the board have shrunk since the pandemic," she says, "and a lot of those entry-level roles just don't exist now."* The old culture of unpaid internships, which effectively locked out anyone without financial backing, is something she is glad to see the back of.

Shanti agrees that the placement has shifted her sense of what is possible. *"I've been more open to doing stuff I was a bit more closed off about before," she says.* For Sadie, the internship cracked open an entirely new professional world. *"It really changed my perspective on the function that art can play in those spaces," she reflects.* She has already decided she wants to return to arts and healthcare - a field she had never previously considered.



A foot in the door

Across all nine placements, there is a pattern – young people finding, often for the first time, that the creative industries are somewhere they genuinely belong. Joshua, an intern at Chocolate Films, says the cohort experience days were key to the success of the programme: *"One of the reasons I wanted this internship was to get more familiarised with other creative practices and [the experience days] allowed me to get a small amount of insight in many creative industries; what considerations they had for practicality, audiences, and artistry. Additionally, it felt more like I was a part of a community as it meant I could get to know the other interns more and feel like there were others going through similar things as me."*

The simplicity of entry-level, paid, local internships turns out to be radical. Grace Lindley at St George's notes that the arts and health sector remains significantly underrepresented by people from Global Majority backgrounds. The scheme gave her organisation a meaningful way to act on its values. *"This was an opportunity for us to try to make a small difference within that," she says.*

As the placements drew to a close in Spring 2026, nine young Wandsworth residents leave their placements with new skills, networks, and confidence. Two had their contracts extended within their host organisations, and one found full-time employment in another cultural organisation. For the organisations that hosted them, the experience has been equally enriching - an injection of energy, fresh ideas, and community connection during the borough's year as London Borough of Culture.





Liberty Festival

Liberty Festival, the Mayor of London's flagship event, took place across five days in September 2025, and was delivered as part of Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture programme, in partnership with disabled arts organisation, CRIptic Arts. Events took place in iconic venues across the borough, including Battersea Arts Centre (BAC), Tara Theatre, World HeartBeat and Clapham Grand. The festival aimed to celebrate disability arts, create meaningful opportunities for audience engagement, professional development for disabled artists and inclusive cultural participation. Featuring approximately 50 disabled creatives and 20 access providers, all paid to deliver a bold and inclusive programme, the artistic offer spanned classical music to rave, hip-hop theatre to contemporary dance, alongside immersive installations.

Giving disabled artists a national platform

Giving disabled artists a high-profile platform to present ambitious and innovative work to new audiences was a key impact of *Liberty Festival*. CRIptic Arts intentionally curated a programme that balanced local artists with nationally recognised disability-led work. Jamie Hale, Artistic Director of CRIptic Arts, explained that the organisation wanted both "to promote Wandsworth-based creatives specifically, but also to bring exceptional creativity to Wandsworth." This created opportunities for local artists and organisations to showcase their work alongside nationally significant disability arts practitioners.

Artists benefited from performing in well-known cultural venues. For instance, Amanda Grace, whose participatory performance *Love In* formed part of the programme, greatly valued the opportunity to present work at BAC, a venue she had long hoped to work with: "I was supremely ecstatic because I'd been trying to crack into Battersea Arts Centre as an artist for quite some time."

Increasing visibility and audience engagement

Liberty Festival helped raise the visibility of disability arts both within Wandsworth and across London. By embedding the festival within the wider London Borough of Culture programme, disability arts became part of a broader public cultural celebration. The festival attracted both disabled and non-disabled audiences, creating shared cultural experiences that challenged perceptions about disability arts and accessibility. Events such as *Disco Neurotico* and *Deaf Rave's Takeover Party* demonstrated how inclusive programming could create vibrant spaces that welcomed people with different access needs without compromising artistic quality or audience experience.

Sahara Huang, Assistant Producer at BAC, highlighted how audiences travelled from across London. She described the festival as "*opening doors to wider communities*" and helping audiences understand that BAC was actively welcoming disabled artists and audiences. According to Sahara, the festival also exposed regular audiences to disability arts on "a very big scale", rarely seen in mainstream programming.

In addition to the breadth of audience engagement, Amanda reflected on the depth: she described audiences engaging deeply with her performance that invites audiences into intimate conversations, ending with a

handwritten love letter. She highlighted the importance of localised cultural programming outside central London for creating meaningful audience relationships and more accessible experiences like this.

Supporting professional development through disability-led practice

A significant strength of *Liberty Festival 2025* was the way in which being produced by a disabled-led organisation created supportive working conditions for artists. Artists highlighted that working with CRIptic Arts felt fundamentally different from previous experiences in mainstream cultural settings because access needs and wellbeing were embedded into the production process from the beginning. CRIptic Arts prioritised sustainable workloads and artist wellbeing, ensuring that artists were not pushed beyond healthy limits simply to maximise output. This created an environment where artists could focus on developing and delivering high-quality work while feeling supported as individuals. According to Amanda: *"It is so rare to have a no-to-low-stress, well-paying, rewarding job where everyone asks you what you need to do the work, and then gives it to you."*

Participation in *Liberty Festival* also generated longer-term development opportunities. For Amanda, the Festival allowed her to deepen her connection with CRIptic Arts: as a result, she has now been selected to be part of CRIptic Arts' year-long leadership development programme, Incubate, for disabled-led organisations. Oily Cart, another participating organisation, described having *"a bumper year for awards"*, including with the show presented as part of *Liberty Festival*.

The festival also represented an important stage in CRIptic Arts' own organisational development. Jamie reflected that the experience of producing *Liberty Festival* marked a transition from being seen as a young emerging organisation to becoming recognised as an established and trusted leader within disability arts: *"Being selected as a disabled-led organisation to take part in something which is such a core part of disability culture [...] was really significant in professionalising us."* At the 2025/2026 Fringe Theatre Awards, CRIptic Arts also won the award in the Access Category for their work producing the *Liberty Festival*.

Inclusive partnerships and sector change

Liberty Festival created opportunities for venues, council teams and cultural staff to strengthen their understanding of accessibility in practice and to build stronger relationships with disabled artists and audiences. At BAC, preparations for the festival prompted practical changes including improved signage, clearer audience information and enhanced accessibility support. Staff also participated in dedicated accessibility and inclusivity training linked to *Liberty Festival*.

The experience also strengthened relationships between cultural organisations and disabled-led artists that are expected to continue beyond the festival itself. BAC identified several artists they hope to continue working with in the future. Importantly, the partnership model demonstrated how disabled-led organisations can shape wider institutional practice. Jamie Hale noted the council's commitment to continue to support and embed disabled-led cultural work within the borough's cultural ecology.

Legacy and lessons learnt

Alongside its successes, *Liberty Festival* highlighted lessons for delivering large-scale accessible cultural programmes. Both CRIptic Arts and BAC reflected that genuinely accessible programming requires significantly longer lead-in times, particularly when coordinating multiple venues, artists and access requirements. BAC also noted the need for earlier staff training, stronger volunteer coordination and more time to communicate accessibility information. Jamie Hale reflected that the current *Liberty* model places significant pressure on delivery organisations because each borough effectively starts from scratch each year, feedback that will inform future planning of the festival.

Liberty Festival 2025 left a strong legacy for artists, organisations and audiences in Wandsworth. The festival increased the visibility of disability arts, created new professional opportunities and ambition for disabled artists and disabled-led organisations, and strengthened inclusive organisational practice. Importantly, *Liberty* demonstrated how disabled-led cultural practice can shape a more inclusive cultural sector, positioning disability arts as a vital part of London's cultural landscape.





Local Champions

The *Local Champions* initiative was a pioneering model within Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture, embedding residents directly into decision-making processes around cultural programming and funding for the first time, acting as a bridge between the council and communities, and bringing lived experience into processes traditionally led by council officers, and decisions usually made by politicians.

Why Local Champions signed up

One reason for Local Champions to join was a sense of pride in the London Borough of Culture award and a desire to play a part. As one Local Champion put it: *"I was so excited and so proud when Wandsworth won the Borough of Culture. I really wanted to get involved."* Others were drawn by the opportunity to influence local decisions, address gaps in provision and ensure their communities were represented in the programme: *"I thought that this would be a good way to get involved with the council and in the community itself."* Local Champions also saw it as an opportunity to connect their existing work with a borough-wide programme, hoping that their expertise would be used to improve provision and to give "something back to the borough."

The impact on Local Champions: personal growth, wellbeing and connections

Many Champions reported increased confidence, particularly in engaging with formal processes such as grant-making. They also developed a stronger understanding of how the council operates and gained new skills in decision-making and critical thinking: *"It's been really interesting to see that grant making process and be involved in it."* Many highlighted the value of being trusted with responsibility: *"I think it really did give me a bit of a confidence boost [...] I am able to actually read through all these applications and select on merit."* Participants described how they had grown through the experience, including one younger member who initially lacked confidence in meetings feeling over time that he was able to make a meaningful contribution.

Another described the experience as formative for their personal journey: *"I've taken quite a lot from it [...] it's slightly reignited the advocate in me. I've dusted off the soapbox, I'll probably be climbing up on it a few times now! I've enjoyed playing that role and representing my borough, [...] my creative community and hope to do more of it."*

One Local Champion, a full-time carer, felt that their participation had improved their wellbeing: *"For me, it's been a nice distraction from being a parent. Caring for children is very hard work. Having the opportunity to go to different events, which I wouldn't normally go to, has been a nice distraction and helped with wellbeing."*

Socially, the programme fostered new relationships and networks: *"I feel like I've made a bunch of new friends... and it's great;"* and *"We would never have met otherwise. It feels great to be part of a group with shared values. That strengthens the feeling of belonging. We also connected across generations, which was valuable."*

For many, the benefits extended beyond the individual. Local Champions reported bringing friends and families to events they would not otherwise have known about: *"being able to help my children grow within the borough and help them explore new hobbies and get them off the internet and all those positivities this has brought to my family. So that's been another proud moment."* While another Local Champion found out about services they had not been aware of before: *"There's been so much services that we've seen that the borough has [...] that all relate to wellbeing [...] a lot of them I didn't know of before."*

How Local Champions strengthened inclusion, community reach and trust

Local Champions brought diverse lived experiences – from youth work to community organising, SEND advocacy to long-term residency in the borough. One Champion summarised this collective strength: *"We all came together with our own experiences... diverse backgrounds."*

The council benefited from direct access to this lived experience and local knowledge, improving the relevance and inclusivity of programming. Champions brought insights that reflected local priorities, challenged assumptions and highlighted gaps: *"We know what our borough needs."* The councillor who chaired the Local Champions meetings echoed this value: *"They've been really helpful at pointing out when we are missing areas [...] or communities."*

Champions also acted as connectors and advocates – sharing information, promoting events, and widening reach within their own networks, thus helping to engage residents who might otherwise have been excluded. As one Champion described: *"Whether staff, family or friends, it's been nice to open their eyes to different experiences. The variety of events and workshops has been unexpected and it's been nice to encourage others to broaden their horizons."*

According to the councillor, Local Champions' involvement also increased transparency and trust, particularly around funding decisions, changing conversations with residents: *"It's your neighbours who decided where the grants went."*

Internally, the model has helped to shift internal perceptions within Wandsworth Council, demonstrating the value of residents as skilled contributors in complex decisions: *"It's really helped the council to see residents as more than just residents [...] They're actually very skilled."*



The Local Champions initiative has provided a working example of participatory governance and demonstrated the value of embedding resident voice in service design, thus strengthening the case for ongoing resident panels and deeper collaboration between the council and communities.

Legacy and lessons learnt

The initiative leaves a strong legacy as both a successful programme and a template for how councils can work with residents. Its success was driven by the diversity, passion and commitment of participants, alongside open communication with the council.

However, the programme also highlighted important lessons. Some Champions felt their expertise and individual skillsets could have been more strategically utilised: *"doing things more specifically suited to us [...] where we could add additional value."* Others pointed to practical barriers linked to volunteering, including childcare, travel and unpaid time: *"We're giving our time free [...] but we still use our money to travel."*

A particular challenge for some participants representing charities, CICs and community organisations was that they were unable to apply for London Borough of Culture grants because of perceived conflicts of interest. While participants understood the principle, many felt this unfairly disadvantaged grassroots organisations already contributing significant unpaid time and expertise: *"Given my time as a champion... I don't believe [that] should penalise my organisation in any way."*

Despite these challenges, the overall experience was highly valued. As one Local Champion summarised: *"It's been a fantastic year [...] and it's opened Wandsworth's eyes to the potential going forward."*

Our Beautiful Neighbourhood:

A nature trail through creativity, connection and community

Entering the Landscape

Begin your journey in the school playgrounds, gardens and green corners of Wandsworth – spaces often passed through quickly, but rarely paused within. *Our Beautiful Neighbourhood*, delivered by Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture in partnership with the Royal College of Art, invited over 1,300 children and young people from 47 primary, secondary and SEND schools to stop, look closer and reimagine the natural world around them. What started with workshops in classrooms and school grounds grew into a borough-wide art trail stretching across Battersea Power Station, Putney Exchange, Southside Shopping Centre, Tooting Market and Wandsworth Town Hall. Along the way, pupils, teachers and artists discovered that nature was not somewhere distant – it was already woven into their everyday lives.

The Hidden Habitat

At the first stop on the trail, children crouch beside flowerbeds, peer through magnifying viewers and gently lift leaves in search of life. Here, the ordinary becomes extraordinary.

Lead artist Vanessa Rolf described how children began seeing familiar spaces differently: *"The children were talking about how they'd never thought that anything lived in that space [...] because usually [...] they're playing and [...] focused on each other."*

School grounds transformed into habitats filled with insects, birds, textures and sounds. Workshops encouraged children to slow down and observe carefully; not simply to create art, but to notice. For many pupils, these moments brought calm, focus and joy. Bushra Oakley, Arts Lead at John Burns Primary School, reflected: *"They were just really, really involved in the task. And they were just really happy."*

Even fear became curiosity. Worms, snails and spiders became objects of fascination. In hospital school settings, conversations about bats and local parks opened up ideas beyond the hospital walls, helping young people imagine future adventures outdoors.



The Making Meadow

Further along the trail, children gather around tables scattered with coloured paper and glue sticks. Here, observation becomes creation, and a place where children discovered not only new artistic skills, but new ways of valuing themselves and one another.

Using collage and printmaking techniques, pupils translated what they had seen outdoors into vibrant artworks: birds layered from paper shapes, insects assembled from colour and texture. There were no templates and no 'correct' outcomes. Every child was encouraged to experiment, improvise and make creative choices of their own.

Some children initially doubted themselves. Lead artist Hannah Coulson recalled one pupil's surprise when her work was praised: *"She said, 'really, I didn't think I'd done a very good job.' And I was like, 'well, you know, I think you did.'"* Slowly, confidence grew. Bushra reflected that children learned: *"What might not be great for one is a huge artistic thing to someone else."*

The Canopy of Celebration

As the trail opens out into public space, the children's artwork rises high above streets, shopping centres and community spaces. Nature, once hidden in school gardens, now fills the borough skyline.

Artists remembered the moment pupils realised their work would be publicly exhibited: *"There'd be gasps of excitement."* For many children and families, visiting the exhibitions was a moment of enormous pride. Bushra described pupils arriving at Battersea Power Station and immediately searching for their banners: *"They were super, super proud."*



Crucially, every child's work was included. There was no judging panel and no selection process. Hannah explained: "Absolutely everything that everybody made was included." This spirit of inclusion became one of the project's defining features, particularly for SEND schools, where opportunities to participate in large-scale public initiatives are often limited. Every contribution mattered. Every child belonged on the trail.

A Grove of Shared Learning

Beneath the branches of the trail, teachers gathered not only as facilitators, but as creative learners themselves, at a CPD session at the Royal College of Art. Here, ideas, techniques and experiences were exchanged and nurtured – from collage and printmaking to new ways of linking art with science, maths and environmental learning. Many discovered new confidence in their own creative practice. Bushra reflected: "Not only are the children learning, but [...] also the teachers."

The project was carefully designed to support schools rather than add pressure to busy teachers. Artists arrived with resources, materials and workshop plans, making it easy for schools to participate. As Vanessa Rolf explained: "We were really mindful of that and wanted to make sure that actually this was not additional work for teachers."

The grove also became a meeting place for schools across the borough. Teachers shared ideas, connected with neighbouring schools and began imagining new possibilities for creative collaboration within their own communities.



Mapping the Journey

Behind every stop on the trail sat a careful process of mapping, coordination and collaboration.

For the lead artists, the project was both creatively ambitious and professionally transformative. Coordinating dozens of schools, managing artist teams and overseeing installations across multiple venues demanded new levels of collaboration and confidence. Vanessa reflected: "It's increased my confidence around doing something of this scale." Hannah added: "That to me felt like quite a step in terms of just personally being able to confidently say, 'this is what we can do.'"

Alongside creativity came challenge: tight timelines, booking systems, the complexities of coordinating a borough-wide project. Yet these challenges also strengthened artists' skills in logistics, communication, and commitment to inclusive participatory practice.

Seeds for the Future

The trail ends, but its impact continues to grow. Children left with stronger creative self-belief and a deeper awareness of wildlife surrounding them. Teachers continue to use workshop approaches, while schools are still displaying artwork within their communities.

At the heart of the project was a commitment to ensuring that scale never overshadowed experience. Hannah reflected: "It really mattered that it didn't feel like a sort of production [...] that young people learning about [...] wildlife and connecting with their local green spaces [...] those things weren't lost in the scale of it."

And as the trail comes to a close, Bushra leaves one final wish hanging in the air like birdsong: "I just wish that there's more [...] can we have some more workshops?"



Sing to Thrive

Research consistently shows that singing is one of the most powerful activities for improving both physical and mental health. *Sing to Thrive* built on this evidence by commissioning two composers to create two original songs.

While one composer worked with existing local choirs, culminating in a joint performance of the specially composed song “Sing as One” at the finale event, the other focused on community groups and underrepresented settings to promote singing as a tool for wellbeing, connection and creativity.

This case study focuses on this community-focused strand of the programme.

An approach rooted in co-creation

The project commissioned composers through an open call, selecting practitioners with strong experience in community music-making. Crucially, the brief centred on co-creation: working directly with communities to develop songs that reflected their lived experiences of Wandsworth, connection and wellbeing.

Aga Serugo Lugo, the composer chosen to work in community settings, employed an approach that was deeply participatory. His brief was “to, in conjunction with various community groups, write a song celebrating both [...] the joy of singing, and – in the making of it – [...] the wellbeing benefits of singing. But also [...] celebrating Wandsworth Borough and the creativity and their experience of Wandsworth Borough.”

He worked across diverse settings, including care homes, SEND groups and intergenerational groups, ensuring that people who “don’t necessarily get a huge amount of singing” were actively included. Workshops were designed to be organic and participant-led. For example, residents in a care home identified ‘connection’ as a core idea. According to Aga, “connection was a really, really, really important word [...] both in terms of singing and also when they were talking about their sense of Wandsworth.” This became the foundation of the song *The Wandsworth Corner Shop*, with contributions from multiple groups shaping verses, melodies and style.

Engaging community groups in singing

The project involved a range of community groups and specialised settings that do not regularly engage in singing activities. For Sparkle, an intergenerational group that participated in the project, participation aligned strongly with their mission of “bringing younger and older people together for mutual benefit.” According to group lead Emma Chisholm, the project was presented as “a song written by the people and for the people of Wandsworth and performed by the people of Wandsworth.”

Importantly, the sessions were designed to be open to all abilities, accessible and non-intimidating, encouraging broad participation, including from those with little or no prior singing experience: “you didn’t have to [...] stand up and do a solo [...] it was very accessible.” (Emma)

Promoting participants' wellbeing

The project had a significant impact on individual participants. Singing fostered confidence, creativity and joy. As Jean Butcher, one of the participants, reflected: *"it's the right way he presented it all [...] just so much fun to join in and be part of it."* By making singing playful and accessible, the project inspired participants to reconsider singing as an everyday activity. Sessions encouraged participants *"to play with our voices [...] and just be silly,"* offering a refreshing alternative to more formal musical experiences.

This approach helped demystify singing and highlight its wellbeing benefits, from improved mood and confidence to social connection. One participant observed: *"I felt absolutely uplifted [...] because otherwise I'd be at home."* Another added that *"it's the wellbeing benefits. It's good to boost your mood and morale."*

Aga observed powerful moments of personal growth, particularly in specialist settings. For instance, at one of the sessions delivered with The Baked Bean Charity, a Wandsworth-based performing arts organisation for adults with learning disabilities, one of the participants who was described as *"often very shy [...]"* stepped up and said *"something"*, thus contributing a key lyric – *"a really lovely addition."* In another case, a group lead reported seeing participants, who are largely non-verbal, singing for the first time.

Building connections within and across communities

Participants also experienced firsthand how singing together fosters connection.

Within groups, the experience of singing together created bonds through shared memories, creativity or simple breathing exercises. As Aga commented, *"that moment of just inhaling and exhaling at the same time with other people is the most bonding thing [...] singing [...] is an incredibly social and connecting activity."* One of the choir leads involved added: *"Social connection is a very important part of what we do. It's not just a choir, it's a support friendship group."*

The shared experience extended beyond individual sessions. Knowing that other groups across Wandsworth were contributing to the same song created a sense of collective identity and pride, reinforcing social cohesion across the borough.

At a borough-wide level, the project also connected diverse groups who might not otherwise interact. Emma explains: *"we are trying to create relationships where one didn't exist before [...] anything that we can do to link up, to show that we are the same [...] is a good thing."*



Legacy

Sing to Thrive was designed to have a lasting legacy. The project has created original - but adaptable - songs, recordings and resources that can continue to be used by schools, choirs and community groups. As Aga notes, *"the sheet music will be available [...] people will be able to just sing it in schools in assemblies [...] it can be used."*

More broadly, the project has sparked continued engagement with singing and creative activity – Jean went on to join another choir after the project, while groups such as Sparkle expressed a desire for *"more of the same."*

Over March 2026, 20 choirs and over 360 singers, performed across Wandsworth, with more performances planned for the spring and summer to help highlight the range of choirs you could join on your doorstep.

By embedding singing within community life and demonstrating its health benefits, the project has demonstrated how engagement can translate into longer-term behavioural change and improve social and personal wellbeing.



Story Catchers

Introduction

Story Catchers was an intergenerational heritage project delivered in two phases. At its core, the project trained fourteen young people (aged 18–25) from Global Majority backgrounds as oral historians to document the lived experiences of older residents across Wandsworth. Collectively, the *Story Catchers* collected fourteen oral histories from interviews with twenty-six community members and elders, culminating in a public exhibition called *We are Somebody* at Wandsworth Town Library (at the end of Phase 1) and a community feast, alongside the publication of the *Memories Kitchen* booklet (at the end of Phase 2). The project produced a lasting archival resource now housed with the Wandsworth Heritage Service and the Wandsworth Heritage Collection.

An archival record of Wandsworth diverse communities

Creating an archival resource combined training, fieldwork, and creative production. Young participants took part in structured oral history workshops delivered by On the Record CIC, learning interviewing techniques, ethics, and archival practice. As Elliot Murray, one of the participants reflected, the training made him realise the importance of oral history, as well as learning the skills needed.

Participants then conducted interviews with Wandsworth residents, also from Global Majority backgrounds, capturing stories of migration and how they shaped food practices, identity, and belonging. These were analysed collectively, with key themes inspiring the *Memories Kitchen* booklet and the community feast menu.

The project directly responds to a longstanding gap in local heritage collections: the underrepresentation of Global Majority communities. According to Elliot, the project actively worked toward “*challenging the dominant narrative*” by capturing experiences of people who “*have been in the area for ages, like longer than I think any of us have been alive and [who...] have seen the area change and develop.*”

By creating a permanent record of these stories in Wandsworth Archives, the project ensures that Wandsworth’s history reflects the full diversity of its communities, creating a more inclusive and representative historical record.



Celebrating lived experiences of older generations

At the heart of the project is the celebration of elders' lived experiences. Interviews created a space for participants to share – often deeply personal – memories, traditions, and reflections. Elliot observed that interviewees were *“really willing to share and were passionate about what they were talking about.”* Sushmita Srivatsava, another Story Catcher, talked about the insights the young people gained through moments of casual conversation and storytelling: *“I think one thing that I genuinely learned through the entire programme was that [...] instead of just finding somebody from your own community and getting into that comfort level, meeting people from different backgrounds and communities gives you a different eye to how people have seen life.”*

The Memories Kitchen booklet – bringing together the recipes from Afghanistan, Jamaica, India, Nigeria, Pakistan and others for the menu of the community feast, alongside the rich stories and recollections that inspired the menu – captures these voices vividly. For some participants, being included in the booklet was profoundly meaningful. As Elliot recounted, one elder *“felt like a celebrity, seeing her photo in the booklet.”*

Interviews often became spaces of shared reflection. According to Elliot, in one instance, two older interviewees who had never met *“were almost reminiscing with each other [...] they related to each other [...] through shared experiences.”*

The project culminated in a community feast, where interviewees, participants, and community members gathered to celebrate the stories and food documented. This event created new social networks and reinforced a shared sense of belonging.

Some of the young people also benefitted from a stronger sense of community. Sushmita's desire to make local connections, after recently moving to London, was a key motivation for participating and the project gave her exactly that: *“I think I've also developed a sense of belonging because since I was not born here, I just moved here for my education. Meeting this group, even the Story Catchers and the facilitator, it was a great experience overall.”*

Supporting Global Majority Young People into Heritage

The programme provided hands-on training and paid opportunities for Global Majority young people, offering a practical route into the heritage and creative sector. Participants developed skills in interviewing, research, and ethical storytelling, alongside increased confidence and employability. For Elliot, this was one of the main reasons for participating, after recently graduating with a design degree but feeling uncertain about his next career steps: *“I definitely [...] was hoping to [...] get some skills and experience from doing it.”*



Beyond developing technical skills, the project built confidence and opened potential career pathways. Sushmita mentioned improved communication skills and confidence: *“I feared a lot speaking in front of the mic, but I did manage to speak at the community feast.”* Elliot also noted increased confidence *“to speak to a wider range of people that I don't know”* and reported that it *“opened my eyes to [...] another area of potential work or career direction.”* Another StoryCatcher participant reported greatly increased confidence in their English-speaking ability and a broadening of horizons.

Legacy

Both Sushmita and Elliot see the transferrable skills they gained as their main personal legacy from the project. But Sushmita has also become a lot more proactive in building community: *“all these stories inspired me in staying connected to the people in the community wherever I live and talking to them. This became like a habit. Like now, when I by myself go to a cafe, [and] see [a] grandpa or grandma, I just go up to them. I simply say, ‘hi,’ I talk to them as to where they are from.”*

The oral histories recollected throughout the Story Catchers project also play a valuable role in supporting a separate initiative developed as part of the London Borough of Culture programme: Memory Boxes for Dementia. Three culturally specific boxes, focused on South Asian and Caribbean communities, have already been created, and the recordings gathered through Story Catchers will enrich these resources. By incorporating familiar voices, personal memories, and culturally resonant stories, the audio material will help patients living with dementia reconnect with their past, stimulate memory recall, and support cognitive skills.

Finally, the archival resource has created more than a collection of stories – it is a living, but lasting, record of Wandsworth's diverse communities, ensuring that their histories are recognised, preserved, and shared for generations to come.



Strictly Wandsworth

Introduction

Strictly Wandsworth launched Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture year with its largest mass-participation dance programme to-date. The project brought together 20 local dance organisations and around 150 dancers, spanning professional companies, community groups and dance schools, to create a 12-minute piece performed in Battersea Park in April 2025. It combined a borough-wide "learn the dance" digital offer with in-person rehearsals and a mass performance designed to be accessible across ages, abilities and settings.

Creative Leadership and Development of Wandsworth's Dance Community

Jenna Lee, co-artistic director of London Children's Ballet and the producer of *Strictly Wandsworth*, emphasised its role in connecting the borough's fragmented dance sector. As the co-director of a key cultural tenant in the borough, Jenna was approached to produce *Strictly Wandsworth*. She combined prior mass-movement experience and the ability to anchor a large collaborative project alongside specialist choreographer and mass-movement expert Jeanefer Jean-Charles. For Jenna, this collaboration was professionally transformative, deepening her understanding of leadership and consolidating a people-first approach to creative work. The project shaped her view that effective leadership in this context must be grounded in empathy and flexibility, particularly when many contributors are volunteering out of

pride and commitment to place, and when artistic ambition has to sit alongside care, respect and clear communication.

Artist surveys reinforced this: 100% enjoyed the experience and 40% attended to "try something new" or improve skills, evidencing capacity-building through new collaborations. Jenna articulated a clear philosophy of mass movement as an access tool, centring on the power of people of different ages and abilities dancing the same gestures to signal that "we can all do it," whether standing or seated. This approach turned *Strictly Wandsworth* into a vehicle for community connection – groups who had never previously entered London Children's Ballet's building were welcomed in, co-shaped the choreography, and saw their own styles and identities reflected in the final piece, reinforcing a shared sense of ownership and belonging across the borough's dance community.

Inclusive Practice

Participants described *Strictly Wandsworth* as a well-structured, inclusive event spanning ages, abilities and dance styles, from ballet and contemporary to salsa and Zumba. Baked Bean Charity, a Wandsworth-based performing arts organisation for adults with learning disabilities, exemplified how the programme advanced inclusion and wellbeing. Survey data showed broad engagement: 73% female respondents, 19% Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, and strong CYP participation (31% of groups included children/young people).

Jason, a long-standing Baked Bean member, called *Strictly Wandsworth* the largest event he had ever performed in, yet one where he felt "never nervous" and "very excited." He emphasised joy as central to inclusive practice: the happiness of performing with friends, watching and congratulating other groups, and feeling part of

Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture year. These experiences reinforced his identity as a confident performer and active participant in South London's cultural life.

Dance leader Lottie Monk-Porcel, Zumba instructor and welfare coordinator at Baked Bean, described Strictly Wandsworth as "one of the best experiences" the organisation has had. She felt it was "fundamentally important" that learning-disabled performers shared a stage with professional companies, and that Baked Bean "had to be a part of that" to represent the learning disabled community in the borough. Initially unsure whether her dancers could manage the mass-movement choreography, she saw them approach rehearsals with "professional heads on," exceed expectations and adapt movements around joint issues without losing impact. This confirmed that with co-created choreography, clear structures and thoughtful adaptation, adults with learning disabilities can excel in complex, high-profile artistic projects.

Lottie also recalled powerful intergenerational and cross-ability interactions during mass rehearsal at Wandsworth Town Hall, particularly when children who initially stared at learning-disabled dancers began dancing with them. For her, these moments embodied Baked Bean's message that people with learning disabilities "deserve to be there," showing how shared dance practice can challenge stigma and build empathy. Survey responses aligned with this: 98% of audiences reported an enhanced sense of community, and 43% of participants attended because they wanted to engage in local community activity.

Wellbeing

A member of the dance group SaSalsa, Funke Adewole, also linked Strictly Wandsworth directly to wellbeing and self belief. Having discovered SaSalsa as a free and community oriented salsa class after moving to London, she joined the performance team and saw the project as a disciplined, structured challenge at a time in life when external routines were often lacking. Funke described the process of rehearsing together over weeks as more valuable than the performance itself. It reminded her that, with consistency and effort, she could do "more than I think I'm capable of." The mass rehearsal at Wandsworth Town Hall, where she danced alongside children, professional companies and learning disabled groups, and the performance in Battersea Park on a full production stage deepened her sense of belonging to a wider community of passionate dancers, and reinforced dance as a source of joy, confidence and connection to Wandsworth. This aligns with survey findings: 100% participants/volunteers enjoyed the experience; and 98% of audience members agreed it enhanced community belonging and benefitted wellbeing.

Reach and Legacy

For creative leaders like Jenna Lee, the project has left a legacy of new partnerships and a stronger, more connected local dance infrastructure. For community organisations like Baked Bean and SaSalsa, it has reinforced the principle that large-scale, outward-facing cultural events can and should be built around inclusion, care and ambition. For individual participants like Jason and Funke, it has generated lasting memories, strengthened confidence and deepened their attachment to Wandsworth as a place where their creativity is visible and valued. For others, it has encouraged commitment to dance activities long-term: according to one of the organisers, one participant was not only inspired to join a local Salsa group herself, but she subsequently encouraged her 80+ year-old mother to join a similar group for older adults, too.





The Wandsworth Way

Introduction

The Wandsworth Way was a 40-episode weekly radio drama produced in partnership with Riverside Radio, Theatre503 and a community cast and crew of over 115 people. Structured around the journeys of a returning novelist and a local cab driver, the series created an audio portrait of the borough that explored memory, identity and the evolving meaning of home.

Artist Development

For many creatives involved, this was a first experience of audio drama, and it proved transformative for their artistic confidence. For writer Kevin Ung, the project provided an opportunity to translate his own experiences of Ernest Bevin College, Tooting and wider Wandsworth into the episodes: "I felt like I could take risks with the script and that someone would be there to just steer me in the right direction." Other writers who had not written for the radio before, found the structured process fun, with four-hour sessions of "collectively plotting episodes before buzzing off to write our bits". Performers talked about discovering the specific techniques of radio acting. Director of Riverside Radio Lesley Strachan noted that people who had never acted before were by the end confidently offering script changes and treating recording days as serious rehearsals, showing a step-change in self-belief and skills.

Wellbeing and Joy in Professional Setting

The project had a positive impact on participants' wellbeing within the professional environment. Interviewees consistently described recording days as energising, mood-lifting and socially meaningful. One observed that anyone who arrived feeling a little bit down was feeling on a high by the end and almost every participant asking "what next?" as the project neared completion. One actor called her day absolutely fantastic saying she made friends and left with new contacts she could talk to and reach out to. This, as a recent Canadian arrival, made her feel notably more community-minded. Another participant described it as one of the greatest experiences of his professional life, noting the rare enthusiasm of a team where everyone arrived eager to find out what was happening next. Several participants emphasised how enjoyable it was to spend evenings and weekends doing something a bit different with neighbours, rather than being alone at home, contributing to improved wellbeing and reduced isolation.



Creative collaboration by a diverse group of creatives

The Wandsworth Way's impact was also civic. It enabled people who might never otherwise have met to work side by side on a shared cultural project. One participant explained that the team made a "systematic effort" to bring in people "from across every postcode in the borough", and that the result was a cast and crew that reflected "the broad spectrum of nationalities and races and religions" in Wandsworth. This was echoed by other participants, who described workshops and recording days filled with "different ages, lots of different accents", people born and bred in Balham, Tooting or Battersea alongside newer residents, all contributing ideas and gently correcting scripts using their local knowledge. Participants noted the creative diversity showcased through the project: the casting and writing made sure that audiences were "aware of the diversity [of creatives] within Wandsworth". Many participants had "never acted before, never written before" and bringing them together in writers' rooms, workshops and the studio created new social networks.

The show has accumulated over 100k listens and gathered a passionate following. One audience member said "I've been listening to the WW from the very beginning, now I've got to know the characters and I'm so invested in their storylines [...] - even though I don't live in Wandsworth I think I've got to know the borough a little bit through the show and I'm just excited to tune in every week as I've got to know what's going to happen with Tash and Mike next!".

Sense of Place

For some, the project provided a space for emotional processing and renewed pride in local history. Multiple interviewees said they had "learned new things" about the area, such as 575 Wandsworth Road (the National Trust property that was the home of Kenyan poet and civil servant Khadambi Asalache until his death in 2006), significant historical events associated with locations across the borough, and lesser-known histories, such as pubs that have closed down or stores that existed. Referencing these in scripts encouraged listeners to explore them too. Participants talked about becoming "much more aware" of places when travelling through the borough, spotting references like Starburger or the Lido on their bus route and feeling that the show "strengthens your bond to the area". Similarly, the show brought a sense of place to the listeners. One listener on Twitter commented "I'm enjoying the series so much. I moved to Wandsworth 5 years ago and hope to be a resident for life; it makes me feel genuinely more connected to the area and the characters are wonderful, it's really fabulously written. Thank you for making it." Participants also highlighted feedback from listeners who had moved away but still tuned in, hearing familiar markets, parks and streets and feeling "brought back home" through the drama, which for isolated or older residents became a meaningful cultural lifeline.



Legacy

The Wandsworth Way left a legacy that reaches beyond the final episode. Across the interviews, participants described being inspired creatively, building new skills and connections that will shape what they do next. One of the co-producers reflected on watching participants grow over the course of the project, especially those without prior acting skills. One actor spoke of a process that inspired her to pursue it further: "I'll definitely be looking to do more of it." For some, the programme shaped how they participate in their own communities, with one writer feeling "inspired to become more active in the community."



Volunteering

The London Borough of Culture volunteering programme in Wandsworth engaged residents as ‘Culture Heroes,’ supporting a year-long programme of cultural events, festivals, and community activities. The programme brought together a diverse group of volunteers: council staff, local residents, retirees, and individuals seeking work experience, creating a genuinely intergenerational and cross-community volunteer base. While the majority (62%) were aged 25-54, a quarter were over 55, alongside 12% of 16-24-year-olds. The group was predominantly female (71%) and ethnically diverse, with 45% of Volunteers from Global Majority backgrounds.

But these statistics only tell part of the story. What made the programme distinctive was how this mix of people came together to form what one volunteer described as “another community all of its own.”

Why people volunteered “It is my community”

For many, volunteering started with a simple instinct: to give something back “because it is my community.” One volunteer, who had lived in the borough for over 40 years, saw the programme as a chance to support something she cared deeply about: bringing people together. Volunteers also wanted to meet new people, step outside their routines, and be part of a shared cultural moment: to “be part of something big like [London Borough of Culture],” and to experience parts of the borough they wouldn’t normally visit.

Some stories were more personal. A resident who had stepped away from work to care for a family member found volunteering a way to rebuild direction and confidence.

Another, newly retired, saw it as a way to avoid “sitting at home” and instead stay active and engaged. Another first encountered the programme as an attendee of the *Strictly Wandsworth event*, saw volunteers in action, and was inspired to sign up – demonstrating how visible, positive volunteer experiences can organically grow participation.

Importantly, the accessibility and flexibility of the programme encouraged participation: through a flexible, mission-based model, volunteers could sign up to individual events that suited their availability and interests. This meant people could take part on their own terms – whether for one event or many – thus removing common barriers to volunteering and broadening the pool of participants.

What volunteers gained: memorable experiences, confidence and connection

What volunteers got back was often unexpected. There were memorable moments – meeting new people, stepping into unfamiliar places, even being unexpectedly hugged by a celebrity chef at an event. But more often, it was the quieter impact that stayed with people.

One volunteer described her feeling of “good positive exhaustion” after a long shift, giving her a sense that she had contributed something meaningful. Another volunteer explained how, after bereavement, handing out leaflets and giving directions – “small things” – helped rebuild confidence and added to their CV as they looked for work.

The programme also provided unique cultural exposure. Volunteers experienced events they might not otherwise attend – ranging from Afro-Caribbean food festivals to theatre and music performances – while discovering new parts of the borough. This broadened their understanding of Wandsworth’s diversity and strengthened their connection to place.

But perhaps most powerful were the connections. Volunteers described working alongside people they would never normally meet: *“We spent the whole day together [...] we wouldn’t have been brought in contact otherwise.”* Across generations and backgrounds, these shared experiences created a sense of belonging. As one volunteer reflected, it felt like *“a celebration of our community and communities.”*

“They were the friendly face”: volunteers’ unique contribution to London Borough of Culture

Volunteers were central to making London Borough of Culture happen. They supported practical operations such as welcoming visitors, managing crowds, distributing materials, and assisting with event logistics. Their presence enabled events to run smoothly at scale.

Beyond logistics, volunteers embodied the ‘human’ side of the events: they were the first people attendees met, the ones answering questions, calming nerves, or simply offering a smile. Volunteers described how members of the public would stop to say thank you, often recognising them instantly in their bright shirts.

Volunteers also helped shape the public perception of the events and of Wandsworth Council. Volunteer involvement helped show *“the soft side of the council, rather than the bit that sends you the bill,”* and reinforced the programme’s identity as something created with the community, not just for it.

Legacy and lessons learnt

Volunteers feel that the programme has generated important lessons around how to mobilise and support volunteers at scale: *“[The council] got to show [...] how you can engage this sort of army of volunteers [...] which knits your borough together.”* The flexible, mission-based model enabled broad and inclusive participation; the volunteering opportunities on offer fostered meaningful social connections and strengthened community cohesion, a key benefit for participants; while the visibility of volunteers as ambassadors built trust and positive engagement with the council.

There is clear opportunity here: the programme has created a diverse, motivated group of residents who are now more confident, connected, and willing to contribute (*“I don’t want it to end.”*). If sustained – through platforms like Rosterfy or by connecting volunteers to local organisations – this model could reshape how the council works with the voluntary and community sector.





Wandsworth Arts Fringe

As part of Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture 2025 programme, Wandsworth Arts Fringe (WAF) delivered its most ambitious festival to date: running across 17 days in June, WAF 2025 presented over 150 events across 65 venues, engaging 24,842 people and involving 767 creatives.

London Borough of Culture funding and focus allowed WAF to expand on its year-long model of engagement: from recruitment and training in autumn, outreach from January, to delivery in June – forging strong, year-round relationships with communities, artists and partners. As highlighted in the [WAF impact report](#), early engagement such as school workshops and estate-based activity “strengthened and deepened participation at key events.”

The value of community collaboration

At the heart of WAF's success is a collaborative model that brings together artists, producers, venues and communities to deliver a shared vision. This approach was visible across the programme: projects developed with residents, estates, schools and local groups created programming that felt relevant, inclusive and rooted in place. As one producer reflected: “If you collaborate with the community, they will collaborate with you. That [...] is the key to the success of this show.”

London Borough of Culture enabled WAF 2025 implement multiple different methodologies that had been successfully tried before when funding was available. Firstly, working with Associate Producers, who connected with local networks, attracted new audiences as well as helping “to increase the diversity of artists that didn't come through open access”. The 2025 programme involved a diverse range of artists, with 31% identifying as from Global Majority backgrounds and wide representation across disability, LGBTQIA+ and socio-economic backgrounds.

Secondly, targeted grant giving enabled “much more focused demographic work with residents in geographical areas where we tend to have gaps.” Finally, commissioning participatory projects before the festival, such as Parade - The Giant Wheel project in Alton Estate, a major outdoor performance piece by Autin Dance Theatre, featuring a striking 12-foot wooden wheel powered by 5-6 street dancers, and a large cast of local community performers, created opportunities to engage communities in cultural programming – often for the first time.



A festival delivered across the whole borough

London Borough of Culture investment enabled WAF to expand its reach, both geographically and demographically. The festival delivered activity in all 22 wards, bringing culture into every corner of Wandsworth. Key to achieving this was the festival's work with five hub venues and the use of a wide network of spaces, including non-traditional cultural venues and everyday spaces, such as libraries, churches, estates, parks, pubs and the high street, alongside cultural institutions.

This approach of taking creative activity to people's doorsteps helped break down barriers to participation. As one creative noted, bringing work directly into communities makes it accessible *"All you need is a patch of grass [...] and now there's a whole show in their backyard."* It also changed how audiences experienced the borough.

One attendee reflected on discovering new spaces and communities through the programme, while a local councillor highlighted that: *"Events like this are really important because they bring people together who wouldn't normally socialise... and that just helps to build a community."*

Audience feedback reinforces this impact, with 83% agreeing that WAF enhanced their sense of community and 76% saying it helped them feel connected to others.



Developing the local cultural infrastructure

By investing in partnerships and networks with cultural organisations, schools, community groups and a range of venues, WAF strengthened the long-term sustainability of the local infrastructure. However, WAF also brought in external voices of experienced artists and organisations – which helped to inspire and increase aspirations of local artists, as well as introducing them to new ways of working. 63% of creatives reported working in new ways, and many developed new partnerships that will continue beyond the festival.

Creatives also consistently highlighted the value of working together, with collaboration enabling them to test ideas, build audiences and grow professionally within a supportive ecosystem.

Legacy

The London Borough of Culture 'umbrella' and increased investment enabled WAF in 2025 to experiment with a wider range of approaches that places communities at its core. The enhanced promotion for WAF over the year has increased its reach of audiences and participants, worked with a more representative pool of artists, facilitated creative collaborations, and strengthened community connections and local pride. These positive outcomes highlight the benefits of long-term engagement, co-creation, and a borough-wide, place-based approach – resulting in more than just a festival, but a connected, creative borough.



Memory Boxes for Dementia

While much of the London Borough of Culture programme in Wandsworth brought members of the community together for public, sometimes large-scale events, *Memory Boxes for Dementia* brought people together in smaller, quieter settings. The project aimed to support one of the core objectives of Wandsworth's London Borough of Culture proposal: to bring together health and the arts by using heritage collections as a tool to support wellbeing and engagement.

During the London Borough of Culture year, Memory Boxes have been used to deliver sessions facilitated by community partners who work with people living with dementia and other forms of memory loss. Filled with objects from Wandsworth's past, the boxes aim to represent and spark memories of the shared experiences of Wandsworth residents.

Collaboration and partnership

One of the key drivers of *Memory Boxes* is partnership. During the project's first phase (November 2025 to February 2027), sessions are being delivered by a range of community partners. Collaboration between the Heritage Service and community organisations is key to the Memory Boxes design and impact.

Partner organisations highlight the value of this approach. "What I've enjoyed...is the opportunity to come together with other organisations that are delivering similar work", says Tabea Leiss, Outreach Coordinator at AgeUK Wandsworth. For Sarah Goodall, Head of Elders Programme at Katherine Low Settlement in Battersea, working with the Heritage

Service was "definitely a winning factor" in taking part in *Memory Boxes* "because we know the amazing work [they] do there". Meanwhile, Antia notes that working with partner organisations through the project has enabled her to expand her knowledge of the health and wellbeing potential of heritage collections. Through collaboration, the *Memory Boxes* project has strengthened the relationships between the Heritage Service and local organisations working with older residents and people with dementia, creating new opportunities all around.

Engagement, reminiscence and wellbeing

Each *Memory Boxes* session works differently, with facilitators shaping the experience around the needs of participants. At the Katherine Low Settlement, sessions include people with dementia and other forms of cognitive impairment as well as those without. Sarah notes that the contents of the Memory Boxes mean it's possible to "support those with memory problems, as well as engage the whole of that cohort in integrated sessions that everyone could take part in". The diverse makeup of the groups led to participants engaging on equal terms, "being really kind and supportive and listening". It also led to fun, with "lots of laughter and carrying on...people giggling over things". Overall, the sessions "really lifted people's mood" and participants "always left feeling quite positive and wanting to know when the next session was".

Tabea comments that participants in AgeUK Wandsworth sessions had similar experiences. The fact that Memory Boxes are designed around discussion and sharing means that "people feel quite included really quickly", and the prompts and activity cards "make newcomers and first-time participants more comfortable" by removing the pressure

to find a way into conversation. Accessibility has led to increased demand for the sessions. "People really enjoy the project", Tabea says, and "they want more of it, they want it more frequently".

Remembering life in Wandsworth

Inside each Memory Box is a carefully curated selection of objects, photographs and documents centred on a particular theme. The contents come from the 14,000+ items in the Wandsworth Heritage Collection. In storage since 2016, the Collection represents a physical and visual record of Wandsworth history stretching back for more than a century.

The local focus has proven to be a particular attraction for participants, and a key factor in the success of the project so far. Sometimes this leads to unexpected and joyful experiences. One participant in an AgeUK Wandsworth session based on the 'Kitchen' Memory Box was surprised to recognise herself in one of the photographs, standing in her childhood kitchen. At a Katherine Low Settlement session, a participant discovered a school magazine in the 'School Days' Memory Box and shared memories of working in the same school in the 1960s when the magazine was created, including stories about the people and events depicted in it.

For those who have not lived in Wandsworth all their lives, Tabea points out that the nature of the themes mean that the Memory Boxes are grounded but not exclusive. "If you've only moved here in the last 10 years, you will still be able to tell a story and relate". Whether participants in Memory Boxes sessions were born and raised in Wandsworth or are relatively new to the borough, the contents create a shared sense of Wandsworth's history and their place within it.

Memory and creativity

Memory Boxes may be carefully designed, but they have also become catalysts for creativity. Sarah laughs as she remembers a session in which participants became very excited talking about their favourite school dinners.

That excitement has inspired a new project in which Katherine Low Settlement's 'Battersea Bites' project is being combined with the 'School Days' Memory Box to support new cook and eat sessions based on classic school meals.

Facilitators of a 'Going Out' Memory Box session at AgeUK Wandsworth were inspired by the positive responses to experiment by adding to the box. Participants nominated songs to create a playlist for a night out, created imaginary characters based on the objects in the box, and handled fabric samples as a prompt to talk about how they liked to dress up for special occasions.

Expressiveness, sharing and playfulness make *Memory Boxes for Dementia* a particularly dynamic project. The creativity inspired by these characteristics also points the way for the remainder of the project, which is inspired by the London Borough of Culture programme.

The future of Memory Boxes

Four new Memory Boxes launched in summer 2026, three of which are inspired by London Borough of Culture events and initiatives. An Afro-Caribbean box represents a continuation of the Story Catchers project; a Queer Wandsworth box contains objects donated by members of the Furzedown LGBTQ 50+ project, and activities built on research for Queer Wandsworth; a South Asian box is being created by a community partner in Roehampton, bringing together aspects of Culturally Mindful and Memory Kitchen.

Memory Boxes for Dementia is already having a positive impact on the wellbeing of people living with dementia through sharing and reminiscence based on Wandsworth's heritage; it aims to continue to do so by involving local communities in making and sharing new memories together.



Legacy Projects

Health & Wellbeing

Creative Health Inclusive Community (CHIC) Network (to March 2028): Connecting artists, community groups and health partners through networking, training and knowledge-sharing to strengthen Creative Health across the borough.

Culturally Mindful Legacy Projects (2026-27): 14 funded projects supporting diverse communities through creative health approaches.

Imogen Stidworthy at Matt's Gallery (Sept-Nov 2026): A co-created programme with ActionSpace and BLINK Dance Theatre, developing alternative audio guides for people who are non-verbal.

Memory Boxes for Dementia (to March 2028): Heritage-based reminiscence resources.

Springfield Projects: Creative health and wellbeing activity around Springfield Park.

Sing to Thrive (to 2027): Local choirs perform the commissioned Sing to Thrive songs.

Schools & Young People

Author Events (Autumn 2026): Three schools events with children's authors Chris Riddell & Paul Stewart, John Patrick Green and Cressida Cowell.

Poetry Programme & Festival (Autumn 2026): A heritage-inspired poetry project for Year 5's with professional poets and artist Grace Holliday, culminating in an online anthology, exhibition and event.

SPIN (November 2026): Two spoken-word performances by Apples & Snakes for up to 1,000 Key Stage 1 pupils.

Young People's Theatre Skills Network: Theatre503, Tara Theatre and Group64 test a borough-wide creative skills network model.

UPLIFT Festival: A platform for emerging young writers and theatre-makers.

Journalism Project Legacy: School journalism clubs with industry speakers and participation in the On Air live broadcasts.

Rock the Grand (March 2027): Annual band competition supporting young musicians aged 13-19.

Heritage

Wandsworth Heritage Collection (ongoing): Digitisation of the collection, with over 1,000 objects already online.

London Borough of Culture Archive: A dedicated archive preserving the programme's outputs, stories and achievements.

Black History 365 (to Dec 2026): 11 community-led projects celebrating African, Caribbean and Black British heritage.

Wandsworth Community Heritage Fund (to Dec 2026): Community heritage projects exploring local history, including the Putney Debates.

CREATIVE JOBS & SKILLS DEVELOPMENT

welcometowandsworth.com: A digital hub promoting culture, heritage and creativity across Wandsworth.

Creative Enterprise Support Programme (from Oct 2026): Business support for creative freelancers and enterprises.

Liberty Get Together (Jan 2027): An event exploring future strategic development of disability arts in London.

PLACE-SHAPING

Wandsworth Arts Fringe (June 2027): A festival supporting artists, partnerships and community participation.

Kambala Community Alliance's Community hub: A programme of creative health and employment skills for Battersea residents.

Refurbish and replace **Battersea Library's** listed roof and glass dome, and complete improvements to **Balham Library's** facilities.

Wandsworth Town's old courthouse to become **WIP Space Artist Studios**.

Thank you to our staff

Delivering Welcome to Wandsworth: London Borough of Culture 2025 was one of the most ambitious programmes ever undertaken by the council. While audiences saw the events, performances, festivals and celebrations, behind every activity stood hundreds of dedicated council staff who worked tirelessly to bring the programme to life.

London Borough of Culture challenged us to work differently. It brought together teams from across the council, including all the teams in Adult Social Care and Public Health, Children's Services, Housing, Residents Services, and Growth and Place, and many of the teams in the Chief Executive's Group, Finance and Change and Innovation, as well as council-wide networks like the Richmond & Wandsworth LGBT Equality & Ally Group, EDI Working Group alongside many others. Colleagues embraced new ways of working,

collaborated across traditional service boundaries, solved problems creatively and continually went above and beyond to ensure residents could benefit from an extraordinary year of culture.

The success of London Borough of Culture belongs not to any one individual or team, but to the collective efforts of staff across the organisation who believed in the power of culture to transform health, happiness and opportunity in Wandsworth. There are hundreds of people across Wandsworth Council who deserve our thanks. While it is impossible to name everyone, we would like to offer special recognition to Ana Popovici, our Senior Responsible Officer, and the London Borough of Culture team, whose passion, commitment and resilience helped make this once-in-a-generation programme such a remarkable success.

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LBOC Partnership Board: Ana Popovici (Chair); Coral Flood (GLA); Elizabeth Lynch (Wandsworth What Next); Esther Clevely (Battersea Youth Alliance); Fenella Merry; Hannah Lambert (Royal College of Art); Ian Mitchell (Enable); James Noble; Jamila Mensah; Keziah Gordon; Paul Chadwick; Richard Keogh (University of Roehampton); Sagar Sharma; Sara O'Donnell; Shannon Katiyo; and Tarek Iskander (BAC/Wandsworth Arts & Health Community of Practice)

LBOC Internal Champions: Cllr Kemi Akinola (Chair); Dianne Jones; Jamie Fisher; Kiran Vagarwal; Lisa Fenaroli; Matt Eady; Neisha Porter; Nike Arowobusoye; Ramyadevi Ravindrane; Sara O'Donnell; Steve Diamond; and Tom Crawley.

LBOC Local Champions: Ajeet Jugnauth; Chantelle Bent; Conor Devlin-Powell; Jessica Coleman; Kanan Barot; Lizzie Reid; Lula Rappoport; Mareshah Thomas; Nadia Nelmes; Nasteho Ali; Sahar Beg; Sally O'Neill; Sandra Munoz-Alvarez; Shaniah Williams; Sheila Allen; Trechia Folarin; Venessa Swaby; and William Chmielewski.

The group was chaired by Cllr Kemi Akinola, and joined by key partners Daniel Andrews, Emma Anthony, Gemma Bechervaise and Rebecca Gediking.

Wandsworth's Liberty Steering Group: Sara O'Donnell (Chair); Caitlin Richards; Chas de Swiet; Danai Batskou; Duncan Lee; Rev. Gemma Duggan; Hannah Wescombe; Jamie Hale; Cllr Jessica Lee; Cllr Juliana Annan; Katie McElligott; Pelin Basaran; Rachel Crossley; Sheryll Catto; Venessa Swaby; and Zoe Lally.

LBOC bid development group: Jon Evans (Chair and Senior Responsible Officer for the bidding stage); Alex Rinsler; Amir Rashid; Andrew Gard; Andrew Hagger; Beth Kelly; Clare O'Conno; Effie Lochrane; Elizabeth Lynch; Esther Swales; Gary Hipple; James Noble; Katherine Burston; Melissa Watson; Megan Hermes; Natalie Daley; Oliver Lewis; Rachel Soni; Santino Fragola; Sagar Sharma; Sara O'Donnell; Shannon Katiyo; Steve Diamond; and Tom Crawley.

And, to every colleague across Wandsworth Council who played a part, however large or small, in making Welcome to Wandsworth possible: thank you. This achievement belongs to all of us.

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Asma Istwani
Asma Karim and family
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Attakkalari
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Baby Broadway Family Concert
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Balham Library
Balham Nursery
Ballet Soul
Baseless Fabric
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Battersea Barge
Battersea Community Festival
Battersea Jazz Festival
Battersea Labour Party
Battersea Library
Battersea Men's Shed
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Battersea Power Station
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Beatrix Potter Primary School
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Belleville Wix Academy
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Ben Judd
Bernard Hughes
Bernie Kennedy
Bertie Collective
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Devas Youth Club
Die Born Art
Dienne Déon
Dilraj Singh
Dimson Lodge (Sheltered Housing)
Clubroom
Dina Polada
Diogo Barroso
Disco Neurotico
Divya Kohli
DJ Chris Armstrong
DJ Fat Freddie
DJ Funke
DJ Queen Kong
DJ Roberts
dogBowl
Domino Records
Dorcas-Xaytha Freya Nyxsonn
Dover House Singers
Dr Adam Stanovic
Dr Amtul K. Y. Bhunnoo
Dr Dara Biaocchi
Dr Glitz & The Fabulous Flirtations
Dr Jak Beula
Dr Philip Seargeant
Dr Sean Cunningham

Dr Selina Packard	Franciscan Primary School	Hing Tsang	Jon Nicholson
Dr Cesare Cuzzuola	Free2Be	History Speak CIC	Jonathan Leitch Conference & Travel
Dub Righters	Frida Touray	Holly Lodge Centre	Jonny Woo
Dub Vendor	Friends of Battersea Park	Holy Ghost RC Primary School	Jools Holland
Dykes on Mics	Friends of Coronation Gardens	Holy Trinity Church Roehampton	Jordan Söderberg
Earlsfield Library	Friends of Putney Library	Home Community Cafe	Joseph Banks
Earlsfield Primary School	Friends of Putney School of Art & Design	Home Start Wandsworth	Joseph Coelho
Ed Spevock	Friends of Streatham Cemetery	Honeywell Infant School	Josh Berry
EDC	Friends of Wandsworth Common	Honeywell Junior School	Josie Verghese
Eddy Smith & The 507	From The Middle Theatre Co	Hotham Primary School	Joy & Gladness
Edie Evans	Frontier Storytelling	House of Juicy Couture	Joy Parry
Eduard Seacrest	Fufu and Afro-Cocktail Society	Hugo Jennings	Julia Bott
Elaine Delmar	Furzedown Primary School	Hyelim Kim	Julia Head
Elaine Giles	Fuzion Four	Ian Shaw	Julia Johnson
Elaine Wein	G23LAB	Ian Sturrock	Julian George
Elana Skeers	Gallifrey Cabaret	Ibstock School	Julian Joseph
Elektra Fence	Gare Du Nord Theatre / Avanti West Coast	Imagiphoria Productions	Julie Anderson
Elena Novello	Garratt Park School	Imogen Stidworthy	Juliet Coker
Eleonora	Gatton Primary School	Improvesarios	Junghun Lee
Elisa Nader	Gayathiri Kamalakanthan	India Button	Just May
Eliska Milay	Gemma Lawrence	Indy Bhullar	Kailong Guo
Elizabeth Adan-Pearl	Geoff Simmons	Ingenious Fools Ltd	Kamapala Chukwuka
Ellie Wyatt	George Grant	Insaafi CIC	Kamilla Arku
Elliot Murray	George Risk and The Blue Bottle Jazz Club	Intergenerational Music Making	Karen Ellis-Rees
Elyse Blackshaw	George Shearing Centre	Iqan Hussain	Karen Fisher
Emergency Exit Arts	Georgia Hewson	Iqbal Hussain	Kat Francois
Emerson	Georgia Johnson	Isaac Mckell	Katherine Low Settlement
Emma Cooney	Gerry Diver	Isabel Fletcher	Kathryn Selwyn
Emma Peries	Ghislaine Granger	Ital Vital Herbs	Katie Bryan
Emma Smith	GLL (Wandsworth's Library and Heritage Service)	Izba Arts	Katie Siah
Enable	Gok Wan	Jack Ambrose	Katrina Woolley
Enem Studio	Goldfinch Primary School	Jack Wakely	Keepsake Videos
Ernest Bevin Academy	GOWD	Jacqueline Middleweek	Keith Hagan
Errol Linton & his Blues Band	GPAD	Jacqui Dankworth	Ken McCalla
Europa	Grace Holliday	Jaesher McDowall	Ken Nwadiogbu
Eviana Gerousi	Granard Primary School	James Bradshaw	Kevin Ung
Ewan Michael Riley	Grandad	James Fritz	Kezia Gill
Eylo Music	Graveney School	James Wheildon	Kibo Productions
Fae Fitchner	Green Curtain Theatre	Jaspar Joseph-Lester	Kim Teresa Marsh
Falconbrook Primary School	Greenmead School	Jayde Adams	Kimber Skate Park
Farrokh Soltani	Griffin Primary School	Jeanfer Jean-Charles	Kinda Elrahi
Fast Familiar	Group 64 Theatre for Young People	Jeanne Rathbone	Kinetika
FAST London	Gully LDN	Jellyfish Theatre	Kody Wilson
Fatima Niemogha	Ham It Up	Jen Bartram	Kody Wilson
Fazl Mosque	Hannah Coulson	Jen Cobb	Krishna Istha
Fée Uhssi	Hannah Debansi	Jeni Manning	Kristina Veasey
Felicity Prazak	Hannah Lane	Jenna Lee	Kristianah Fasunloye
Felicity Varah Harding	Happy Homes Community	Jenna Lee-James	Krity Gera
Fergus Church	Harris Academy Battersea	Jenni Bowley	Krystal S. Lowe
Finton House School	Hazelhurst Estate	Jenny Massey	Krystal Wong
Fiona Campbell	Heart & Lungs Singing Group	Jenny Moore	Krystsina Sachkouskaya
Fiona Eccles	Heather Sibly	Jenny Rossiter	Kulvir Bhambra
Fiona Richmond	Heathmere Primary School	Jenny Wright	Kumud Mandal
Fircroft Primary School	Hedda Rustad Carlsen	Jeremiah Bown	Kyla Brox
First Time Flyers	Helen Eastman	Jimmy Crow	Kyilia Benjamin (Kindness Courier)
Flamenchorus	Helen Smith	Joanna Adebeyie	Lambeth Tour Guides Association
FlawBored	Helena Newbold	Joe Borges	Lance Ellington
Floreast Wandsworth Primary School	Helena Rustad Carlsen	Joe Lawn	Landsec
Flow Dance	Heritage of London Trust	Joe Wiltshire Smith	Lara Black
Focus Hall	Herr & Me	John Bramley	Lauren Leadbitter
Forbidden Nights	High Voltage Events	John Brown	Lawrence O'Connor
Fozia Riaz	Hilaire	John Burns Primary School	Leah Boleto
Frances Radcliffe	Hillbrook Primary School	John Hatch	Leanne Alie
Francesca Beard		John Myatt	Lekan Babalola
Francis Augusto		Johnny Cash Roadshow	LEKIDDO
Francis Barber Pupil Referral Unit		Jon Archdeacon	Leon Clowes
			Let's All Dance

LGBT Hero	Morocco Bound Bookshop	Owen Brothers Catering	Red Handed
Liberty Advisory Group	Mosaic Jewish Primary School	Ozge Gozturk	Regenerate
Lilli Palmer	MovementWorks	Paddock High School	Reuben Abraham
Linden Lodge	Mudabbir Hussain Qureshi Azeemi	Paddock Primary School	Rhammel Afflick
Lisa Knapp	Museumand	Pagrav Dance Company	Richard Choksey
Lisa Maffia	Naarah Bonti-Asamoah	Painted Face	Richard Fox
Live Projects	Nadine Wild-Palmer	Pam Fraser Soloman	Richard Gray
Liz Burton	Nadira Tudor	Pamela Greenwood	Ricky Boleto
Liza Bec	Nancy Whiskin	Paradise Cooperative	Rieko Makita x Londinium Consort
Lizzie Knatt	Naomi Ellynn	Parks Police	Rishika Williams
Lizzie Wells	Natalie Williams	Parky Players	Rita Ray
London Arts & Health	Natasha Shah	Parnika Shriyan	Riversdale Primary School
London Brass Allstars	Nathalie Juma	Patience James	Riverside Radio
London Children's Ballet	Nathan Dawkins	Patrick Patterson	Roaring Girl Productions
London Children's Literary Festival	National Opera Studio	Paul Lyalls	Rob Petit
London Festival of Architecture	National Portrait Gallery	Paul Shaw	Roehampton BASE
London LGBT Forums Network	Nature. Connected. Creative.	Pauline Vallance	Roehampton Church Forest School
London School of Samba	Neha	Pegasus Opera	Roehampton Library
Loretta O'Neill / Lolo Brow	NEKO Trust	Peggy Moylan	Roehampton Street Band
Lottie Monk-Porcel	Neo Merrell	Penguin Random House	Roehampton Wellbeing for Women and Children
Louis Martin	New Covent Garden Market	Penwortham Primary School	Romeo
Louise Higgs	New Orleans Second Line Band	People Show	Ronald Ross Primary School
Louise Marshall	New Stagers	Pete Harrison	Roopa Basu
Louise Simms	NHS South West London Integrated Care Board (ICB)	Peter Webber	Roots to Change
Luca Bosani	Nia Awel	Peter Winbourne	Rory McAllister
Luca Volpe	Niall Moorjani	Phil Atkinson	Rose Antony
Lucia Piquero Alvarez	Nic Ambola Whiting	Phil Green	Rosie Foden Designs
Lucie Benson Dance Academy	Nicholas Mackey	Phil Polgraze	Rosie Plunkett
Lucy Davidson	Nick Collinson	Philip Boys	Roy Vickery
MACS Dance	Nick Eisen	Philip Bradley	Royal Academy of Dance
Maddie Morris	Nightingale Academy	Philippa Goodrich	Royal College of Art
Malsara Thorne	Nina Jackson	PiNS	Royal Philharmonic Orchestra
MalteserZ Jazz Band	Nine Elms Arts Ministry	Pipeline Projects	Roza Prosser Keeling
Manasi Pophale	Nisha Patel	Pirate Studios (Earlsfield)	Ruckus Theatre
Marcus Morgan	Noah Reid	Planet Tooting	Rumaisa Zahid
Marcy's Mixes	Nobilis	Pointe Black	Russell Barnett
Margaret Holborn	Northcote Library	POor Collective	Ruth Martin
Maria Gasparian	Nubian Jak Community Trust	Positively Putney	Rutherford House Primary School
Mark Bery	Nuffield Health	PostHuman Performance Collective	Sabrina Hilaire
Mark Bojan	O1M Productionz	Pride in London	Sacred Heart (Battersea) Catholic Primary School
Martin Goodsell	Oak Lodge School	Pride Punx	Sacred Heart (Roehampton) Catholic Primary School
Marvin Muoneké	Objectively Funny	Priscilla Yeung	Sacred Heart Convent
Mary Mandefield	Octagreen	Providence House	Sade Canzius
Matt Ford	Oily Cart	Punchdrunk	Saint Francis Xavier Sixth Form College
Matt Hodges	Old West Circus	Purminder Gandhu	Saira Niazi
Matt's Gallery	Olena Hrynychuk	Purple Ostrich Productions	Sally Pomme Clayton
Mauritian Fusion	Olivia Khaki	Putney Arts Theatre	Sam Campbell
Max Reinhardt	Olivia Mathurin-Essandoh	Putney Exchange	Sam Chaplin
Mbeke Waseme	Olu Spwemimo	Putney Library	Sam Evans
Mei Leng Yew	Omar Mehtab	Putney School of Art & Design	Sam Haynes
Mengshuo Wu	Omer Kaan	Putney Theatre Company	Sambrook's Brewery
Michael Mapp	On Da Beat	Quarantine	Sanctuary for Sisterhood CIC
Michael Woods	On the Record	Quarto Publishing	Sandy Warr
Midgitte Bardot	One Night in Nashville	Queer Britain	Santra Consulting
Mike Christie	OneLab	Queer Heritage and Collections Network	Saqib Deshmukh
Miltos Boumis	Orleen Mckintosh	Quick Brown Fox	Sarah Archdeacon
Miss Jacqui	Orleta Polish Folk Song & Dance Group	R.O.S.E Community Clubroom	Sarah Burbedge
Miss Leighding	Orode Faka	Rachel Perkins	Sarah Jayne's Dolly Parton Experience
Mission Kitchen	OSMO	Ratheeshkumar Manotharan	Sarah-Jane Field
Moa Johansson	Oti Mabuse	Ravenstone Primary School	SaSalsa
Mohit Mathur	Our Lady of Victories RC Primary School	RealWorth	Sav Kyriacou
Molly Anne Sweeney	Our Lady Queen of Heaven RC Primary School	Rebecca Cresta	Sean the Cheap
Monica Lee	Our Roehampton	Rebecca Hayes	
Monique Jackson		Rebecca Moore	
Montefiore Hall		Rebecca Olajide	
More Curricular CIC			

Sellincourt Primary School	St Cecilia's CE School	The Country Rose	Urszula Kucharczyk
Senior Street Sextet	St Faith's CE Primary School	The Dance Lab	Vanessa Rolf
Sense Arts	St George's Hospital Charity	The Emerging Artists	Victoria Drive Primary
Shaftesbury Park Primary School	St George's Hospital School	The Exhibit	Pupil Referral Unit
Shagufta Iqbal	St Georges Nine Elms Church	The Folly Brothers	Wandsworth Archives
Shakesqueer	St George's University	The Furzedown Project	Wandsworth Asian Women Association
Shaline Manhertz	St George's University Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust	The Grand's Dreamteam	Wandsworth Care Alliance
Share Community	St John Bosco College	The Great Gustos	Wandsworth Carers
Sharon O'Neill	St Joseph's Catholic Primary School	The Groove Chorus	Wandsworth Civic Suite
Sharon Willems	St Mary and St John the Divine	The Inner Attitude	Wandsworth Community Empowerment Network
Shatha Abumorr	St Mary's (Battersea) Catholic Primary School	The Lindy Hop Dance Company	Wandsworth Community Transport Choir
Sheema Huq	St Mary's (Putney) CE Primary School	The Magic Garden	Wandsworth Health & Care Board
Sheringdale Primary School	St Mary's Church Putney	The Menstrual Cramps	Wandsworth Health & Wellbeing Partnership
Shiza Naveed	St Mary's Convent, Roehampton	The Pines Nursing Home	Wandsworth Historical Society
Shomokeh	St Michael's CE Primary School	The Ram	Wandsworth Jazz Orchestra
Shreyas Suresh	St Michael's Community Gospel Choir	The Red Rash Inn	Wandsworth Music
Sibyl Theatre	Stefano Parrella	The residents and owners of 16 Bellevue Road	Wandsworth Oasis
Sikh Gurdwara South London	Steph Tyrrell	The Roche School	Wandsworth Performance Troupe
Silvia Ziranek	Stephen Midlane	The Royal Hospital for Neuro-Disability	Wandsworth Prison Museum
Simeon Campbell	Steve Reeves	The Royal Philharmonic Concert Orchestra	Wandsworth Sensory Support Service
SingSwell	Steve Scipio	The Samaritans	Wandsworth Town Library
Sink The Pink	Stewart McLaughlan	The Shania Twain Story	Wandsworth Town Property Partnership
Sisterwoman Vegan	STORM Family Centre	The Social Investment Consultancy	Wandsworth Welcomes Refugees
Siyu Chen	Studio Voltaire	The Storyteller of Southfields	Wandsworth Youth Choir
SKSie	Streatham Society	The Thames Path	Wandsworth Youth Council
Sky	Summerstown 182	The Ubuntu Stop CIC	Ward Thomas
Small Sample Size Theatre	Sumudu Jayatilaka	The Undergrads	Waterstones
Smallwood Primary School and Language Unit	Sunil Gupta	The Vegetable Orchestra	We are SENSORIA
Smiling Wolf	Sushmitha Srivatsava Tadepalli	The Wandle Industrial Museum	WebVid
Sofia Swenson-Wright	SW15 Music	The Wandsworth Society	WeJam Foundation
Soft Focus	SW15 Women's Network	The Woodfield Pavilion	West Hill Primary School
Some Voices	Swaffield Primary School	Theatre503	Westbridge Academy
Sonia Boyce Studio	Swans Events	Threedumb Theatre	What Next? Wandsworth Chapter
Sophia Parks	Sybil Theatre	Tiah Algarrondo	When Blossom Comes
Sophie Chapman	Sylvie Randall	Timothy Walker	Wilditch Community Centre
Sophie Douglas	Symphonic Disco	Toby Lee	Will Fitzpatrick
Sophy Higgins	Tai Chi Chuan Group	Tom Coffey	Will Johnson
SOTA Marketplace	Taj Daar e Madina Masjid Mosque & Education Centre Tooting	Tony Fallshaw	Willow Wolff
Sound Minds	Tall History Tales	Tony Moore	Wimbledon Arts Studios
South London Botanical Institute	Tanya Acquah	Tony Pappard	WIP Space
South Thames College	Tara Theatre	Tooting Broadway Market	Work and Play Scrapstore
South West London & St George's Mental Health NHS Trust	Tasha Best	Tooting Community Garden	World Heart Beat Music Academy
South West London Tamil Kalvikoodam	Tavaziva Dance	Tooting History Group	Xavier Leopold
Southfields Academy	Tayce	Tooting Hub Youth Centre	Yana Penrose
Southfields Library	Terra RussekRobbins	Tooting Library	Yew Tree Lodge Sheltered Housing
Southmead Primary School	Terry Pointer	Tooting Market	Yoichi Ishida
Southside Shopping Centre	Tess Burstone	Tooting Primary School	YolanDa Brown
Southwest Songbirds	Thames Philharmonic Choir	Tooting Works	York Gardens Library
Soweto Kinch	The Alton School	Topfoto	Youth Battersea
Sparkle Intergenerational	The Arty-Crafty Crescent Club CIC	Topline Support	Youyang Song
Spree	The Audience Agency	Treblemakers	Yvonne Carr Centre
Springfield Hospital School	The Badgers	Trinity St Mary's Primary School (CE)	Zainab Mahmood
Sprout Arts	The Baked Bean Charity	Tsipora St. Clair Knights	Zarji Arts CIC
Sr. Mary Whelan	The Bedford	Turbine Theatre	Zerina Johanson
Sr. Nora Coughlan	The Beyonce Experience	Tyreek Edwards	Zohab Khan
Sri Lankan Culture Collective Ltd	The Boat Race Company	UK Caribbean Food Awards	
St Andrew's Church Earlsfield	The Bread and Roses Theatre Company	Unique Youth	
St Anselm's RC Primary School	The Clapham Grand	University of Roehampton	
St Boniface Catholic Primary School		UNLV Red Desert Dance Ensemble	
St Boniface Church Parish Halls			And thank you to all our incredible volunteers.