

REGISTERED COMPANY NUMBER: 03272271 (ENGLAND & WALES)  
REGISTERED CHARITY NUMBER: 1061522

# Immediate Theatre

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

BRINDLEY MILLEN LTD  
167 Turners Hill  
Cheshunt  
Hertfordshire  
EN8 9BH

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022.....	3
DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT.....	3
CHAIR'S REPORT.....	6
REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022.....	7
ESTATE-BASED YOUTH THEATRES.....	9
.....	10
SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES.....	11
TRIPS.....	13
"OPEN YOUR EARS!" SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT.....	13
INTERACTIONS.....	14
SPEECH BUBBLES.....	17
WORK WITH SCHOOLS.....	18
RISE UP EAST.....	20
CAN I WALK IN YOUR SHOES?.....	21
WORK WITH THE OVER 50S.....	25
HACKNEY SOCIAL RADIO.....	25
THEATRE EXCHANGE.....	26
SHORT PLAYS.....	26
QUEEN FLORENCE AND THE SEVEN SEAGULLS.....	26
.....	28
PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT.....	28
WHAT'S YOUR STORY?.....	29
WEEKLY EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT DROP IN.....	30
16+ NETWORK.....	30
INTERNSHIPS AND PLACEMENTS.....	30
KICKSTART SCHEME.....	30
PEER FACILITATORS.....	31

OTHER INTERNSHIPS AND PLACEMENTS .....	31
LIVING WAGE.....	32
QUALITY ASSURANCE .....	32
DISABILITY .....	32
MARKETING AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT.....	33
PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS.....	34
FINANCIAL REVIEW.....	36
RESERVES POLICY.....	37
BOARD DEVELOPMENT.....	37
STAFFING .....	37

## REPORT OF THE TRUSTEES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31 MARCH 2022

### DIRECTORS' AND TRUSTEES' REPORT

The trustees, who are also directors of the charity for the purposes of the Companies Act 2006, present their report with the financial statements of the charity for the year ended 31 March 2022. The trustees have adopted the provisions of Accounting and Reporting by Charities: Statement of Recommended Practice applicable to charities preparing their accounts in accordance with the Financial Reporting Standard applicable in the UK and Republic of Ireland (FRS 102) (effective 1 January 2019).

### STRUCTURE, GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

#### Governing documents

Immediate Theatre is controlled by its governing document, a deed of trust, and constitutes a limited company, limited by guarantee, as defined by the Companies Act 2006.

### REFERENCE AND ADMINISTRATIVE DETAILS

Registered Company number  
3272271 (England and Wales)

Registered Charity number  
1061522

Registered office  
The Adiaha  
Antigha Centre  
24-30 Dalston Lane  
London  
E8 3AZ

Trustees  
M Butcher (Stood down as Chair 14/09/21)  
S Scarlett (Elected as Chair 14/09/21)  
L Oguntoyinbo Vice Chair  
P Smith Treasurer  
S Moss  
S Scarlett  
R Harris  
G Green  
M Howarth  
S Summers – also known as S Gorman  
John Wong Tuck Hoi  
(appointed 8/02/22)  
A Perry  
(resigned 11/05/21)  
I Fryer  
(resigned 27/07/21)

Company Secretary  
J Carter

Independent Examiner  
Brindley Millen Ltd  
167 Turners Hill  
Cheshunt  
Hertfordshire

Commented [SS1]: Jack should have the date after appointed and the next line starts A Perry

EN8 9BH

**Management**

The Board of Trustees governs the charity, meeting at least four times a year. The Trustees delegate daily management of the Company to a management team, currently consisting of one Artistic Director and one General Manager.

**Appointment and retirement of trustees**

Trustees are appointed (or elected) at the AGM and those who have been standing the longest stand down and offer themselves for re-election. Those wishing to retire from the board do so at the time of the AGM.

**Objectives and Activities**

Immediate Theatre's charitable objective, as detailed in the Memorandum and Articles of Association is to advance education for the public benefit through the promotion of the arts with particular, but not exclusive, reference to the dramatic arts.

**Public benefit**

The Trustees have considered the Charity Commission guidance on public benefit and consider that the activities of the charity meet its charitable objectives and provide a benefit to the public.

**Risk Management**

The directors have examined the major strategic, financial, business and operational risks which the charity faces and confirm that systems have been established to enable regular reporting so that the necessary steps can be taken to lessen these risks.

## CHAIR'S REPORT

I was immensely proud to have taken on the role of Chair of Immediate Theatre in October 2021. Having first joined Immediate Theatre as a participant when I was 11, it gives me great joy to be leading an organisation which has done so much to support not only my journey but the journeys of so many young people.

In April 2021 we confirmed our new Business Plan creating clear strategic aims for the organisation:  
Increase our reach, engaging more people in our programmes.

Excellent progress has been made during the year exceeding participation targets for both regular attendees and those benefiting through one off workshops and performances.

1. Strengthen pathways for our participants to our other programmes and into employment, particularly the creative industries. We have increased our staffing resources to support this aim as well as supporting 6 Kickstart posts for young people new to employment. 127 AQA awards have been achieved by participants.
2. Demonstrate the success of our approach to mental health and wellbeing  
Films were created through the Walk in My Shoes project, which shared insights about the mental wellbeing challenges faced by many of our participants. We invested in a wellbeing review and mental health training for managers, acknowledging that the wellbeing of our staff team is key to the continuity of support we offer the community. We have been able to provide clear evidence demonstrating the impact of our work and represent the voluntary sector on many local panels addressing how services need to be developed to meet community needs.
3. Ensure the voices of our participants are heard and raise awareness of their/our work  
We are very pleased that in March 2021, we were finally able to bring many of our youth theatre's together again for our annual Social Action event. Following the lifting of pandemic restrictions, we have reached more local schools than ever before and Hackney Social Radio was a key vessel to having our work heard by thousands of people across the world.
4. Create a well-resourced and resilient organisation, making best use of technology and minimising our impact on the environment. By March 2022 we had identified new premises for the organisation, and for the first time we will combine office facilities with rehearsal and meeting spaces. We have been awarded Resilience funding from the Charities Aid Foundation enabling us to invest in cloud-based software and IT, improving how we work together and use our data to show impact. We have also been awarded a number of long-term funds which will assist with future company planning and support the stability of the organisation.

This year we also celebrated 25 years of Immediate Theatre and were pleased to welcome so many of our friends and supporters to an event at the West Reservoir in Woodberry Down. We produced a short book and film reflecting on the company's many achievements over the years; reaching this milestone has truly been one to celebrate. The dedication of our staff team supporting our community through the challenges of the Covid Pandemic, together with the exceptional support of our Patron Idris Elba are testament to the success of our journey. I would like to thank all our staff, freelancers and volunteers for their passion and commitment to our goals.

**SHEKEILA SCARLETT, CHAIR OF TRUSTEES**

## REVIEW OF ACTIVITIES FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST MARCH 2022

### Our Vision:

Immediate Theatre remains committed to our vision of a society where questioning, articulate and motivated people create and collaborate to build thriving communities.

### Our Purpose:

Our purpose is to involve communities in creative projects that inspire wellbeing, break down barriers and engage people in the process of personal and social change.

### Our Objectives:

- To provide inspiring participatory arts programmes, enabling people to reach their potential and preventing exclusion and social isolation
- To creatively explore social issues, engaging people in the process of change and encouraging and enabling them to influence decision making
- To improve health and wellbeing and increase life skills and employability through engagement in the arts

Our objectives are delivered across our programmes with thorough evaluation processes being used to evidence the impact of our work.



Staff and Trustees 2021, (Photographer Gbenga Olopade)

## ACHIEVING OUR OBJECTIVES; HIGHLIGHTS

<i>Inspiring participatory arts programmes enabling people to reach their potential and prevent exclusion and social isolation</i>	<i>Creatively explore social issues, engaging people in the process of change and encouraging and enabling them to influence decision making</i>	<i>Improve health and wellbeing and increase life skills and employability through engagement in the arts</i>
<p>Over 1,000 hours of participatory arts programmes delivered</p> <p>We engaged 495 participants over the year including 345 young people, 130 unemployed, and 20 over 50s</p> <p>Over 85% of participants come from ethnically diverse communities</p> <p>Over 20% of participants identify as disabled</p> <p>Participants ranging from ages 5 – 91</p> <p>Provided 37 weeks of after school delivery through our youth theatres and 4 additional holiday projects</p> <p>Our Speech Bubbles programme was delivered in 7 schools and engaged 140 young people</p> <p>Produced 50 hour-long episodes of Hackney Social Radio, achieving a total of 44,176 listens on Resonance and 5,628 playbacks on Mixcloud, ensuring digitally and socially isolated older people stayed connected through the pandemic</p>	<p>Delivered 4 projects exploring social issues, including the ‘Together’ healthy relationships programme, through which we engaged 450 young people</p> <p>We welcomed all our youth theatres in one space for the first time since March 2020 for our annual Social Action competition event</p> <p>We created 4 short films sharing the experiences of young participants, covering complex topics including mental health issues, police brutality and racism</p> <p>Our summer Exposure project produced 3 performances exploring the impacts of inequality and gentrification – 94% of audiences rated the show as ‘excellent’ or ‘very good’</p> <p>Involved 328 local people in the production of Hackney Social Radio, including community activists, healthcare professionals, local councilors and faith leaders and enabled older people to have a voice in key local issues</p>	<p>Of those young people who sustained engagement, 85% demonstrated improvements in behaviour, engagement and focus</p> <p>67% of participants said they had increased in confidence after taking part in our summer programme</p> <p>We took 9 young people to Clacton-on-Sea for a 4-day residential trip</p> <p>We hosted 6 Kickstart placements and 4 student placements</p> <p>20 young people were paid the London Living Wage to work as Peer Facilitators</p> <p>Through Hackney Social Radio, we provided paid work for 25 freelance feature makers and artists at a time when work was very limited</p> <p>7 people entered paid employment after participating in our <i>What’s Your Story?</i> programme</p>

## WORK WITH YOUNG PEOPLE

We deliver a variety of programmes with young people, including our youth theatres delivered on local estates, work with young people who have been excluded from school and/or are at risk of becoming involved in criminal activity, and a range of projects in both primary and secondary schools.

We are acutely aware that young people continue to be impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic, particularly their mental wellbeing. Our focus is now on supporting our participants to adjust to the post-pandemic world, helping to re-establish a sense of stability and enable young people to achieve their aspirations.

Key funders & partners over the year included:

Connecting Young Hackney, Children in Need, Big Lottery Fund: Reaching Communities, Global Giving, Sanctuary Housing, the Jack Petchey Foundation, Zurich Community Trust, Peabody Community Fund, Vanguard Group Foundation, UBS, Youth Endowment Foundation, London Borough of Hackney, Mayor of London's Young Londoners Fund, GLA Violence Reduction Unit, Angus Lawson Memorial Trust, Jacobs Charitable Trust, Wally Foster Community Centre, London Youth, London Bubble.

## ESTATE-BASED YOUTH THEATRES



Pembury Youth Theatre, Social Action Project, March 2022, (Photographer Shoib Ahmad)

Led by Charmain Humphrey, our Estate-based Youth Theatre programme has continued to prove the value of our work with young people across the borough. The establishment of a new core team has enabled us to develop the work in new directions. In the new post of Estate-based Youth Theatre Coordinator, Gavin Dent has enabled us to rebuild and extend the programme with the support of Eleanor Clack, Kyarna Morris and Deane Dixon-Foster.

After a reduction in numbers due to Covid restrictions, we were very pleased to see our groups growing at the start of the school year in September 2021. Our Pembury Youth Theatre, which was established in

February 2021, has become a particularly strong and enthusiastic group, and our Kingsmead groups have now grown to full capacity, with 30 regular attendees across the Autumn and Spring term. We were also able to open a new Youth Theatre on Woodberry Down this year, which was a particular highlight having previously closed this session in March 2020.

We were very sorry to move out of the Wally Foster Community Centre, which has sadly closed due to Council renovation works, but are very grateful to St Barnabas Homerton for enabling us to move some of our groups to their space.

Through 37 weeks of after school delivery and 4 additional holiday projects, we engaged:

- 131 regular participants plus 49 additional young people in school holiday projects
- 32% with registered disabilities; many more with learning support plans
- 67% female participants
- 85% from ethnically diverse backgrounds

Participant data, gathered using the tools and systems approved by the Centre for Youth Impact, evidences the impact of our work on young people's social, emotional and practical capabilities.

Staff observation data showed that young people had improved or sustained previous levels in the following key areas:

- Engagement, focus and behaviour - 85%
- Attitude, enthusiasm and contribution - 82%
- Teamworking and communication - 87%
- Technical skills and performance ability - 82%
- Artistic confidence and creative thinking - 76%

Young people are also asked to rate their quality of life using Cantril's Ladder, an internationally recognised tool for measuring Overall Life Satisfaction. Participants are asked to rate their overall wellbeing from 0-10. This year, 82% of participants reported an improved quality of life after taking part in the project.

## Estate-based Youth Theatre

**37** weeks of after-school delivery  
+ 4 additional holiday projects

**131** regular participants  
+ 49 young people in school holiday projects

**32%** with registered disabilities

**67%** female participants

**85%** from ethnically diverse backgrounds



## SCHOOL HOLIDAY PROGRAMMES

This year we delivered three summer holiday projects and one half-term project. Our annual holiday projects, Breakout and Exposure, were delivered in person with careful Covid procedures in place, and we continued our very positive partnership with Apex Learning Hub, delivering 2 projects at Daubeney Primary School over the summer and again at Christmas. Our summer projects all focused on the theme of 'Hopes, Dreams and Journeys', linking in with our 25th anniversary celebrations. This enabled young people to express their hopes and dreams for the future, as well as addressing the barriers they face.

This year's Breakout project engaged 24 young people aged between 7-12 for 5 days in July 2021. The project was delivered in person for the first time since summer 2019, having moved online last year, and the young people were extremely excited to be back. Many young people had lacked opportunities to socialise and make new friends, but Breakout gave them the space to do this in a fun, creative way.

Participants used the theme of 'Hopes, Dreams and Journeys' to imagine what the world would be like in 10 years' time and ask what we can do today to create a better tomorrow. In small groups, the young people devised their own scenes relating to the themes of technology and communication, the environment, climate change, and racism and inclusivity. We worked with set and costume designer Hannah Danson to create a set which transformed between the present day, 2021, and the future, 2031. Hannah hosted four arts and crafts workshops with the young people throughout the week, where they used recycled items to create their own artwork of what they imagined they would look like as a robot. These designs were applied to costumes for the final performance.

At the end of the project, young people's goal setting forms showed:

- 88% of participants said they had made friends during the project
- 63% of participants felt they had contributed their ideas
- 67% of participants reported an increase in confidence
- 50% of participants felt they developed skills to help other people.

Young people also rated their quality of life using Cantril's Ladder, an internationally recognised tool for measuring Overall Life Satisfaction. Participants are asked to rate their wellbeing from 0-10. Data shows an increase of 79% in participants' life satisfaction from the start of the project compared to the end.

### CASE STUDY

J joined Breakout as a new participant, having been referred to us through the Hackney Speech & Language team. J has Downs Syndrome, and we were told he has complex needs and would need 1-2-1 support throughout the project. On the first day of the project, J was accompanied by his mum. We then suggested that he fully integrated into his small group. We put a number of provisions in place for him, such as eating lunch with a staff member and taking time out from the group activities if needed. When we discovered that J had a passion for the musical 'Annie', we incorporated this into his group's scene. This made him extremely happy and allowed him to have a moment in the performance to truly shine.

The project culminated in a wonderful sharing on Friday 30<sup>th</sup> July to an audience of 30. From the audience feedback forms received, 92% rated the show as 'excellent' or 'very good'. Feedback from parents and carers throughout the project was extremely positive, and many commented on how much their children had enjoyed taking part and how helpful the project had been for them in terms of providing much-needed free childcare during the summer holiday.

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## School Holiday Programme

**88%** of participants said they had made friends during the project

**63%** felt they had contributed their ideas

**67%** reported an increase in confidence

**50%** felt they had developed skills to help other people



*"My child loved taking part and when he came home each day he would tell me how excited he was. He looked forward to going every day"*

*"The young people did an amazing job in creating a performance in the show with relevant content"*

This year's Exposure project for ages 12-25 took place over 3 weeks in August 2021, engaging 23 young people. Participants worked with Playwright Nell Hardy and Director Will Hudson to create the script for "Eyes Up", which depicted a version of the future where communities have gradually eroded due to the growing impact of social inequality and gentrification, the climate crisis has become more extreme and fossil fuels are in short supply. Young people have little to hold on to and are desperate to create meaning for themselves. To inform the content of the show, Nell and Will spoke to the young people about their aspirations for the future and the barriers they face to achieving their dreams.

Unfortunately, on the day of the performances, one of the young people tested positive for Covid and we made the decision to cancel the shows. Thankfully, the Tower Theatre kindly offered us the venue for free in early September and almost the entire cast were able to perform in two live shows. The young people did an amazing job of adapting to these circumstances and put on an exceptional performance, showcasing their talent and resilience. Audience feedback from the performances was very positive, with 94% rating the show as 'excellent' or 'very good'.

Comments from audience members:

*"It's great to see local talent emerging"*

*"Such talented performers who did an incredible job given the circumstances - I can't wait to see more from these young actors"*

*"Really great imagination and great acting"*

"H has thoroughly enjoyed being part of this production. We were incredibly grateful for H to be involved. Right from the first day she was literally buzzing! Coming home telling us about it with such enthusiasm. It was clear to us how much it has meant for her to be involved. We are so grateful for H to have had this opportunity and all the hard work that has obviously gone into putting the production together"

Parent of Exposure participant

## TRIPS

A particular highlight this year was being able to take participants on trips again. In June 2021, we took 12 young people from our EbYT groups to the Playhouse Theatre in the West End for an exclusive backstage tour. The young people got to see the stage door, dressing rooms, auditorium, and foyer, and were introduced to the General Manager, Front of House team and a member of the Backstage Crew who spoke to them about their roles. They also had the opportunity to stand on the stage and experience what it was like to see the curtain come up.

We were also thrilled to be able to reinstate the much-loved tradition of attending the Christmas Panto - this is always a highlight for the young people, some of whom have never attended the theatre before. In November, we took 62 young people to the dress rehearsal of Jack and the Beanstalk at Hackney Empire. Young people really enjoyed the show and the opportunity to socialise with each other. In December, we took 66 young people to see Sleeping Beauty at Hoxton Hall. All participants were provided with a hot meal and goody bag before the show, and we also provided parents with food parcels for the school holidays, which included several staple foods.

## "OPEN YOUR EARS!" SOCIAL ACTION PROJECT

We were delighted to welcome all of our youth theatres in one space for the first time since March 2020 for our annual social action competition event. This year's project, "Open Your Ears!", was a huge success, bringing together 52 young people to share their projects for social action causes with each other and a panel of judges. Young people identified key social and environmental issues they wanted to address - topics included plastic waste, ocean pollution, fast fashion, bullying, racism and homelessness.

Performances used a variety of artforms, including drama, dance, music, photography and spoken word to encourage the audience to take action.

The event took place on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> March at the Forest Road Youth Hub. Unfortunately, we were unable to welcome family and friends due to Covid restrictions at the venue, however the young people were a great audience for each other's performances and the judges were blown away by the standard of work produced. Nightingale Youth Theatre were awarded first prize for their project about the impact of human activity on the environment, presented from the perspectives of different elements of nature.

"It felt very moving to see all the groups back together in the same space for the first time in 2 years. I was particularly impressed by the topics the young people chose to focus on, and the Nightingale group's piece was strikingly beautiful. I loved how the young people embodied a different aspect of the environment and spoke about the damaging impacts in the first-person narrative, directly to the audience. This really enabled us to connect with the topic on a personal level and feel like we should re-evaluate how we treat the environment"

Nadya Bettioui, Social Action Competition Event Judge



Eyes Up, (Photographer Geraint Lewis)

## INTERACTIONS

Interactions is a film and drama programme led by Charmain Humphrey, working with young people aged 13-19 who have been excluded, or are at risk of exclusion, from mainstream education. The project engages young people in positive creative activities through which they can achieve.

The pandemic continued to impact our work with Pupil Referral Units (PRUs) across the year. Due to

restrictions on external visitors entering schools, we struggled to build relationships with new PRUs, however our long-term relationship with Inspire PRU in Dalston meant that we were able to continue the programme and deliver two 6-week blocks of workshops. We are very pleased to have made a great deal of progress with the project at the end of the year, working in two new settings during the Spring term – The Boxing Academy in Hoxton and New River College in Islington – as well as establishing a dedicated evening session for the group at The Crib youth club.

The addition of Jermaine Julie as Positive Pathways Officer has enabled us to build stronger relationships with these young people and we have seen several of our participants return to mainstream education or move into paid employment as a result of our support. Young people have also taken part in serious debates about the issues facing young people in Hackney, and many aspire to make a difference to the community in which they live.

Staff observation data, completed by our own team and staff at the Pupil Referral Units, showed that:

- 100% of participants showed improvement in their relationships with peers and adults
- 95% of participants showed improvement in their mental health and wellbeing
- 57% of participants showed improvement in job readiness

#### CASE STUDY

Y is in Year 10 and a member of our Interactions group at The Crib. When we first started the sessions, Y was not engaged at all and merely played computer games. After several weeks of relational work and a series of workshops looking at identity, we saw Y's confidence begin to increase and they have since expressed interest in becoming an Immediate Theatre Peer Facilitator. Y feels that it is important for young people to have life skills and they are now designing a programme with the facilitators focusing on aspirations and money management.

In February half-term, we took 9 young people to Clacton-on-Sea for a 4-day residential trip, giving them a vital opportunity to get out of London and have some much-needed fun. The residential also provided a space to explore key issues that had been raised in workshops in more depth, particularly youth violence, which the participants had expressed their concerns about. We arranged facilitated sessions to expand on these conversations, including a knife crime workshop delivered by The Crib; 3 self-defence workshops delivered by Taking Shape, and a healthy relationships workshop delivered by Immediate Theatre. The young people then took part in a facilitated discussion with Wale Show from Maktub Arts, a local theatre company, to generate ideas for a new piece of theatre that could bring their experiences of these issues to life. The session highlighted a range of issues that the young people felt were important, including learning difficulties, peer pressure and bullying, access to online pornography, mental health, and the influence of social media.

We received very positive feedback from both the young people and their parents and carers. One young person had never travelled outside of London before and was very grateful for the opportunity to go on a residential trip.

**Comments from young people:**

- "I enjoyed the workshop discussions and sharing my thoughts. I also enjoyed the Pier, bowling and the beach walks"*
- "The opportunity to have reflective learning was nice. I also enjoyed the freedom and the opportunity to have fun"*
- "It was nice to make new friends. I also found the self-defence class interesting, especially learning some of the techniques"*
- "The residential was fun and I learnt a lot. I enjoyed the arcades and bowling, and the discussions around knife crime and staying safe were really interesting"*

Over the year, we worked with 72 young people, the vast majority of whom had faced school exclusion. Of these:

- 15 young people have engaged in volunteering, work placements or enrolled in formal training
- 3 young people were directly supported by Immediate Theatre to gain places at Big Creative College in Walthamstow, where they are studying for Level 3 BTECs.

## Interactions

Staff observation data showed that:

**100%**

of participants showed improvement in their relationships with peers and adults

**95%**

showed improvement in their mental health and wellbeing



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- Commented [SS4]:** The Pathways graphic has gone now - you should still use it but just not beneath peer facilitators
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## SPEECH BUBBLES

Speech Bubbles is an evidence-based drama-led intervention aimed at improving speech, language and communication in selected children in Key Stage 1; delivered as a franchise from the now independent charity Speech Bubbles.



Thanks to funding from UBS and the Paul Hamlyn Foundation, we were able to run the programme in 7 schools this year and engaged a total of 80 young people. The practitioners managed to maintain consistently high-quality, fun and engaging sessions, despite the challenges of occasional staffing issues in schools due to Covid. The programme enabled the children to express themselves in a supported environment, after struggling with the challenges of home learning during lockdown. Due to the success of the programme, UBS have increased our funding, enabling us to work in additional schools next year.

Holmleigh School performance, *(Photographer Innogen Fryer)*

Data gathered at the end of the programme showed that:

- 89% of participants showed improvement in being receptive, understanding and making sense of what people say and do
- 83% of participants showed improvement in giving, taking turns and listening
- 89% of participants showed improvement in being able to communicate physically and verbally
- 85% of participants showed a positive change in their behaviour or attitude
- 86% of participants developed new skills or increased their individual effectiveness.

## Speech Bubbles

**89%** of participants showed improvement in being receptive

**83%** showed improvement in giving, taking turns and listening

**89%** showed improvement in being able to communicate physically and verbally

**85%** showed a positive change in their behaviour or attitude

**86%** developed new skills or increased their individual effectiveness

## CASE STUDY

H was identified by their school as being selectively mute and was referred to the programme due to this. Their teachers reported that they were not able to speak in front of their class or even to staff members. The facilitator and Teaching Assistant (TA) worked together to provide ways to gently support H in the sessions, including providing visual aids for them to point to rather than having to speak. The TA also supported H by accompanying them in the story square and sitting next to them so that they could whisper responses that the TA would then relay to the rest of the group. In week 6, H acted in the story square on their own (pretended to be a cat!) without the assistance of the TA. In week 12, they told the facilitator a whole story, speaking continuously for almost 5 minutes. This was an extraordinary breakthrough, especially as the facilitator and TA had encouraged H to speak to them on a 1-2-1 basis previously and they had not felt comfortable to do so. The facilitator showed the child's class teacher the story and she was also very surprised and delighted!

## WORK WITH SCHOOLS

This year we have developed our relationships with a number of local schools. With Eleanor Clack in the new post of Schools Coordinator, we have been able to create new partnerships and develop our offer for both Primary and Secondary schools.

### 'Our Libraries' Workshops

In October 2021, we worked on a partnership project with the Hackney Libraries team as part of the Council's 'Our Libraries' consultation process, where they created a schools' competition to give both pupils and teachers an opportunity to have their say. The Council commissioned us to deliver creative workshops in schools to help stimulate ideas and generate excitement for the competition. We created the characters Sammy Shelvit and Professor Bookblast, who requested the pupils' help in designing a new library and asked them a series of questions about whether they go to their local library, what they do there and what they would like to do. We then offered different activities to support the children in generating ideas for their dream library, including creating posters to persuade people to visit their library and writing poems about libraries. Not only did these activities enable us to gather feedback for the Council but they also helped to change young people's perceptions of libraries. We delivered a total of 17 workshops to approximately 1,018 young people in 7 schools across the Borough.

Comments from young people included:

*"I want to be a librarian when I grow up"*

*"Libraries give you a better imagination"*

*"I feel like I learn about the world when I read"*

Feedback from teachers was also very positive, with 100% of teachers ticking 'strongly agree' or 'agree' to the following statements:

- The children enjoyed the workshop and engaged well with the activities
- The children feel more enthusiastic about visiting their local library
- The project was well organised and staff communicated well

### Taster Workshops

From January–March 2022, we delivered taster workshops to 7 schools across Hackney, reaching approximately 319 young people. The workshops were tailored to each of the schools' curriculum and covered topics including mental wellbeing, traditional tales from other countries and powerful women of the Victorian era. Both student and teacher feedback was very positive; all schools signed up to hear more about Immediate Theatre projects, and we were able to engage new participants in our EbYT sessions. Since the workshops were delivered, the number of young people in the Kingsmead Olders group has increased by over 50%.

“The workshops were excellent in every way: engaging, educational, great behaviour management skills from the staff, and the children learnt too! Best thing I’ve seen anyone from outside the school do”

Y3 Teacher, St John and St James Primary School

We also delivered a one-off workshop with Year 10 GCSE Drama students at Waterside Academy in March, supporting them with their devised pieces for their exam. We have since developed a strong relationship with the Head of Drama and delivered another one-off workshop with Year 9 students which explored approaching scripts.

#### ‘Meet the Parents’ RSE Workshops

Meet the Parents is an innovative peer-led project that focuses on relationships, contraception, pregnancy, and the realities of parenthood. The programme has been successfully running in Hackney schools for over 20 years. In November 2021, we delivered 6 workshops to the Year 10 cohort at Clapton Girls’ Academy, engaging a total of 180 students. Workshops explored the different types of contraception available, enabling students to feel empowered to make their own personal choices. The topic was explored through a combination of discussion, debate and creative activities, such as creating a TV advert.

At the end of the workshops, young people’s feedback forms showed:

- 92% of students enjoyed the workshops
- 85% of students felt they would be able to help others with the topics discussed
- 88% of students felt they would feel confident making decisions about relationships.

## Work with Schools

**85%** felt they would be able to help others with the topics discussed

**88%** felt they would feel confident making decisions about relationships

**92%** of students enjoyed the workshops



## RISE UP EAST

Rise Up East is a new partnership project funded by the London Violence Reduction Unit who aim to bring people across London together to better understand why violence happens and to take action to prevent it now, and in the long-term. The main Hackney partners: The Wickers, Immediate Theatre, Out Runners, Hackney Quest and the Crib are led by the youth team from Hackney CVS and supported by the East London Business Alliance. Our work focusses on the Homerton and Hackney Wick areas where there has been an increase in youth violence. This fund supports our Estate-based Youth Theatre activities in the East of the borough covering Kingsmead, Wally Foster Centre and St Barnabas.

Partnership working is at the heart of this project and has enabled us to create active partnerships with other youth providers and opportunities for young people to be signposted to other local activities. Many of our participants attended a Christmas party at Hackney Bridge with food and presents for everyone. We are particularly pleased with how our relationship with Hackney Quest has grown, supporting the establishment of the 16+ Network and engaging Youth Drama Worker Kyarna Morris, who lives in the area, to co-lead a research project about how safe young people feel in Hackney Wick & Homerton. This will culminate in a report next year. We look forward to building on this work through until July 2024.

### 'Together' Healthy Relationships Programme

As part of Rise Up East, we created a new healthy relationships programme, Together, for school delivery. The programme is designed to support young people to understand the differences between healthy and unhealthy relationships, consent and rights, coercive control, and how to be assertive in an unhealthy relationship. Workshops are delivered by Peer Facilitators, aged 18-25, and use a combination of discussion, debate and creative activities such as role play to engage students in the topic.

## Rise Up East

According to student evaluation forms:

**73%** of students enjoyed the workshops 'a lot'

**94%** felt that they would be able to help others with the topics discussed

**49%** said they would feel 'very confident' making decisions and relationships



Between September 2021 – March 2022:

- 12 young people aged 18-25 were trained as Peer Facilitators

389 hours of paid work was provided for the Peers

- 13 workshops were delivered in schools as part of the 'Together' programme, reaching 450 young people

In November 2021, we delivered 6 Together workshops to the entire Year 11 cohort at Clapton Girls' Academy, engaging a total of 180 students. The day was a huge success, with positive feedback from both students and teachers.

According to student evaluation forms completed at the end of the workshops:

- 73% of students enjoyed the workshops 'a lot'
- 94% of students felt that they would be able to help others with the topics discussed
- 49% of students said they would feel 'very confident' making decisions about relationships

Comments from young people:

*"I think the session was very inclusive, fun, creative and engaging"*

*"The people leading the session were brilliant and it was a really accepting environment"*

*"The session was really helpful and informative, and the staff were nice and welcoming - it was easy to ask questions"*

*"Very informative workshop, it gave us a lot of advice and was very interesting. Our best one yet!"*

We also adapted the workshops for Years 5 and 6 in the Spring term, delivering 7 workshops and engaging a total of 270 students across Kingsmead Primary School, Mossbourne Riverside Academy and Mossbourne Parkside Academy. The activities supported young people to understand the different types of relationships that exist – with family, friends, and peers – and how to tell the difference between healthy and unhealthy behaviours in a relationship.

## CAN I WALK IN YOUR SHOES?

In June 2021, we announced our part in an exciting collaboration with our Patron Idris Elba, his wife Sabrina Elba, and French fashion designer Christian Louboutin. Through their 'Walk a Mile in My Shoes' capsule collection, Idris, Sabrina and Christian aimed to raise awareness of the social and racial injustices faced by many around the world and instigate meaningful change, with 100% of the proceeds directly supporting 5 grassroots organisations, including Immediate Theatre.

Thanks to this funding, we embarked on an ambitious new project, 'Can I Walk in Your Shoes?', which aimed to explore the hopes and dreams of young people living in Hackney and identify the various barriers they face to achieving their aspirations. The project used a combination of theatre and film to shed light on the social injustices young people still experience today, and in doing so, help them to identify a future that has purpose and prosperity.

In June 2021, we took 8 young people to take part in filming arranged by Idris, Sabrina and Christian. Each young person was paired with a mentor in their desired career and given the opportunity to ask questions about their journey. The mentors were: multi-award-winning British Actor Sheila Atim; BAFTA winning Actor Naomi Ackie; Model, Artist, and Entrepreneur Kwame Morris; London-based Rapper Kam-Bu; Writer, and Author of Sunday Times Bestseller 'Queenie', Candice Carty-Williams; Writer and Director Michael 'Buck' Maris; Chelsea F.C. Women and former England footballer Anita Asante; and Actor Aaron Pierre.

'Walk in My Shoes' Film Series

We created a series of short films sharing the experiences of 4 of our young participants. The films covered some very challenging and complex topics including mental health issues, police brutality and racism. The films were intended to give a platform to young people who have felt unfairly treated by

authority figures and give them a chance to have their voices heard. We took enormous care with safeguarding during the process, but unfortunately two of the films have since been withdrawn for safeguarding reasons.



Photo shoot for *Can I Walk In Your Shoes?* product launch (Photographer Adama Jalloh)

The aim was also to create an opportunity for a young Black filmmaker to create work which can be shared at film festivals and advance their career. The Director, Tayo Odesanya, supported by our in-house Producer Lucie Regan, worked with a full professional crew and spent time with each of the young people, filming them at home and out in Hackney, talking to their families and workers who have made an impact on their lives. A portrait of each of the young people was created by Artist Hakob Muradyan and framed - these were presented to the young people on a mystery film shoot at Strawberry Hill House, inspiring the young people to see themselves as the influencers of the future. The films also featured Jake Ferguson, former CEO of Hackney CVS, who speaks as a Racial Equity Community Practitioner and offers an expert view on how we as a society can work with young people to offer them a fairer and brighter future.

The films were shared at a private screening at the Rio Cinema in Dalston in November 2021, which was attended by 86 people, including representatives from local Government. Cllr. Sem Moema kindly offered to take the project forward by showing the films to the police authority. There was a Q&A discussion with the Director and the young people following the screening and we were able to obtain some very useful feedback about how the films could be used to reach decision-makers and create change. The films will also be submitted to film festivals in the summer of 2022.

Comments from audience members:

*"The films were very emotive and thought provoking"*

*"Brought the problem of racial discrimination into real focus"*

*"It made me more aware of the obstacles and prejudices that young Black people face"*

*"It was very impactful and made me emotional as I can relate to my own experiences of racial injustice and the struggle that comes from dealing with emotional trauma and mental health"*



Created for 'Walk In My Shoes' Film Series, (*Photographer Hakob Muradyan*)

## WORK WITH THE OVER 50S

Our work with older adults aged 50+ has continued to flourish this year and has become a core part of the Immediate Theatre programme. We have established a team of staff and freelancers supporting our wonderful volunteers to provide much needed connections and entertainment for the community. Though we were not able to sustain Hackney Social Radio beyond July 2021 we are pleased that through demand from our participants and the community this work will continue from June 2022 with the monthly Hackney Social Audio.

Key funders & partners over the year included:

Henry Smith Charity, Arts Council England, CAF Resilience Fund, London Borough of Hackney, Sir Jules Thorn, Hackney Caribbean Elderly Organisation, Resonance FM, Connect Hackney (Ageing Better).

### HACKNEY SOCIAL RADIO

Our community radio show, created by older people, for older people, ran until July 2021. The weekly programmes aimed to promote wellbeing and connectivity and provide entertainment and information about where to access help and support during the pandemic.

We trained 14 older people to create features for HSR through Production Club a monthly online meeting. All 14 participants were featured on the show and 4 participants were part of the regular presenting team. Participants were full of ideas and able to lead on much of the programming from April 2021, taking a much more active role in the production of the show. The group reported this enabled them to feel useful and contributed to their wellbeing and enabled them to learn new skills.

"Being involved in Production Club and Hackney Social Radio enabled me to talk to very interesting and informative people. Being part of a group gives me a feeling of belonging and that I'm contributing to something. It was fascinating to learn of so many different projects going on in Hackney, which I wouldn't get to know about otherwise"

*Production Club participant*

By July 2021, we had produced 50 hour-long episodes of Hackney Social Radio. We had a total of 44,176 listens to the series on Resonance and 5,628 playbacks on Mixcloud. We built a loyal and engaged community of listeners, including the older people involved in creating the programmes, and involved 382 local people in the production of the programmes. This included the production team, feature makers and editors, local artists/creatives, community activists and volunteers, representatives from local Government, GPs and health care professionals, and faith leaders. We were also very proud to provide paid work for 25 freelance feature makers and artists at a time when work was very limited.

HSR received a very positive response from the local community. Feedback gathered from audience surveys found that:

- 95% of respondents enjoyed listening to the programmes
- 79% of respondents related to programmes easily
- 85% of respondents learnt/discovered something new as a result of listening
- 70% of respondents said the programmes made them feel more connected to the community

Feedback from listeners:

*"Initiatives like this are incredibly important for my age group as they keep us connected and with our brains engaged in something other than its usual function and routine"*

*"It is a great response to the lockdown - a way for older people who like the medium of radio to stay in touch with what is going on in Hackney"*

The programme was described as “one of the most successful initiatives for older people in the borough” in a Hackney Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise meeting, and was featured as a case study of community radio for and by people in later life by the Centre for Ageing Better. Read the case study here: <https://ageing-better.org.uk/stories/community-radio-case-study>. We were very proud to be shortlisted for the National Charity Awards under the Arts, Culture and Heritage category having been judged by an independent panel of sector leaders as demonstrating best practice in leadership and management, from which other organisations can learn.

“The success of the project was as much about the skills learned by older residents and their involvement in producing the shows, as it is about the stories about Hackney that they shared with listeners”

Centre for Ageing Better Case Study

The project brought into focus the need and desire for meaningful participatory arts work for older people in Hackney and the value of having our participants involved at all stages of the project. However, we recognised that continuation at this level of intensity was not practical or sustainable in a post-Covid environment. Working with Production Club members we have designed a new intergenerational programme, Hackney Social Audio, which builds on the work developed through HSR to produce a monthly podcast, provide podcast training and create a space for meaningful intergenerational conversations. We are very pleased that we have now been awarded funding from the Arts Council to sustain this model until the end of 2022, and we hope to make audio work a permanent aspect of Immediate Theatre’s programmes.

## THEATRE EXCHANGE

Our weekly sessions on Zoom continue to be at the heart of our programme, providing the opportunity for creativity and fun. Many of our members are also engaged in our broadcasting work. Over the year, we worked with 15 participants through 34 online workshops and 3 live sessions. The group remained highly enthusiastic about the work and keen to develop in new areas.

## SHORT PLAYS

Between April - June, participants produced 3 short plays:

‘A Veg in Time’ - a conversation between a King Edwards potato, a butternut squash, and a kiwi about the fear of being left behind in the Odd Box and the terror of being taken out.

‘George & Georgina’ - after a year of lockdown, George decides to reveal his inner self to his wife, who has been too busy with Zoom meetings to notice he is wearing a tutu.

‘Christabel’ - on a tow path walk, Sarah recognises a childhood friend is sleeping rough, but can she make the final step to really help?

## QUEEN FLORENCE AND THE SEVEN SEAGULLS

The group began developing ideas for a live Christmas show in July 2021. We commissioned Penny Cliff to start work on a script over the summer, based on the story of Snow White. Plans for a live touring production were put on hold due to Covid and we decided to extend the project as the group were keen to develop their skills and wanted to incorporate elements of film, puppetry, shadow puppetry and voice work to bring the story to life. Work culminated in a live rehearsed reading of Queen Florence and the Seven Seagulls at Homerton Library on 21st April 2022, with an audience of 24.



Queen Florence and the Seven Seagulls, (Photographer Chock Koo)

“Theatre Exchange has helped me throughout the pandemic. Having the opportunity to meet with friends and be creative helped me through this difficult time. Both Jo and Penny have done a great job”

Theatre Exchange participant

## Work with Over 50s

**95%** of respondents enjoyed listening to the programmes

**79%** related to the programmes easily

**85%** learnt/discovered something new as a result of listening

**70%** said the programmes made them feel more connected to the community



## PATHWAYS TO EMPLOYMENT

Despite the ongoing obstacles of the Covid lockdowns the Pathways team have continued to do excellent work this year, supporting clients to progress by working on a one-to-one basis until group work was possible and creating tailored support plans with participants via phone calls in order to try and improve their emotional wellbeing in the wake of the pandemic. Increasing partnership work through the 16+ Network has also enabled us to be part of local developments particularly focussing on improving the Mental Health support offer for 18-25 years olds. Thanks to additional funding, we were able to increase the capacity of the team, with Jermaine Julie joining us as Positive Pathways Officer at the end of August 2021. We are excited to be welcoming our new Creative Pathways Coordinator, a local woman who will be looking at developing relationships with creative employers and engaging young people in shaping their career pathways. Kianu Glasgow will start in this position in April 2022.

### Key funders & partners over the year included:

Henry Smith Charity, Sanctuary, Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest, Kickstart, Job Centre Plus, Hackney CVS, Hackney Quest

### By March 2022:

- 130 participants engaged through outreach
- 54 participants registered and completed goal setting
- 3 What's Your Story programmes delivered
- 17 participants completed What's Your Story?
- 40 participants attended weekly support sessions
- 45 participants received one to one support
- 12 Young Black Men received support and guidance under the Wellbeing Network programme
- 7 participants progressed into employment plus 6 Kickstarter posts within the organisation

## WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

*What's Your Story?* uses filmmaking and drama techniques to help participants build their confidence and employability skills. We delivered two programmes for unemployed young people aged 18-25 in June and October 2021. Based on feedback from our participants, we have since changed the format of the programme, meaning it now takes place over 4 consecutive days as opposed to our previous schedule of 2 days per week over a 4-week period. We have also re-designed the course outline with a focus on particular learning outcomes, including the Tree of Life, interview skills, the psychology of body language, presentation skills and continuing to create short films to develop teamworking skills. The first course using this outline took place in February 2022 to very positive feedback from participants. Through the three programmes we have delivered this year, we have engaged a total of 17 participants who all completed the course with accreditation. Since completing the course, several participants have gone on to secure paid employment, including as:

- A teaching assistant
- A runner at Ten Three Productions
- A shop floor assistant at JD Sports
- A production assistant at the Playhouse Theatre
- A body art painter at Dalston Den

## CASE STUDY

J is 22 and was recruited through the Job Centre. They signed up with us because they wanted to get on to a Kickstart scheme, but they weren't sure which one. They initially joined an intensive *What's Your Story?* programme then continued on to the weekly meet ups. J displayed very low self-esteem; they found it hard to regulate or talk about their feelings and were very reserved in group situations, speaking seldom and tending to only answer YES or NO questions. With support from the team, J began to open up and share some of their musical skills. Their confidence observably increased and they created a backing track for the group's film and then went on to make a short film based on their life. In collaboration with Hackney Quest, they were referred to Ten Three Productions, where they worked as a runner for 3 months. J's confidence has now grown significantly, they are relaxed in conversation and smile and greet everyone. J has recently taken on part-time work and is now selling their music online. They continue to attend group sessions but will be exiting from the programme in the coming months.

## WEEKLY EMPLOYMENT SUPPORT DROP IN

Thanks to ongoing funding from Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest, we have continued to provide weekly drop-in sessions for young people with a particular emphasis on supporting Young Black Men. Supported by our new Positive Pathways Officer this group have flourished as well as using the space to socialize and yet support the group have enjoyed working on projects including making short films and developing ideas for an exhibition.

## 16+ NETWORK

The 16+ Network, led by Immediate Theatre in partnership with Hackney Quest, has continued to grow this year and now has 57 individuals from 39 organisations. The network is proving to be an incredibly beneficial resource, allowing organisations across the borough to fine-tune their services and create a more cohesive approach to supporting vulnerable young people and ensuring their voices are heard by those in a position to make a difference. We have been working with the Child and Adolescents Mental Health transitions team to research and develop services for the 18 - 25 age group which meets their needs. As Co-Chair of this group, Jo Carter is now a representative on the VCS leadership group, contributing to the Hackney Children and Young People's Emotional Health and Wellbeing Strategy (2021-2026).

## INTERNSHIPS AND PLACEMENTS

### KICKSTART SCHEME

The Government Kickstart Scheme provides young people aged 16-24 who are on Universal Credit with 6-month paid work opportunities to "kickstart" their careers. We partnered with Hackney Council on this scheme and are very proud to have supported 6 young people during the year.

From May-November 2021, we employed Jannah May as Marketing & Admin Assistant, Sophia Contreras as Film & Media Assistant and Deane Dixon-Foster as Youth Drama Assistant. Since completing her placement, Jannah has continued to engage in the weekly Pathways meet ups and has recently gained employment as a digital marketing apprentice; following a period abroad Sophia has returned to the UK and is pursuing her film career. Thanks to funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation, we were delighted to employ Deane as a full-time member of staff on a 12-month internship.

In January, we welcomed another 3 Kickstart placements: Leo Dunlop as Radio Production Assistant, Frankie Bertoletti as Youth Drama Assistant and Shemi Olaniran as Marketing & Admin Assistant. Leo will progress onto a STEP internship in partnership with A New Direction as of June, whilst Shemi and Frankie are due to complete their placements in July. All the Kickstart employees have been a real asset to the company and have enabled us to make a great difference in the lives of young people.

“My Kickstart placement at Immediate Theatre was my first real job and my lack of experience made me worried to start the role. However, everyone at Immediate was so welcoming and did their best to support my growth in the role and my interests outside of work, helping me explore my creativity in ways I hadn’t had the chance to do before. I gained a lot of skills and experience and I’ve since started a digital marketing apprenticeship with Amazon.”

*Jannah May, Kickstart Placement, May-November 2021*

“The main thing I set out to develop and grow through my Kickstart placement at Immediate Theatre was my confidence in the workplace. Upon reflection, I have achieved just that! Thanks to the support of the team, I feel as though my contributions are valued, which in turn makes me feel more confident in my decisions and quality of work. Moving forward, I now feel comfortable contributing to a team as well as working alone.”

*Shemi Olaniran, Kickstart Placement, February-July 2022*

## PEER FACILITATORS

Providing first-time employment opportunities for young people who would otherwise face significant barriers launching their careers is something Immediate Theatre is strongly committed to. Therefore, we regularly employ participants aged 16-25 as Peer Facilitators. The Peers are paid the London Living Wage and trained in the principles of safeguarding, drama workshop facilitation and being a positive role model for vulnerable young people. Thanks to the additional outreach work in schools that we have recently invested in, we have been able to provide first time work to 20 Peer Facilitators in the last 6 months. We have also sustained an entry-level post of Youth Drama Assistant for one of our ex-Peer Facilitators and have supported her to take an Apprenticeship through which she will gain a Level 3 qualification in Youth Work.

## CASE STUDY

Jay began his journey with Immediate Theatre three years ago as a participant at our Estate-based Youth Theatre sessions. He became very intrigued at the idea of facilitating sessions and expressed his interest in becoming a Peer. At first, he found it difficult to accommodate the young people due to his lack of experience – the thought of introducing a game was difficult for him. Thanks to his eagerness to work with and learn from the facilitators, Jay has become a well-rounded Peer Facilitator. Participants are drawn to his energy and he always puts in 100%. It has been a pleasure to have him on our team!

## OTHER INTERNSHIPS AND PLACEMENTS

We were grateful to receive funding from the Jack Petchey Foundation to host another Projects Administration Assistant internship. Lauren Humphries joined the team in April 2021 and proved to be a great asset during her 9 months with us, substantially increasing the capacity of the administration team.

We are also committed to providing placements for students. This year, we have hosted 4 placement students from the Royal Central School of Speech and Drama, Goldsmiths University of London and the University of East London. Each placement student integrated well into the company and developed their learning while bringing their individual personalities to their respective projects.

### LIVING WAGE

Immediate Theatre is proud to be a Living Wage Employer, accredited by the Living Wage Foundation. All employees are paid London Living Wage we use industry guidelines such as JNC and Independent Theatre Council agreements to set fees and wage levels.



### QUALITY ASSURANCE

We are proud to hold the London Youth Silver Quality Mark, having demonstrated our commitment to high quality youth work in 2019. Assessment focused on opportunities for young people, staff and volunteers and included Monitoring and Evaluation; Diversity, Equality and Inclusion; Leadership and Management; and Partnerships. The Quality mark is a badge of excellence recognised by local authorities and funders.

### DISABILITY

Confident Immediate Theatre is proud to be a Disability Confident Employer - Level 1, Committed, helping to change attitudes for the better by adopting inclusive recruitment practices and ensuring that disabled people have opportunities to fulfil their potential and realise their aspirations.



## Pathways to Employment

**130**

participants engaged through outreach

**54**

registered and completed goal setting

**3**

'Whats Your Story?' programmes delivered

**17**

participants completed 'Whats Your Story?'

**40**

attended weekly support sessions

**45**

received one to one support

**12**

Young Black men received support and guidance under the Wellbeing Network programme

**7**

progressed into employment

## MARKETING AND AUDIENCE ENGAGEMENT

This year we were able to increase our marketing capacity by increasing the administrative team within the company and hosting two Marketing and Administration Assistant placements through the Government's Kickstart scheme. The first placement ran from May – November 2021, providing great support during the summer holiday projects, and the second placement began in February 2022 and will run up to August 2022.

We developed a new company marketing strategy this year to support Immediate Theatre to meet the targets set out in the 2021-24 Business Plan. The strategy was informed by audience development research conducted online and in person between December 2020 and June 2021 in collaboration with The Audience Agency and in consultation with iProspect via the Media Trust Digital Comms Mentoring Programme. Over the lifetime of this plan, we aim to increase the number of people engaging across all our programmes; increase audiences for all public performances; raise our profile both locally and nationally; position the company to appeal more widely to stakeholders, and effectively communicate Immediate Theatre's brand, purpose and vision.

We have continued to have a very positive relationship with our Patron Idris Elba this year, and the announcement of the Walk a Mile in My Shoes collection has made a significant contribution to raising the company's profile both locally and nationally. Thanks to this funding, 4 of our participants were able to create short films which were shared at a private screening at the Rio Cinema in Dalston in November 2021, which was attended by 86 people, including representatives from local government. The films will also be submitted to film festivals in the summer of 2022. Read the Hackney Gazette feature about Walk in Mile in My Shoes and Immediate Theatre's involvement here: <https://www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/hackney-patron-idris-elba-supports-arts-group-8075350>

Our 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations were a real highlight and provided a great opportunity to engage new and existing audiences by sharing our journey so far and our plans for the future. We created new company logos to honour the occasion, as well as designing a commemorative book and film telling the story of Immediate Theatre, including photos, quotes and stories from people who have engaged with the company over the years.

Watch the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary film here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K9r94qa5u4Y>  
View the digital version of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary book here: [https://issuu.com/immediate-theatre/docs/25th\\_anniversary\\_book\\_final\\_201021](https://issuu.com/immediate-theatre/docs/25th_anniversary_book_final_201021)

We were very pleased to be featured on ITV News London in July 2021. Our Youth Drama Leader Kyarna Morris spoke to Ria Chatterjee about her involvement in the Rise Up Youth Leadership programme and the importance of empowering young people and tackling the complex issues around violent crime. Watch the interview here (from 12:15): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydfTE0VRkwc>

Kyarna was also interviewed for a profile by London Youth as one of their Community Champions during Youth Work Week in November 2021. Read the profile here: <https://londonyouth.org/youth-work-week-community-champions-kyarna-morris/>  
This was also shared by the Hackney Gazette: <https://www.hackneygazette.co.uk/news/london-youth-community-champions-recognised-8482054>

We are really pleased with the development of our audience engagement over the year and expect this to continue to rise in the coming year, as we continue to develop our relationship with our Patron Idris Elba and implement our new marketing strategy. The creation of a permanent Administrator post in April 2022 will also increase the Marketing Officer's capacity in the year ahead, allowing them to focus solely on achieving the aims set out in our marketing strategy.

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Immediate Theatre's 25th Birthday, (Photographer Ben Moss)

## PLANS FOR FUTURE PERIODS

In the coming year we will be relocating to bigger premises in Hackney Downs. For the first time Immediate Theatre will have its own creative workshop space, meeting room and storage space alongside desk space for our staff. These new facilities will enable us to provide more holistic support, particularly for those participants seeking to develop careers in the arts industry. We are grateful to the London Borough of Hackney who through their Bringing Hackney Together grant fund are enabling us to transform this 2000 square foot empty space into a resource for the local community.

The transition to our new building whilst maintaining a hybrid working style also necessitates a review of systems during the coming year. This will include transferring to a cloud-based system and the development of a new database. We are grateful to the Charity Aid Foundation for the support from their Resilience Grant to make this happen.

By the time we move, October 2022, it will be two and a half years since we had a functioning office space able to support our expanding staff team. Whilst we will continue to use hybrid working practices, we hope that this new collaborative environment will lead to refreshed innovation and creative ideas. Whilst we will be moving some regular sessions from across our programmes into the new space, the majority of our engagement will remain embedded on estates and youth hubs across the borough.

We are very excited that thanks to funding from #WalkAMileInMyShoes, initiated by our patron Idris Elba,

his wife Sabrina Dhowre Elba and French fashion designer Christian Louboutin, we are able to create a new production for schools this year. Research for Pressure Drop started with our participants back in February 2022, it will explore societal pressures on young people, the risks of personal safety, and the power of friendship. We will be producing a pilot 2 week run in Hackney schools in November 2022 and looking to extend this work in 2023.

With social pressures on the people we work with continuing to be exacerbated, we are also seeking to extend our levels of engagement across our programmes. We are also exploring the potential of extending our work into Newham and Enfield where we already have positive partnerships. With the new post of Creative Pathways Coordinator, we hope to build relationships with employers so that we can support the ongoing pathways of our participants.

## FINANCIAL REVIEW

The company built on the growth of the previous year and continued to improve our financial position, once again significantly increasing turnover. Income increased to £699,616 with expenditure of £645,035 and an operating surplus of £54,581, higher than we had budgeted for the year. This strong position is due to the ongoing support of our key funders and partners and reflects the hard work of the staff team and their commitment to Immediate Theatre.

We worked closely with the London Borough of Hackney over the year, with support for a wide range of programmes. Our Connecting Young Hackney contract was extended for a further year and we received Discover Young Hackney and Healthy Activities and Food Programme funds to provide young people with holiday activities and hot meals. A London Community Response Wave 5 grant provided support for Hackney Social Radio, in addition to support for our team's mental health and well-being. We were commissioned by Hackney Libraries team to deliver workshops in schools and partnered with Hackney Employment and Skills to deliver Kickstart placements. Continued support from the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) via Mind in the City, Hackney and Waltham Forest for our Pathways to Employment programme meant that overall income from local government made up 24% of total income, an increase on the previous year, although still a reduction from pre-pandemic levels of funding.

Income from Central and Regional Government grew to £130,734, although this was only 19% of our total income due to the general increase in funding. In September we received five-year funding from the Big Lottery Reaching Communities Fund for *Estate based Youth Theatre* and delivered the first year of *Rise Up East*, a two-year partnership with the GLA Violence Reduction Unit in Hackney Wick. We continued to deliver our three-year *Interactions* programme in Pupil Referral Units, funded by the Young Londoners Fund and completed our Arts Council funded project with the Audience Agency and *Stepping Up*, transitions programme funded by the Youth Endowment Fund

Income from Trusts and Foundations continued to be our main source of income, thanks to support from our fundraiser, Katrina Duncan. Grants increased to £378,148, 54% of a total income compared to 38.7% in 2019/20 as well as £74,474 of advance payments for work in 2022/23. The most significant of these was the grant from Global giving, for funds from the Idris and Sabrina Elba and Christian Louboutin collection to deliver *Can I Walk in Your Shoes*. A number of Trusts including the Coutts Foundation, Children in Need, Zurich Community Trust, Vanguard, Peabody and Sanctuary supported us to deliver *EbYT*, including establishing a new youth theatre at Woodberry Down. Funding from UBS and Paul Hamlyn, via London Bubble supported *Speech Bubbles* and Angus Lawson Memorial Trust supported *Interactions* and enabled us to take young people from this programme on a residential. The Henry Smith Charity continued to support *Pathways to Employment* and *Hackney Social Radio*. This year the Jack Petchey Foundation supported us to provide two Internships, as well as the Achievement Awards. At the end of the year, the CAF Resilience Fund enabled us to begin a programme of organisational development which will continue across 2022/23.

Earned income rose to £11,524, 2% of total income, due mainly to the partnership with Apex delivering holiday projects, as well as delivering work in schools again and working with Kickstart employers. Donations of £9,738 included donations from Idris and a UBS client. We had predicted a large increase in donations as a result of the partnership with Idris Elba, however this income came via Global Giving rather than an individual donation.

We have a robust fundraising strategy in place, continuing to diversify income streams and prioritising multi-year support from trusts and foundations, whilst exercising rigorous cost and financial control. Over the year we submitted funding applications for £937,291 achieving £598,421 in successful bids (some relate to 2022/23 and multiple years); an incredible success rate of 64% compared to 29% in 2019/20. Support from Idris Elba and Global has enabled us to develop ambitious new programmes with a level of confidence in achieving funding for the coming year. We enter the new financial year with £580,383 funding confirmed (71% of our target income) in a strong position to deliver our ambitious plans and continue to build our resilience and financial sustainability.

## RESERVES POLICY

The total reserves of the company at the close of 21/22 are £119,179 (2020/21: £64,598). This includes unrestricted funds of £88,361 (2020/21: 50,505) and restricted funds of £30,818 which must be spent on specific projects.

It is the aim of the trustees to build up sufficient reserves to cover 3 months running costs based on the prior year's financial statement, currently calculated at £107,500. These reserves will be used to safeguard against a temporary shortfall in income and any additional unforeseen costs. We have been rebuilding our reserves over the past five years and are pleased to have once again achieved an increase in unrestricted reserves. Trustees will continue to make prudent progress towards meeting the reserves target to match increased turnover. Trustees review the Reserves Policy annually to account for changing circumstances and will determine the amount needed to reflect increased operating costs and staff commitments.

## BOARD DEVELOPMENT

Our board of twelve Trustees includes ex-participants and Hackney residents, who bring a range of expertise and lived experience. We were delighted that Shekeila Scarlett agreed to take on the role of Chair when Professor Melissa Butcher stepped down in October, after 5 years as Chair. Shekeila is an ex-participant herself who joined Immediate Theatre's Board as a Trustee aged just 18.

Trustees meet quarterly and hold additional meetings with our User Groups and wider staff team to ensure that they are listening to and responding to their needs and ideas. A Finance sub-committee meets at least quarterly, reviewing financial performance, forecasting, financial controls and reserves, reporting all proceedings to the full Board. A Personnel sub-committee meets to discuss staff salaries as needed. Trustees attended a Board Away Day in March to look at the company's vision, objectives, hopes and dreams.

This year the Board has played an active part in supporting the development of the organisation providing strong leadership and governance throughout. We were pleased to welcome Jack Wong to the Board in February 2022 to support the finance sub-committee. We were sad to say goodbye to Inogen Fryer who stepped down in July. We will be seeking new Trustees in the coming year and looking forward to Anthony Lee and Sophie Morris joining us in July 2022.

## STAFFING

Our core staff team remained stable over the year and we were joined by several new team members.

Artistic Director	Jo Carter
General Manager	Suzy Smith
Participation Manager	Charmain Humphrey
Training Projects Manager	Gbenga Olopade

Projects Manager	Nadya Bettioui
Estate-based Youth Theatre Coordinator	Gavin Dent
Drama Leader (Schools)	Eleanor Clack
Positive Pathways Officer	Jermaine Julie
Producer (Hackney Social Radio)	Lucie Regan
Marketing & Administration Officer	Georgia Gill
Youth Drama Assistant	Kyarna Morris
Projects Assistant (intern)	Lauren Humphries
Youth Drama Assistant (Intern)	Deane Dixon-Foster
Youth Drama Assistant (Kickstart Intern)	Frankie Bertoletti
Radio Production Assistant (Kickstart Intern)	Leo Dunlop
Marketing & Administration Assistant (Kickstart Interns)	Jannah Miah/Shemi Olaniran
Film and Media Assistant (Kickstart Intern)	Sofia Contreras

We were pleased to create several new posts this year. On the Pathways to Employment programme, Jermaine Julie joined in the role of Positive Pathways Officer at the end of August 2021, having previously worked on several projects with us. In September 2021, we created two new posts on our youth programme to support increased delivery in schools and community settings – Gavin Dent joined in the role of Estate-based Youth Theatre Coordinator after working as a freelancer on our summer projects and Eleanor Clack joined in the role of Drama Leader (Schools), including working as a Speech Bubbles practitioner. Their appointment has substantially increased the capacity of the EbYT team. We were sad to lose Nadya Bettioui in February and wish her every success in her new role at the National Theatre. Our team is due to grow further in April 2022 as we will be welcoming two new full-time members of staff. Rebecca Mayer will join us in the position of Administrator, providing support across all projects. Kianu Glasgow will join us in the position of Creative Pathways Coordinator, working primarily with the Pathways to Employment team to forge connections with employers in the creative industries.

We congratulate Charmain Humphrey our long-standing Participation Manager who welcomed her son Braydon to the world on the 2<sup>nd</sup> of March 2021. Charmain will return from maternity leave in June.

We would like to thank our Peer Facilitators, freelancers, volunteers and placements for their support over the year. They include:

EbYT

Hannah Drummond  
Pembe Tokluhan  
William Hudson  
Nicky Wilson  
Ajai Perkins  
Montell Pemberton  
Charlotte Macrae  
Joaquim Fortunato  
Sophy Leys-Johnston  
Nell Hardy  
William Hudson  
Kevin Stuart  
David Omordia  
Hannah Davies  
Deji Adeosun  
Daniel Peart  
Tecumseh Lee Cunningham  
Daniel Peart

Speech Bubbles

Abbie Nichols  
Flo Katesmark  
Melanie Hering

Walk in My Shoes – films

Tayo Odesanya  
Jasper Enujuba  
Joseph Wallace  
Gabriel Xavier  
Neil McKeown  
Nathan Ford  
Tony Edwards  
Nick Sondidis  
Miguel Rodriguez Puente  
Kasino Morris  
Hakob Muradyan

Hackney Social Radio & Theatre

Exchange

Penny Cliff  
May Robson  
Sue Elliott-Nicholls  
Steve Roberts Sharon  
Aspess  
Dr May Cahill  
Frank Kaos  
Ben Dorling  
Zahra Awani  
Neil McKeown  
Colin Guthrie  
Justin Marosa  
Riitta Hakkarainen  
Janet Evans  
David Howells  
Christine Taylor  
Patricia Howlett  
Judy Frumin  
Barbara Susman  
Donald Hutera  
Luxmi Ghosh  
Shirley Murgraff  
Steve Latner  
John Greenwood  
Heather Qualtrough  
Vicki Carter

Rise Up East

Abigail Burland  
Martha-May Corton  
Whitney-Bola Lawal  
Yasmin Tayane  
Beverley Mensah  
Rashane Headley

Gina Modeste-Payne  
Jamaal Lee  
Charmel Koloko  
Lennox Nelson  
Jesse Orlando  
Shakira Robertson  
Akacia Wolfe  
Phoebe Fisher  
Chyna-Mae White  
Latrece Brisport

Pathways to Employment

Shruti Shine  
Yasmin Adamson  
Jamaal Lee

Fundraising, Marketing & Administration

Katrina Duncan  
Steve Roberts

