



ANNUAL REPORT 2019/20
YORKSHIRE ARTSPACE

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INTRODUCTION

Our vision is to be a centre of excellence for the support of artists and makers, raising the profile of artists and their practices to audiences locally, nationally and internationally. Yorkshire Artspace provides studio space for around 170 artists and makers across two sites in Sheffield city centre. We provide good quality, affordable studio space and deliver a professional development programme which offers exhibition opportunities, training and subsidised Starter Studios.

Established in 1977 by art graduates, Yorkshire Artspace was one of the first studio groups developed outside of London, where the studio movement began in the late 1960s. Since then we've grown to become one of the largest and most established studio providers in the UK.

Yorkshire Artspace is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee, run by a dedicated staff team and governed by a Board of Directors. The Society is a membership organisation owned by its members, and all Board meetings are open for members to attend.

Our Programme is wide-ranging, encompassing professional development for artists and makers as well as a range of activities that offer inspiring and meaningful opportunities for the public to engage with creativity, focusing on the neighbourhoods known to have low take up of the city's cultural offer. Public access to the studios and artistic product is enabled through the annual Open Studios event in November and a dynamic exhibition programme.

There is lots of information about Yorkshire Artspace the organisation, our studios, our programmes and our artists at www.artspace.org.uk

FOREWORD

It is with mixed feelings that I write a foreword in September 2020 to our annual report of the year 2019/20. The achievements and activities of Yorkshire Artspace over this period took place before the unprecedented context brought about by the arrival of the Covid-19 pandemic. It is a “Before Covid” report.

Like all other cultural organisations in the country, our physical premises were forced to close in late March of 2020, a move which, while necessary, brought with it a total cessation to all the engagement activity we describe in this report. Our entire membership has been affected by the ongoing impact the pandemic has caused, with lives and creative practices massively disrupted.

We can, however, be proud of the ways in which we have risen to the challenge. In a very short space of time, we have had to respond effectively and adapt to an ever-changing situation. As an organisation that primarily provides and manages space, our immediate focus was to ensure that our shared spaces were as safe as possible. Our quick and efficient action allowed those members who were unable to work from home to continue their practices as safely as possible. We also worked intensively to communicate government guidance to our membership and aid them in accessing government funding support.

This was largely made possible by our new Director, Georgina Kettlewell, who took post in April and entered straight into a situation of crisis management amidst a relocation from London. Georgina’s strategic leadership and people-driven approach has been an invaluable tool for the organisation as we continue to navigate these unprecedented times, and we are filled with optimism for the positive developments she will be able to implement in the future.

The pandemic has made the incredible value of creative practices clearer than ever before, and we are committed to ensuring that our artists and makers are able to continue their work for many years to come. We have been moved and impressed by the spirit of resilience and community that our membership has displayed over the last few months and it has become obvious that our members value us as much as we value them.

This report has served as an excellent reminder of all the fantastic work we were able to achieve together between April 2019 and March 2020. I would like to thank the Staff team and my fellow Board members for continuously going above and beyond on behalf of the organisation, and in particular for navigating Yorkshire Artspace through these dramatically different circumstances over the last six months. I would also like to thank our members for their ongoing support and understanding. It is my sincere hope that we can safely return to showcasing your work and talents in the near future.

Dorrien Peters

Chair, Yorkshire Artspace Society



OUR ORGANISATION

Yorkshire Artspace Society is a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. The Society is owned by its members, governed by a board of directors and managed by a staff team of seven (around five full time equivalent). We have around 170 studio holders in two studio complexes, which are both owned by the Society on long leases.

OUR BOARD

We operate a rolling chair programme designed to invigorate an already highly skilled board. The programme offers individual board members a time-limited period to invest more time in delivering their own manifesto, reflecting their skills, experience and passions.

For the period of this report our chair was **Dorrien Peters**, partner at law firm Irwin Mitchell, supported by **Tom Tobia** (vice chair) a creative entrepreneur and founder of Makerversity. This year, we were delighted to welcome a new addition to our Board in **Ceris Morris**, Deputy Director of Campaigns and Alumni Relations at the University of Sheffield. **Neil MacDonald**, our previous chair, **Paul Houghton** and **Professor Sally Wade** all stepped down from the Board in October 2019 after many years of dedicated support.

OUR STAFF

Our small staff team has a rich and varied body of experience and skills that is drawn on by the organisation and by the visual arts community nationally.



Kate Dore, Previous Director

The year 2019/20 was characterised by change, with Director Kate Dore stepping down halfway through the year. Having overseen the development of Yorkshire Artspace since 1994, expanding both our studio portfolio and our programme. Kate was supported in her role by all the board members and fellow members of the Sheffield Culture Consortium.



Georgina Kettlewell, Director

Georgina Kettlewell joined the organisation in April 2020. Her background in museums and galleries, learning, education and communities - most recently at the Horniman Museum and Gardens - coupled with a holistic and sensitive approach to leadership has us really excited about what the future might bring for Yorkshire Artspace with Georgina at the helm.



Stuart Wright, Operations Manager

Stuart Wright comes from an accountancy background and oversees both the finances of the organisation and the efficient running of our premises. Stuart works closely with the Director on budgeting and the viability and delivery of new studio buildings.



Rachael Dodd, Programme Manager

Rachael Dodd develops and delivers all aspects of our programme activity. She is really looking forward to working alongside the staff team and Yorkshire Artspace members to develop a new vision for our programme, which will have supporting our creative community at its heart alongside opportunities for the public to engage with artists and makers.



Anita Lloyd, Office Manager

The whole team is supported by Anita Lloyd, who provides financial and systems support. Anita also helps nurture the creative community at Yorkshire Artspace through social events and studio tours for prospective newcomers as well as managing the selection process for studio holders.



Jane Elliott, Programme & Communications Admin

Jane Elliott has been with us for 6 years and, as Programme and Communications Administrator, supports Rachael in delivering programme activity. She also leads on communications for the organisation, which includes the distribution of our newsletter. Jane took maternity leave from July 2019.



Penny Ashmore, Administration Assistant

Penny Ashmore joined us as an apprentice aged 16, and is now our Administration Assistant and front of house at Persistence Works. Penny supports Anita by assisting with general administration tasks, as well as overseeing visitors and deliveries. Penny is studying a Business Administration Level 2 qualification as part of Sheffield City Council's Lifelong Learning programme.

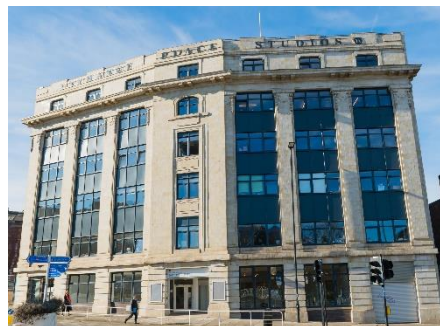


Tyler Mellins, Digital Marketing Assistant

Tyler Mellins joined us in August 2019 as Digital Marketing Assistant and front of house at Exchange Place Studios. Tyler supports Rachael in delivering communications related to programme, and supports Stuart and Anita with operations. He also produces content for our website and social media channels.

OUR STUDIOS

We are proud that the Arts Council calls us 'one of the leading artist studio spaces in Europe'. The workspace that we provide is affordable, accessible, well-managed, warm, safe and secure.



Persistence Works opened in 2001, and is our purpose-built flagship studio complex. Sitting proudly in what is now the vibrant Cultural Industries Quarter in Sheffield's city centre, our Persistence Works gallery is home to most of our delivered programme.

Exchange Place Studios opened in 2013 in the historic and rapidly changing area of Castlegate. The recently renovated Art Deco building was built in 1927 and is now connected to the city by the beautiful Grey to Green 2 developments. Our Gallery and flexible Project Space allow our artists to deliver their own exhibitions and workshops.

Together, these buildings are home to a thriving community of artists and craftspeople whose presence has injected new potential and kickstarted regeneration in the areas around both sites. We are pleased that both complexes continue to operate at 100% occupancy.

In 2019/20 our management of **Manor Oaks Studios** reverted to the landowners Green Estate. We were honoured to have been involved in the project and to have been able to help fill these beautiful studios with talented artists and makers.

Our studio selection process is based on our artistic policy which demands that studio holders are able to demonstrate a continued commitment to maintaining a creative practice. The Society aims to have a 50:50 balance of fine artists and applied artists as studio holders, something that makes us a distinctive choice, and that we are well-placed to support with the range of studio spaces we operate. While we actively encourage our studio holders to offer services and sell their work, their ideas, skills and creative vision must guide their practice and the work they produce.

This ensures that the valuable, and publicly funded, resource that we offer supports professional artists moving towards full time commitment to their practice. The support that we offer to studio holders through our programme helps them on this journey to excellence. By providing artists with workspace and professional development support, we actively enable their engagement with audiences on a massive scale.

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT

We develop a new business plan every 5 years and update it annually. As a small organisation, we find that a major consultation with artists and stakeholders every 5 years is manageable and has a direct impact on the business plan development. In between, we evaluate our programme annually and feed this into an Audience Development Plan. Progress against the Business Plan is reported on quarterly at our open Board meetings and annually in our Annual Report.

In 2019, we established a Working Party group consisting of staff, Board and studio holders. The purpose of the group was to directly involve studio holders in organisational decision making and make our internal processes more transparent. Over a series of meetings and working lunches, the group discussed and reviewed a range of policies, from health and safety and risk assessment procedures to our application process for exhibitions and opportunities. The findings of these sessions informed the creation of a new Studio Handbook, which the Working Party will review before circulation. Members of the Working Party were also involved in the selection process for our new Director, Georgina Kettlewell.

ADVOCACY & PARTNERSHIPS

We are an enabling organisation, actively working with partners to increase audiences for, and advocate on behalf of, arts and culture.

Our relationship with Museums Sheffield, Sheffield Assay Office and South Yorkshire Housing Association has continued, enabling us to offer annual commissions for makers on our Starter Studio Programme. Completed pieces are displayed in the foyer of the Millennium Gallery and seen by thousands of visitors. This year, graduates of our Silversmithing & Jewellery Starter Studio were also able to deliver an Exit exhibition, hosted by the Sheffield Assay Office, as a celebration of their time on the programme

We continued our involvement in SNAP (Sheffield Network of Arts Providers), with our Programme Manager extending her chairship for a further year. Three 'Open Network' meetings were delivered, aimed at artists and practitioners who work with children and young people in Sheffield. With the emergence of Create Sheffield, it was determined by that SNAP was no longer needed and the group disbanded.

Create Sheffield's mission is to bring arts and culture to as many young people as possible, removing the barriers that might prevent them from engaging with the sector. Through our involvement in steering groups and board meetings, we helped move Create Sheffield from an idea to a fully-fledged charitable company which has secured Partnership Funding through IVE. Yorkshire Artspace is now registered with Create Sheffield as a partner and we look forward to being part of a movement which aims to develop sustainable partnerships with local artists, cultural organisations and schools for the benefit of young people aged 0-24.

In February 2020 we registered as an ArtsMark Partner. This is a scheme to help schools and other educational settings to develop high-quality arts and cultural education and experiences.

As a member of Sheffield Culture Consortium, we work hard to deliver a citywide cultural strategy which takes a coherent approach to the city's cultural offer and audience reach. Since its inception, the Consortium has raised more than £2m for additional cultural activity in the city resulting in a stronger, more vibrant and better connected cultural offer. The main achievements this year included:

- With City Council support, the Consortium was able to continue the legacy of Making Ways, developing a Visual Arts Panel tasked with overseeing the implementation of the Visual Art Statement, *Making Our Way*; plus continuing the invaluable monthly Making Ways artists newsletter.
- A second Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair took place in July 2019, building on the success of the previous year.
- The Culture Consortium set up a creative consultation project *Darnall Community of Culture*, in partnership with Darnall Wellbeing, Ignite Imaginations and Tickets for Good. This informed a larger bid for a two-year programme supporting creativity in Darnall's diverse communities.



Workshops at Castlegate Festival 2019

We play an active role in the regeneration of the Castlegate area of Sheffield, home of Exchange Place Studios, through membership of the Castlegate Partnership. This involves regular meetings between Sheffield City Council and Castlegate stakeholders to help steer the ongoing developments of the area. We also sit on the Exchange Street Collective, which brings together local cultural organisations and oversees the delivery of the annual Castlegate Festival.

We repeated our partnership with Studio2021 on our *Art in the Home* exhibition, which showcased the work of almost forty Yorkshire Artspace-based artists and makers and attracts collectors to our Open Studios event. Through our partnership with Studio2021, the exhibition was also able to tour a selection of external venues, including Kommune, Nomad Atelier and David Mellor, helping to expand the reach of both the organisation and the work of our members.



Art in the Home at Kommune, featuring 38 YAS artists and makers

As a partner in Site Gallery's *City of Ideas* urban realm project, an Arts Council Ambition for Excellence scheme, we have connected with Sheffield City Council's Knowledge Gateway, an urban regeneration project within the Cultural Industries Quarter that includes millions of pounds of investment in public realm and capital projects in the area. In 2019/20:

- We were able to commission a large-scale public artwork for the front façade of Persistence Works. The aim of this project was to increase the visibility of the building at street level, and better represent the kind of work that goes on within our spaces. Entitled *Growing City*, the commission includes a hand-painted mural by studio holder Jo Peel, combined with a living wall by Professor Nigel Dunnett from the University of Sheffield.
- We committed to taking part in a Wayfinding project which enhances the visibility of the Cultural Industries Quarter and the organisations within it. As part of the project, buildings in the area will feature colourful signage, which for us will be installed in the tall tower overlooking Sidney Street. The project was also able to facilitate additional signage in our gallery windows and a street-level text about our organisation.

OUR COMMITMENT TO DIVERSITY

As a member of the Sheffield Culture Consortium, we share good practice around diversity. Progress has been made since 2009 in attracting applications for studio space from an increasingly diverse group of artists, thanks to our acquisition of Exchange Place Studios.

We provide affordable studios to artists at all career stages. Increasingly, we find that our studio holders are able to work full time in their creative practice and we hope this reflects the professional development opportunities we are able to offer through our programmes. Additionally, we maintain a good gender balance and attract artists of all ages. We have initiated communications with Sheffield Hallam University, to discuss ways we might be able to work together to make our studios more accessible to artists from BAME backgrounds.

We aim to reflect the diversity of society in our staff team. Our staff members are a broad range of ages, from the late teens to the late 50s, and 70% of them identify as female. All current staff and Board members would describe themselves as White British, and as part of our annual review we are assessing the specific types of skills and experiences we require on the team as an evolving organisation. We are therefore embarking on a Board recruitment drive to diversify the range of backgrounds, expertise and experience available to the society.

Our public programming has always been a useful way to expand the diversity of our audience. Following on from the Audience Diversity Academy training programme that we undertook in 2018/19, we continued to apply what we had learned to attract a younger audience. We were once again able to work with young people from Longley 6th Form College, in an area known to have low take-up of city's cultural offer, extending to them an opportunity to engage directly with our artists and a cultural venue they may otherwise not have accessed. As part of this initiative, we delivered a presentation to a group of 30 students about Yorkshire Artspace and Open Studios to encourage their attendance at the event. We also offered bespoke guided tours for these students and a ceramic workshop session with Rebecca Brown, which attracted 9 bookings. We also continued our commitment to the college's mentorship programme, offering 1-2-1 mentoring sessions to its students to support them in developing their future plans post-college.

In August 2019, as part of a new partnership with Site Gallery, we were able to host the first of the Platform exhibitions supported by the Freelands Artist Programme. Yuen Fong Ling presented *Towards Memorial* in our Persistence Works gallery, an exhibition which documented the remaking of a pair of sandals originally designed, made and worn by Edward Carpenter and explored some political concerns around the representation of queer identities through history. The sandals Yuen produced went on to be featured in exhibitions at Millennium Galleries and Weston Park Museum, as part of their *Queering the Collection* drive to showcase LGBT+ stories in Sheffield's past. Through collaborations with the Friends of Edward Carpenter, the exhibition also helped raise the profile of their drive to have a permanent memorial to Carpenter erected in Sheffield. Their proposal has since been approved and the sculpture will be created by celebrated LGBT+ artist Maggie Hambling.

As part of the new national initiative, *Discover! Creative Careers Week*, Yorkshire Artspace was one of over 500 cultural organisations that opened its doors to thousands of students aged 11+, to inform the next generation of cultural workers. We hosted two group visits of 35 young people from Meadowhead Secondary and Becton School, who provide alternative education for young people who are unable to attend mainstream school due to medical or mental health problems. The visits gave the students insight into our organisation and potential career paths, by speaking to staff and studio holders about their day to day work.

More widely across the city, our *Making Masterpieces* project in collaboration with Ruskin in Sheffield targeted schools from areas with a traditionally low take-up of the city's cultural offer. This strategy was also applied to our *Ways of Making* exhibition Never-Land Sheffield, which welcomed children and young people into the gallery to create work and positioned our organisation as a space that is friendly and accessible.

In addition to our more strategic outreach work, the renovation (and activation) of our ground-level exhibition spaces at Exchange Place Studios has encouraged drop-in visits from an audience in an area of the city that previously had little or no publicly-accessible cultural activity. Members of the local community got involved with Making Masterpieces, having their photographs taken and included in our mural which became a true reflection of the communities around Castlegate.

OUR ENVIRONMENTAL RESPONSIBILITY

We recognise that by reducing the negative environmental impacts of our own activities, we can not only contribute to the preservation of our environment but also reduce our spending.

This allows us to make the most of our funding and supports us in our purpose of providing affordable studio space by keeping studio rents low, extending the benefits of this to our membership. Both of our buildings are powered by the Sheffield Heat Network, with heat exchangers that enable us to heat the buildings using the energy generated by the incineration of the district's unrecyclable waste, reducing our dependence on fossil fuel.

Our Environmental Policy is supported by an Environmental Action Plan Checklist which is informed by our environmental monitoring and measurement. We report on our progress in our Annual Report to Julie's Bicycle. The policy is reviewed by our Board on a bi-annual basis.



OUR PROGRAMME

We are committed to providing opportunities for artists to extend their practice and develop their learning. Through our programme, we offer professional development across career stages, with particular support for emerging artists. We are also able to support artist-led projects through provision of space.

SUPPORTING THE CREATIVE COMMUNITY

We are committed to providing opportunities for artists to extend their practice and develop their learning. We offer professional development across career stages, with particular support for emerging artists.

Our *Starting Out* programme has been delivered each year for over 15 years, providing free information about starting, developing and sustaining a creative arts practice. This year included sessions with creative business coaches Patricia van den Akker, Pete Mosley and Auriel Majumdar. We also delivered an accounting workshop with Allots Accountants and a bookkeeping workshop with Anita Lloyd. These sessions were offered to members of our Starter Studios as part of their programme, with additional spaces made available to other studio holders.

In May, we also secured additional funding from Making Ways to deliver a series of four lunch time Maker Talks from expert speakers, which focused on the development of craft practice and were attended by around 50 of our members. This included a ‘selling online’ masterclass with Camilla Westergaard, Lead Content Editor at Folksy.

In addition to our *Ways of Making* exhibition series, we also support our membership in the delivery of their own independent projects by providing free space and marketing support. This sees our spaces accommodate a wealth of artist-led activity, from exhibitions and workshops to book launches and pop-up shops, and helps our artists and makers to forge their own opportunities in a supportive and relatively low-risk environment.



Roanna Wells presents at ://Feedback

This year, we have really enjoyed getting up close and personal to our artists' work through ://Feedback, our new monthly crit group. Each session allows for two artists to present their work without context and listen to the organic ‘feedback’ of the group. The crit group affects artists' practices in fascinating and unexpected ways, such as the addition of video projections to Alison Churchill's exhibition at Exchange Place Studios.

STARTER STUDIOS

To foster new talent and support early career artists, Yorkshire Artspace runs two Starter Studio Programmes: one for Silversmiths and Jewellers, and one for Ceramicists.

Designed to help ambitious and entrepreneurial artists at an early career stage to develop their skills and creative enterprises in a supportive environment, the programmes offer access to subsidised workspace and shared facilities, mentorship support, business advice and opportunities to exhibit work. Both programmes culminate with a commission opportunity facilitated by Yorkshire Artspace and our partner organisations, Sheffield Assay Office and South Yorkshire Housing Association.



Francisca Onumah and Helena Russell in the Starter Studio

Since 2001, over 40 beneficiaries have been through the Starter Studio for Silversmiths and Jewellers. We were really pleased to welcome two new makers onto the programme this year, as Georgia Clipsham and Ellys May Woods joined second year cohort Holly Clifford, Abigail Asher and Helena Russell. It was also a great pleasure to be able to offer bench space in the studio to graduates Daisy Lee-Overton, Josephine Gomersall and Francisca Onumah for a further year. This enabled them to continue their practice whilst they waited for a studio of their own to become available, and we are glad that they have chosen to remain at Yorkshire Artspace.

Our Starter Studio for Ceramicists originally began at Manor Oaks Studios in 2010. Now based at Exchange Place Studios, the programme has supported 17 ceramicists to date. The move has enabled us to increase the annual intake from two makers to three. In 2019, our three new recruits are Cristina Cerulli, Fernanda Cortes and Jenny Chan, who joined second years Carla Murdoch, Kate Langrish-Smith and Rebecca Perry.

Since 2004, the Sheffield Assay Office has supported our annual *Precious Little Gems* commission for members of our Starter Studio for Silversmiths & Jewellers. This year, the commission was awarded to Helena Russell and Abigail Asher; excitingly, a third commission was offered to Holly Clifford by Charles Turner, a trustee of Sheffield Assay Office. We are thrilled for all three members of our current cohort to be working on these commissions and feel this is a testament to the impressive quality of their work.

For the Starter Studio for Ceramicists, we offer the annual *All Fired Up* commission in partnership with South Yorkshire Housing Association and Potclays Limited. Carla Murdoch and Kate Langrish Smith were both successful in their proposals, which saw them working with some of SYHA's partners to create new work. The settings for this year's projects were Beaufort Road, which supports adults with long-term mental health needs, and the Age Better-Wellbeing project for people aged 50+ who are experiencing low mental wellbeing.

Through our partnership with Museums Sheffield, all commissioned artworks are displayed in the foyer of the Millennium Gallery, a venue with a very high footfall. Unfortunately, at the time of writing all this year's commissions have been disrupted by the coronavirus pandemic and have subsequently been paused, to be completed at a later date. We were, however, still able to deliver some fascinating Lunchtime Maker Talks at Millennium Gallery, providing another platform for members of our Starter Studio Programmes to connect with the public. This year, we saw Rebecca Brown, Daisy Lee Overton and Francisca Onumah impress audiences of around thirty people with their presentations.

We have continued our profiling of the Starter Studio Programme through local shows and fairs, which has become part of programme's core offer. A particular highlight was the presence of our Silversmithing & Jewellery Starter Studio at the inaugural Goldsmiths North event. Approximately 3,000 visitors attended over the weekend and all the makers made sales, which is a real indication that there is an appetite for this kind of event in Sheffield.

The Silversmithing & Jewellery Starter Studio were also present at Art in the Gardens in Sheffield's Botanical Gardens, billed as the largest outdoor art market in the North, while the Ceramic Starter Studio were able to present their work at Great Northern Contemporary Craft Fair and the Sheffield Ceramics Fair. These events are excellent opportunities for our Starter Studio holders to engage with the public, enabling them to gain exposure for their work and begin the life-long process of building a customer base. The fairs also function as great platforms for promoting the organisation and generating interest in our annual Open Studios event.

'WAYS OF MAKING' EXHIBITIONS

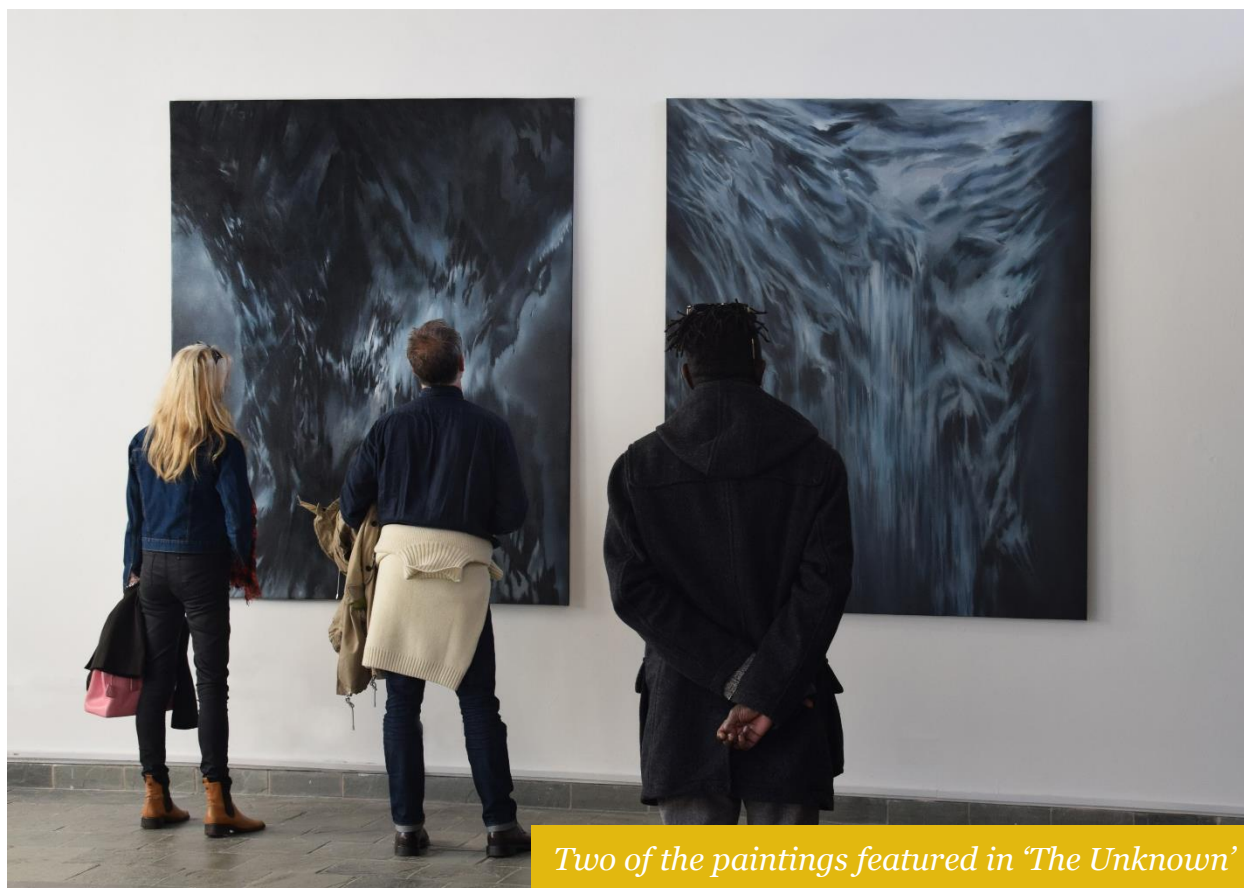
Through our exhibition programme, we are committed to providing a wide range of opportunities for audiences to engage with the work of artists and makers in meaningful ways. We aim to work in partnership to reach new audiences and develop and expand the public offer that we provide.

Following the initial 2 year *Ways of Making* programme (supported by Making Ways), we used earned income from space hire to support a second series of *Ways of Making* exhibitions in the Persistence Works Gallery. Following an open call to artists from within Sheffield city region in response to the theme of 'materiality', we were able to support exhibitions by Poly-Technic, Arantza Pardo and Janie Moore.

These three exhibitions attracted 927 visitors in total, of which 113 were children and young people under 25. Sadly, Janie Moore's exhibition was cut short by the Covid-19 lockdown which did have a detrimental impact on visitor numbers.



Poly-Technic is an arts collective consisting of Kate Genever and Steve Pool. Together, they presented *Never-Land-Sheffield*, a project that directly engaged children and young people by inviting them to take over the gallery space at Persistence Works. Responding to the question, "What will Europe look like in 200 years?", visitors were able to create new, collaborative artworks through 'discussion collages' and large-scale interventions. Targeted engagement sessions with Artbreakers, Forced Entertainment, Pitsmoor Adventure Playground, as well as A Level students from King Edward's School and Longley Sixth Form College allowed us to engage almost 60 young people with creative practice. We were also able to directly support the work of three young writers by commissioning short texts to be displayed in the gallery.



Two of the paintings featured in *'The Unknown'*

In September, we hosted *The Unknown* by Arantza Pardo, an abstract painter from Spain who is based at Exchange Place Studios. Her paintings draw from astrophysical research and Renaissance techniques, imagining the visual potential of unseen (and undiscovered) matter in space. Several large paintings were shown, alongside a virtual reality experience created in collaboration with Sheffield-based developers Virtual Pixel. The experience enabled visitors to immerse themselves in Arantza's paintings and explore her imagined landscapes. The interactive element added by the virtual reality experience made the exhibition especially attractive to children and young people, who accounted for more than 10% of the total visitors. Additionally, an artists talk in partnership with Chris Shepherd (University of Manchester) explored the connections between art and science.

Closing out our exhibitions programme for 2019/20 was Janie Moore, who conducted a residency in the gallery space followed by an exhibition entitled *Anatomy of Loss*. The centerpiece of the exhibition was a large textile sculpture, built in situ over three weeks, upon which visitors were encouraged to write their thoughts connected to death, loss and grief. The exhibition also hosted a series of 'Death Cafes' in partnership with local facilitator Penny Merrett, as well as meditation sessions led by local Methodist minister Ric Stott attended by 51 people. Conducting these workshops surrounded by Janie's artwork enhanced the conversations that took place and invited in an audience who might not have otherwise visited the exhibition. The exhibition was unfortunately cut short by the coronavirus pandemic, but some engagement was able to continue online in the form of 'Digital Death Cafes' and online submissions for the interactive sculpture.

SUPPORTED ACTIVITY

Outside of our delivered programme, we are also able to support our members with the delivery of their independent projects through provision of free space and marketing support.

We have been really pleased to be able to host eleven independent exhibitions by our members over the last year. These have included both solo and group exhibitions, including a broad spectrum of work from painting, sculpture and mosaic to immersive installations.

This included Painterly Exchange, a group of 18 painters based at Exchange Place Studios. In November, they delivered *Regeneration*; an exhibition of paintings inspired by the ongoing *Grey to Green 2* works in Castlegate. Yorkshire Artspace were able to assist by producing a press release and facilitating meetings with Simon Ogden and project managers from NMCN to inform their work. They filled both gallery spaces at Exchange Place Studios with some exceptional work that attracted more than 300 visitors to the area.

We were also able to welcome MA/MFA Fine Art students from Sheffield Hallam University, who held part of their graduation exhibition *Post* in the gallery at Exchange Place Studios. The preview evening included a large-scale projection on the external wall of the studios, showcasing a collaborative video project the students had created.

At Persistence Works, Susana North-Bates delivered our best-attended exhibition of the year, with over 600 visitors flocking to view her collection of *Sea Longing* paintings. Susana benefitted from an additional level of support from us, as we produced marketing material and helped with administrative tasks such as creating digital events and securing TENS licensing. This has set an excellent precedent for how we can more proactively support the exhibitions we are able to host by our members and make these opportunities more valuable. Susana's exhibition included an artist's talk and an innovative 'drawing into music' workshop, before culminating in a live music concert of both original and traditional folk songs.

In December, Shirley Harris and the International Tree Foundation presented *Wellbeing in the Woods* in our Project Space at Exchange Place Studios. Through a series of outdoor sessions in local woodlands, they worked alongside partner organisations Sheffield Foyer, Cherry Tree Support Services, Roundabout and Crisis Skylight South Yorkshire to provide outdoor wellbeing activities for people who had previously been homeless. The exhibition celebrated the project and showcased photographs, artwork and wooden artefacts created by its participants. It was fantastic to welcome this community into our space and facilitate an interview with BBC Radio Sheffield.

Also in December we made spaces available to YA member Charlotte Tollyfield to lead practical sessions with 22 students from King Edwards Secondary School as an in-kind contribution to the Design Lab partnership project with Museums Sheffield & the V&A seeking to develop young people's understanding and skills in the design and making processes.

OPEN STUDIOS

Our annual open studios weekend in November is our biggest public event and this year we had 2,013 visitors, a great figure considering that Manor Oaks Studios was no longer included. People told us they had mainly found out about the event online this year, either through posts made by our artists or by coming across our promotional video.



Hanne Westergaard welcoming visitors to her studio

For the second consecutive year, we were able to host *Art in the Home* in partnership with Studio2021. The exhibition presented a series of room sets in our Persistence Works gallery, featuring work from almost 40 YAS-based artists and makers. The work varied from paintings and prints to ceramics, sculpture, and of course textiles and furniture. This year, we also included work from some of our silversmiths, including bespoke candleholders by Charlotte Tollyfield and contour map wall art by Holly Clifford. The exhibition is a great opportunity for visitors to view artwork in a domestic setting, and envision what our artists' work might look like in their own homes.

Across both our exhibition spaces at Exchange Place Studios, we featured paintings from nearly twenty artists based in the building, in response to the theme of 'regeneration'. The exhibition was a celebration of the ongoing regeneration efforts in the Castlegate area, particularly the *Grey to Green 2* work around the studios, and helped inform our visitors about the impact Yorkshire Artspace in particular has made to the development of areas in Sheffield. Two of the featured artists, Karen Davies and Mandy Gamsu, held free drop-in workshops in the Project Space, where they discussed the work they had produced for the exhibition and shared techniques which visitors could then use to produce their own pieces to take home.

As always, this year's Open Studios proved to be a really positive experience which enabled the public to connect directly with the organisation and our resident artists.



OUR AUDIENCES

This year, we were visited by more than 7,100 members of the public who attended our exhibitions and events. This is a growth of about 6% from last year. Our most popular offer continues to be our annual Open Studios event, which this year attracted over 2,000 people.

OUR DIGITAL AUDIENCES

We convert our physical audiences into digital ones by directing them to sign up to our mailing list. Our newsletter is sent out quarterly and lets readers know about our upcoming exhibitions and events.

The average number of visitors to our **website** each month has stayed consistent, varying only by 0.1% from last year. This comes alongside an increased usage of third-party sites such as Mailchimp to share information and updates, which offer more sophisticated formatting options than our website and are more readily shareable by email or social media.

This is also reflected in the readership of our **e-newsletter**, which currently averages at 44% having had our audience decimated by recent changes to GDPR requirements. Sharing these newsletters as **social posts** on our Facebook and Twitter channels has been greatly beneficial, allowing us on average to reach around 420 additional views per article. This approach bypasses our reliance on GDPR-regulated mailing lists and increases our overall readership by 154%.

The developments in our communications over the last year have only emphasised the increasing role and value of social media in the way we communicate as an organisation. Having had several years working on building our online audiences, this year we decided to focus on increasing the value of our online content. This meant a change in strategy from high frequency posts which more regularly engage with audiences, to less frequent but more meaningful updates which are of greater value to the organisation and our members.

A good example of this is our *Artist Spotlight* feature on **Instagram**, which profiles our artists as well as our studios through bespoke photoshoots and interviews. Despite less frequent updates, we still grew our Instagram following by 35% over the last year, reaching 4,170. Part of this approach has seen more frequent use of the Instagram Stories feature, where posts only reach your existing audience and are removed after 24 hours. This has seen an increase of up to 7% in direct visits to our profile.

Switching our booking system for previews from Eventbrite to **Facebook** allowed for greater engagement and wider reach for our event posts, which coupled with regular sharing of our newsletter saw our Facebook audience grow by 16% to 2,572. A video campaign for Open Studios on Facebook also saw us generate over 6,000 unique views.

Less energy has been invested in **Twitter**, which has seen its userbase drop by 100m in the last few years (a loss of nearly 30%). Twitter has therefore mainly been used as a platform to share artist opportunities or news from our partner organisations, as well as a channel for our newsletter. Followers on Twitter increased by 2% to 4,745.

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2020/21

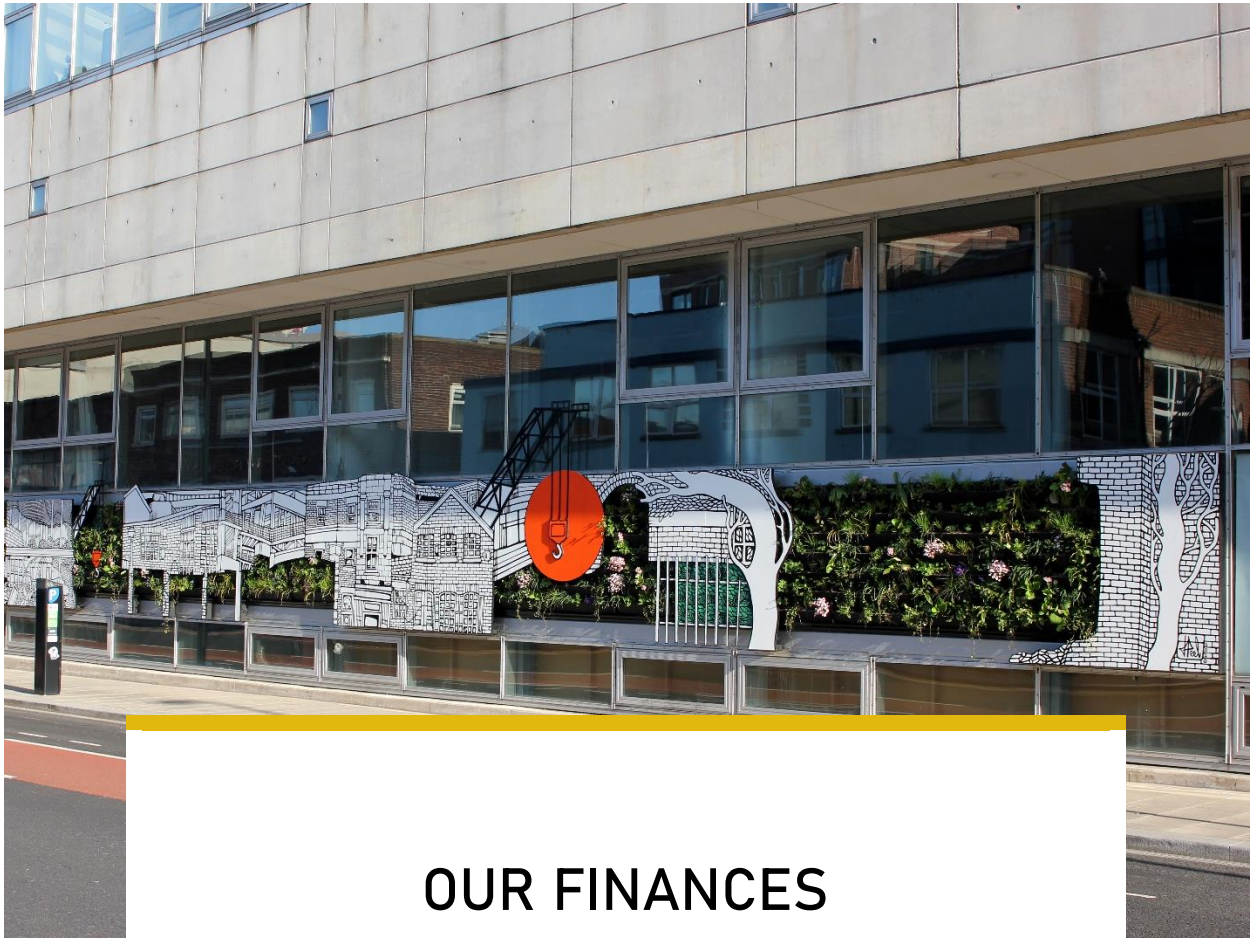
In what we hope will be a more positive year for our membership, we expect 2021 to continue the tradition of change. With new Director Georgina Kettlewell at the helm, we are really excited about all the positive developments we will be able to pursue when circumstances are more stable.

We are assessing the specific types of skills and experiences we require on our team as an evolving organisation. We are therefore embarking on a Board recruitment drive to diversify the range of backgrounds, expertise and experience available to the society.

In a step towards formalising the additional ways we have been able to support artists in realising their independent projects over the past year, we have created a call-out for a series of three exhibitions at Exchange Place Studios. Supported by microgrants of £150, the call-out includes an attractive marketing package comprising flyer design, copywriting and a tailored social media campaign. After a selection process which included local curating collective Fronteer, the successful applicants Clee Claire Lee, Jamie Mills and Lianne Mellor will exhibit on this programme in 2021.

We are actively pursuing opportunities to develop our buildings and programmes in ways that enhance benefit and opportunities for Yorkshire Artspace artists and members. To this end we are currently scoping out the repurposing of an outdoor area to the rear of Persistence Works for communal use, and reviewing our use of space in general across the organisation.

As part of this review, we are excited to be able to offer more affordable studio space to emerging artists and graduates in 2021, via our new Bridging Studio. The plan involves converting a large space at Exchange Place Studios into an open-plan studio area with affordably-priced booths to accommodate five emerging artists.



OUR FINANCES

Our business model is simple; earned rental income from the studios covers all the running costs and the management of the premises (including building a contingency fund) and surplus is invested in programming and opportunities that benefit our members and their practices.

BALANCE SHEET

31 March 2020

	Notes	2020 (£)	2019 (£)
FIXED ASSETS			
Tangible assets	13	3,947,250	4,089,064
CURRENT ASSETS	14	7,108	80,173
Debtors		56,151	39,747
Cash at bank and in hand			
CREDITORS			
Amounts falling due within one year	15	(46,128)	(100,109)
NET CURRENT ASSETS		17,131	19,811
TOTAL ASSETS LESS CURRENT LIABILITIES		3,964,381	4,108,875
NET ASSETS		3,964,381	4,108,875
FUNDS	18		
Unrestricted funds		31,057	37,219
Restricted funds		3,933,324	4,071,656
TOTAL FUNDS		3,964,381	4,108,875

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL ACTIVITIES

(incorporating an Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended

		Unrestricted funds £	Restricted funds £	2020 Total funds £	2019 Total funds £
<u>Income & Endowments from:</u>	Notes				
Donations	3	-	-	-	103,786
Charitable activities (Support and promotion of arts and crafts)	5	318,779	95,848	414,627	905,362
Investments	4	-	-	-	86
TOTAL		318,779	95,848	414,627	1,009,234
<u>Expenditure on:</u>					
Charitable activities (Support and promotion of arts and crafts)	6	324,941	234,180	559,121	534,260
NET INCOME/(EXPENDITURE)		(6,162)	(138,332)	(144,494)	474,974
<u>Reconciliation of Funds:</u>					
Total funds brought forward		37,219	4,071,656	4,108,875	3,633,901
TOTAL FUNDS CARRIED FORWARD		31,057	3,933,324	3,964,381	4,108,875