



plantation
productions
connect • grow • create

CREATIVE STEPS

TO POSITIVE MENTAL HEALTH

2020 - 2021 | PROGRAMME REVIEW



CREATIVE STEPS PROGRESS REPORT

2020 - 2021

WHO ARE WE?

Plantation Productions is a community arts and media charity based in the Greater Govan area of Glasgow. We deliver creative participatory programmes and activity for the advancement of citizenship and community development. Plantation Productions provide a creative recreational facility and resources with the object of improving opportunities and conditions for people and families who reside in areas of multiple deprivations.

Our current projects include a programme for children and young people, a seniors group, and a film and media arm which offers both training opportunities and commissions.

As part of our remit, we deliver the [Creative Steps Programme](#).

WHAT DO WE USUALLY DO?

We use creative participation and peer support to promote positive mental health. Using a three-step progression based model, we encourage individuals who are experiencing a mental health condition and isolation to get back into their communities, connect with others, be creative, learn skills and improve their wellbeing.

At **Step 1**, we deliver outreach classes at health locations throughout the south of Glasgow. Together with our NHS partners, we work with individuals within their place of treatment - somewhere that they are already familiar. Over the 8 week course, we work on building resilience and individual strengths to encourage participants to move to our next step.

Our **Step 2** groups take place at Gallery 966, our community based space at The Portal in Govan. We run a number of groups throughout the week to meet demand. New members are placed within a set group running at the same time each week, enabling them to form positive relationships with other groups members. There is no time limit on attendance - participants can attend for as long as they want to. Individuals can also refer directly to this step, if they feel able to do so.

Taking this further, our **Step 3** groups encourage participants to engage in wider participation activities, skills-based classes and events. From specialist and academic based classes, in partnership with local colleges and artists, to volunteering programmes and community art projects, we aim to provide activities that promote integration and progression on to further activities.

WHAT HAS THE LAST YEAR MEANT FOR US?

As a programme that focuses on encouraging people to get out of their homes, engage with their communities and take part in in-person peer support groups, our usual activity has been incredibly restricted over the last year. After suspending our groups from the 17th March 2020, we have continued to follow all Scottish Government guidance to ensure that we keep our participants as safe. As we are based in Glasgow, we have faced a significant amount of the year in either Lockdown or Level 4 restrictions. This has presented considerable challenges that we have worked to meet by adapting what we do.

The pandemic has had a substantial impact on our collective wellbeing. For our participants, many of whom were experiencing severe and enduring mental health conditions prior to the pandemic, the year has been particularly difficult. Issues include a significant increase in loneliness and isolation, a lack of access to structure, routine and engaging activity, reduced access to health services – such as the NHS – for physical and mental health conditions and a collection of practical concerns, including housing issues, financial worries and a lack of access to resources. Each of these can potentially lead to increases in poor mental health and wellbeing.

Taking these into account, and looking at what we can do, we established the following aims and adapted outcomes:

Individuals experiencing a mental health condition during the coronavirus pandemic:

1. Have a better **sense of structure and develop a routine**: through the provision of a programme of regular, planned activities and active encouragement to undertake creative activities in their own time - in the aim of reducing the risk of mental health deterioration.
2. Feel **connected and less isolated**: through the provision of creative and supportive interactions with others and the facilitation of a positive, peer support environment: leading to people feeling understood and that they are not alone.
3. Are participating in **accessible, meaningful and engaging creative activity**: to help to alleviate boredom, provide something to do, provide enjoyment, be a positive distraction from negative things and to provide something to look forward to.
4. Are **developing skills** to enable them to be more creative, to assist them in everyday life and to be able to better manage their conditions. This includes practical skills, gained from specialised creative groups, emotional skills, gained through taking part in peer support environments, and creative skills, gained through creative participation.

We worked towards this by adapting our services fully, consulting with our participants and partners throughout the process.

HOW HAVE WE ADAPTED?

In order to respond to the new challenges and risks of mental health deterioration, be adaptable to changes and need, and to be compliant with the set boundaries and restriction levels, we adapted our service to provide the following programme:

STEP 1

- Delivered online outreach classes for NHS Mental Health Resource Centres.
- Created and distributed a range of general crafting packs to Outreach Partners.
- Created and distributed creative activity packs for the wider Govan community, to keep people busy during the lockdown restrictions.

STEP 2

- Online Creative Peer Support Groups: Delivered by our Lead Artist and freelance tutors in a wide range of creative activities.
- Online Resources: A Temporary Blog with new online tutorials every week and frequent update posts.
- Equipment Borrowing Library - Internet Enabled Digital Devices and various pieces of crafting equipment.
- Creative Paper Post Packs - a weekly mini magazine focusing on the themes of wellbeing, health and creativity, including articles and paper based activities.
- Wednesday Drop In - Weekly safe drop in sessions, where participants can pick up class materials and general crafting packs and check in with us.
- Materials Packages - Both boxes made up with activities and class materials packs - sent through the post during lockdown.

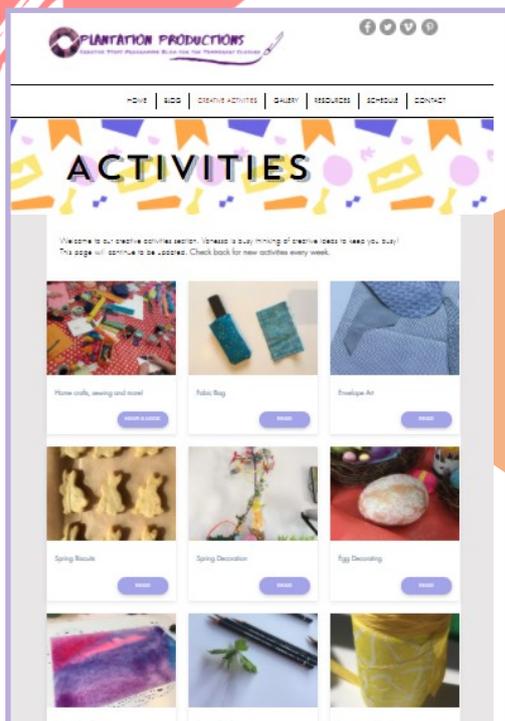
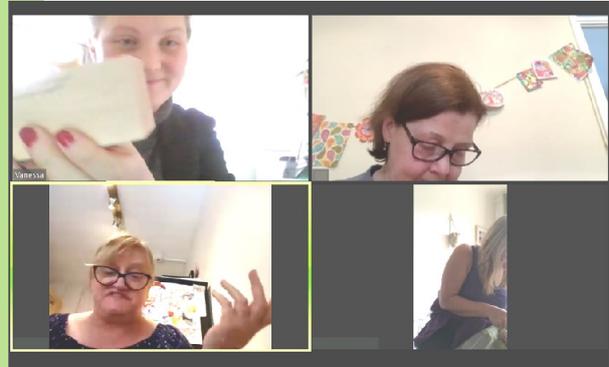
STEP 3

- Community Engagement Activities and events, such as a joint art project for Mental Health Awareness Week and the Winter Wonderland window display event.
- The engagement of volunteers in sending ideas for crafts at home and guest blog posts.
- Specialist and skills based classes delivered by freelance tutors: Including an online Community Choir and Sewing classes.
- In Person / Outdoor Art and Wellbeing Groups throughout the Autumn.

YEAR REVIEW

259

**ONLINE CREATIVE CLASSES
ACROSS OUR 3 STEPS**



1605

**VISITS TO OUR TEMPORARY
BLOG**

**CONTAINING CREATIVE TUTORIALS,
RESOURCES AND UPDATES**



2350

**GENERAL CRAFTING AND CLASS
MATERIALS PACKS DISTRIBUTED**

**TO THE PUBLIC, PARTICIPANTS AND
OUTREACH CENTRES**

2337

**WEEKLY MINI CREATIVE
MAGAZINES POSTED**



STEP 1



NHS OUTREACH PACKS

303 packs distributed to NHS centres

7 centres taking part in the scheme

As restrictions on group work resulted in the temporary suspension of our outreach classes, we developed new ways of partnership working with our NHS contacts.

By putting together crafting packs for outreach centres we were able to provide engaging and creative resources for our partners to distribute to patients receiving mental health support.

The scheme has proved to be popular throughout the year and feedback from both staff and patients has been very positive.

NHS ONLINE GROUP PILOT

8 centres updated about our online classes

6 online classes delivered for the NHS

In November we trialed a small outreach group online, in the form of a Jewellery Design class with our contacts at the Stewart Mental Health Resource Centre. We hope to develop this further over the next year.

Additionally, we distributed our online class books to all outreach partners to be shared with their patients, resulting in a number of new referrals over the year.



PUBLIC CRAFT PACK STALL

286 packs distributed to the public

Throughout the summer, we distributed crafting packs to our local Govan community from a stall at our doorway.

These packs each contained the materials and instructions for a creative activity. New packs were released each week.

This project was funded by the Govan Temporary Emergency Fund as a response to the mental health impact of the pandemic. By providing engaging, creative activity and encouraging people to incorporate pack collection into their daily walk, we aimed to improve wellbeing and social connection in a safe way.



PUBLIC CLASSES: BREATHING FOR WELLBEING

35 sessions provided to the wider community

333 attendances at these sessions

Singing for Breathing has numerous benefits, including the development of positive breathing techniques and the promotion of wellbeing.

These sessions were delivered Rachel Hynes, a trained lung health practitioner and group facilitator.

This joyful group has been extended throughout the year due to it's popularity and excellent feedback from participants.

STEP 2

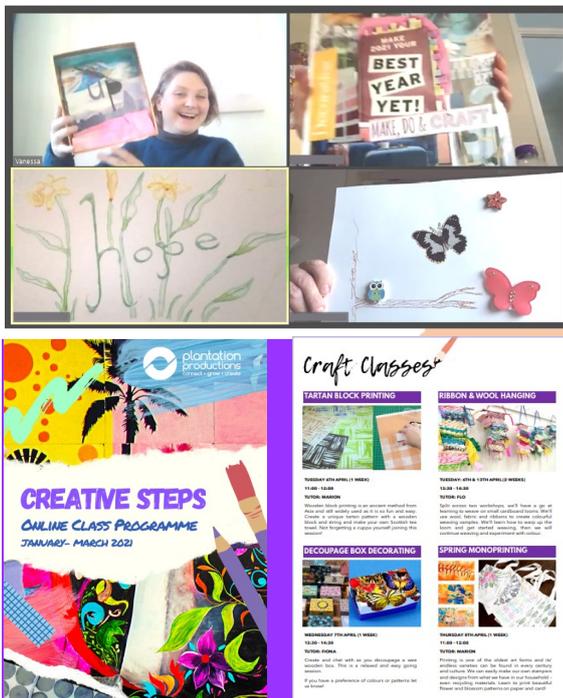
ONLINE GROUPS

140 online 1 hour classes delivered

90 different creative activities

594 total attendances

Our online groups are a great place to connect with others, engage in meaningful creative activity and learn new skills. Following a regular schedule throughout the week to promote structure, we have encouraged participants to join in with a range of creative classes - everything from 3D Felting to Jewellery Design.



CLASS MATERIALS

582 class materials packs given

(286 in person, 296 sent by post)

To increase accessibility, materials were prepared and packed up to be collected for each of our online classes.

During the January lockdown, we initiated a materials posting service so that we could distribute the packs for our January - March block of classes.





ONLINE RESOURCES

1605 blog views over the year

99 total online tutorials

138 update posts

We wanted a place to easily share information, with the aims of being able to provide updates, links to resources and regular creative tutorials.

Our solution was to create an online blog website: www.creativesteps.org.uk

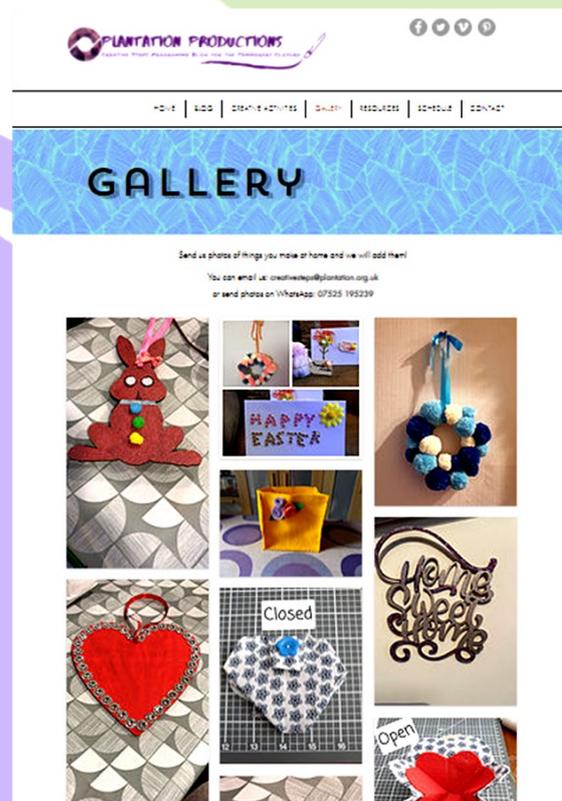
Two new creative tutorials are released every Friday so that participants can try activities in their own time.

PARTICIPANT PHOTO GALLERY

659 amazing photos sent to us

Our online gallery was set up to encourage interaction and the sharing of ideas. Participants have continued to send us photos of their home crafting projects throughout the year to be added to the page. This includes items made within online classes, craft projects from our general craft packs and projects that participants have designed themselves.

We want to promote a sense of pride in seeing work being displayed and inspire people to take part and be creative.



STEP 2



WEEKLY MINI CREATIVE MAGAZINE

2337 paper packs posted

491 creative activities

50 magazines made

Using the three categories of wellbeing, health and creativity, we initiated a letter based posting service to send out a mini magazine of activities each Friday.

These contained ideas, articles, tutorials and paper based activities. Where possible, we tried to include templates and materials in the letter, or planned activities taking into account what people may have around their home.

POST CRAFT BOXES

81 crafting boxes posted containing

401 creative activities

In January 2021 we initiated a new service in response to the return to lockdown and consequent closure of our drop in - craft boxes through the post. These contain a mix of crafting activities to keep participants busy, with new packs sent each week.

To respond to different interests and skills, we additionally were able to make up personalised activity packs on request.



CRAFT PACK DROP IN

778 packs distributed

114 creative activities

39 total 2 hour drop in sessions

When restrictions permitted, we ran a weekly drop in for our participants.

This enabled us to both check in with participants in person and to distribute a selection of crafting packs containing crafting materials and instructions.

We offered a wide range of creative activities: A few examples are Ice Cream Pom Pom Keyrings, Decoupage Cards, Pine Cone Owls, Felt Flowers and Bulb Planting.



LENDING LIBRARY

12 digital devices

13 pieces of crafting equipment

In partnership with Govan Housing Association, we were able to provide internet enabled digital devices to participants without online access. All participants who have received a device have gone on to take part in a number of online activities.

To better support participants to craft at home, we established a lending library for specialist equipment. This has included items such as weaving looms, felting needles and paint sets.



STEP 3

WE ALL PUT ON OUR GOVAN ALLSORTS T-SHIRTS FOR THE SESSIONS AND HAVE A LAUGH.

COMMUNITY CHOIR

33 digital choir sessions

Our Govan Allsorts Choir made the move to digital sessions this year, led by our Choirmaster Lesley Robertson.

Activities included singing chains, where choir members each take turns to sing a line of a song and fun discussions about music.

Though very eager to get back to singing in person, these digital sessions have provided space for social interaction and a bit of fun over the last year.

SEWING GROUPS

42 sewing sessions

22 sewing projects taught

Our sewing tutor, Morag Campbell, has delivered a range of engaging sewing based activities, from Bunting Making to Cushion Design.

Classes were arranged for all skill levels and in both machine and hand sewing. Participants have been able to learn hand stitching methods, embroidery techniques and practical skills for using a sewing machine.



SEWING: BROOCH MAKING



PROJECT: 15th APRIL (11 WEEKS)
15:00 - 16:00
TUTOR: MORAG
This beautiful brooch will make a great addition to a coat or bag, or otherwise a wonderful gift for someone.
*Participants have been to craft their own!

SEWING: SPRING BUNTING



PROJECT: 15th APRIL, 20th APRIL (2 WEEKS)
15:00 - 16:00
TUTOR: MORAG
If you are looking for beautiful handmade bunting to brighten up your home, try our spring bunting.
This is a great way of bringing a bit of nature indoors!

SEWING: MINI WREATH

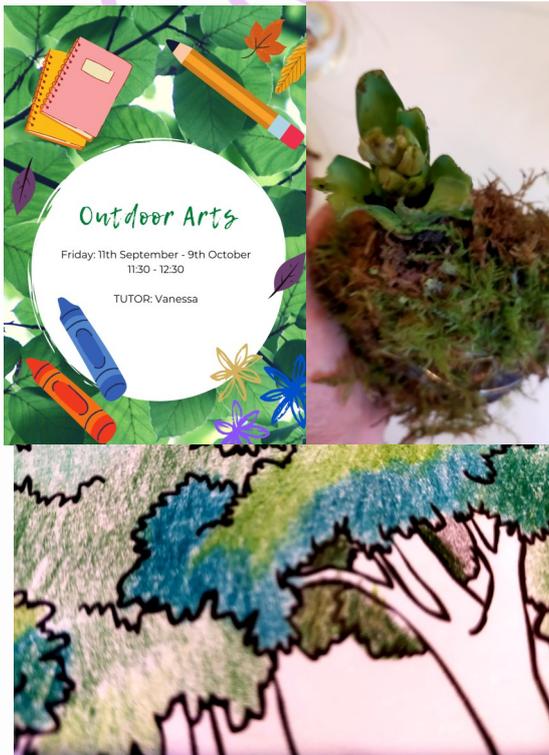


PROJECT: 15th & 20th APRIL (2 WEEKS)
15:00 - 16:00
TUTOR: MORAG
To celebrate spring, and the new season, make a beautiful mini wreath to hang on your wall.
This beautiful hanging can be used to decorate your home and add a bit of joy.

SEWING: FLOWER BOOKMARK



PROJECT: 20th APRIL (1 WEEK)
15:00 - 16:00
TUTOR: MORAG
If you are reading, or know someone who does, try our flower bookmark sheet!
These mini flower bookmarks are useful to have and look beautiful!



OUTDOOR CRAFTS PILOT

3 trial outdoor sessions

We trialled a small outdoor arts class for a group of participants.

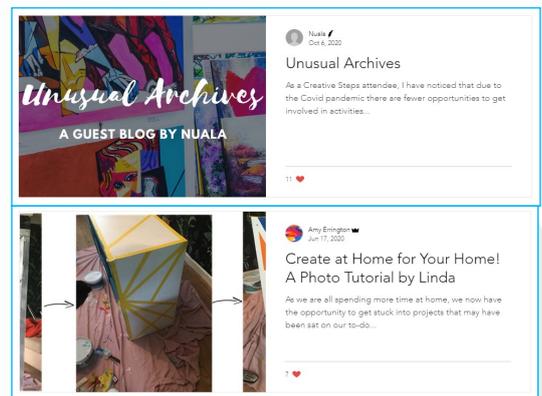
These nature based classes encouraged participants to connect with their surroundings and try creative activities whilst getting exercise.

Unfortunately, a return to restrictions for Glasgow in late Autumn has prevented us from developing this further, however we have great plans for the future.

VOLUNTEERING

Our plans to launch our full volunteering programme in 2020 had been put on hold temporarily - however we have still found numerous ways to involve participants in what we do.

This has included involving volunteers in our window decoration projects, encouraging participants to contribute guest articles and pictures of their own craft projects to inspire others through our blog and holding informal feedback sessions where participants can suggest ideas for classes.



EVENTS



FILM LAUNCH

June saw the online launch of our new promotional film. Produced by Chris McGill and Moya Crowley, the film highlights the work of our Creative Steps programme and will be a great tool for showing others what we do and how we do it.

We timed the release for Mental Health Awareness Week and were able to connect with our local NHS services and third sector intermediary bodies such as the Alliance to promote the film.

COMMUNITY ART PROJECTS

In May, we took part in the Kindness themed Mental Health Awareness week.

Participants were provided with templates to contribute their own tile to a patchwork rainbow project.

In December, we saw the return of the Govan Window Wanderland event: a community window decorating project. Our sparkly themed display contained wonderful sewing projects crafted by participants.



SURF AWARD NOMINATION

We were fortunate to be one of the three finalists in the category of Creative Regeneration at the 2020 SURF awards.

This year the award ceremony took place online, which was enjoyable to watch. Our feedback from the judges was as follows:



"The panel of judges were particularly impressed by the innovative 3 Step programme of development for clients with complex and varied mental health issues and difficulties, and by the new approach of taking the service to the point of clinical delivery as an initial means of engagement.

There were an impressive range of creative opportunities and extensive support options to positively transform people's lives whilst adding substantial social value benefits.

The innovation of using existing participants to subsequently attract, provide comfort and lead skills on specific initiatives was very impressive, as was the high level of referrals from healthcare partners who so obviously valued the opportunities offered by the project."



COMMUNITY IN ACTION PROFILE

In January, we were nominated to participate in the Alliance Community in Action series.

This project profiles community based organisations throughout Scotland who have adapted their services to provide support to individuals during the pandemic.

You can read the full article on the Alliance website.

FEEDBACK

"I am writing as a service user and volunteer of Creative Steps. I wanted to write to express my huge appreciation for the amazing job those involved with Creative Steps have done. I would go as far as to say they have kept me (and am sure quite a few others) sane during this very difficult year.

Starting with the Postal Packs, they brightened my week, allowed me to feel connected and gave me activities and a blog to interact with. Soon after, classes moved to Zoom. These were really thoughtfully designed and we were supported to get used to the technology and do activities from the Postal Pack, also using things everyone would have at home. Then the Craft Packs were made available and we've been able to experience a huge amount of different art and crafts. Not only have I learned things, I've enjoyed the arts and craft activities enormously and found them very therapeutic. I've also made new friends, which has been just lovely.

It has made a huge difference to my mental wellbeing, sense of connection, structure in my week and my learning. Furthermore, I am involved with a range of other organisations providing support to people with mental health issues and none have been able to provide this level of service. I think all those involved in Creative Steps and the organisation in general deserve to feel very proud of what they have achieved."

Creative Steps Participant

I enjoy doing the craft and sewing and also to see and interact with fellow attendees even if it is through a computer screen rather than in person. We all need to connect with people, it's what stops peoples feeling isolated and alone.

Thankfully, having access to the online groups has been a life saver for me, many thanks. I do enjoy a good blether too as you know, so that's an extra plus for me.

Creative Steps Participant

I have managed to pass on all the craft packs to the patients and they were pleased with them, especially the wooden boxes ones. Thank you on their behalf.

NHS Mental Health Resource Centre Staff Member

group are so nice too there's always something to chat about I don't know what I would do without the zoom class lol keeps me focused xx 13:05

Hi Amy just thought aye would shared theses pic of some cross stitch that my daughter has did through the super bag from the club my daughter has never did cross stitch before let alone sew so this was a big step for her and 1 that I'm proud that she taken all thanks to Ur wonderful bags so thank u both so much 🍷👩🏻👧👩🏻

Am getting the mail outs and absolutely loving them. Thank you so much for these. They are a highlight in my week.

I love to see the lovely bright envelope through my letter box. It's always full of inspirational things to do. This one really appeals because it is about Art.

Good morning guys ,the packs are absolutely amazing and wonderful have went and bought vases to do the shells the 1 u have on display us absolutely beautiful and has given me so many beautiful ideas so thank you so much 🍷❤️🌸👩🏻👧👩🏻

I've tried stuff I've never tired before. It's good to have different experiences. I find this brilliant, I really do. I don't want to think where my head would be if I didn't have this.

Omg thankyou so much for all the wee bags ill be a busy woman this week take care both of you xx 13:47

LEARNING

As we start our new reporting year for 2021-22, our standard programme remains temporarily suspended, meaning our distance services are continuing for at least the first few months of the year. Throughout April and May 2021 we have a diverse range of online sessions available to participants as lockdown restrictions continue to be slowly lifted. We do not yet have a timescale for the reopening of in person groups, or have any indication of the format and restrictions that we will have to take into account, however our aim is to put steps in place to re-establish standard services as soon as it is safe and permitted to do so.

CHALLENGES

Poor Mental Health

We are anticipating there being significant increases in poor mental health across all sectors of our communities - from our young people to elderly. As a programme that works with individuals with severe and enduring mental health conditions, we are seeing this on a daily basis. However, we also feel that this will become a much more prevalent issue throughout our wider community with many now struggling - who may not previously have had mental health issues. Many NHS mental health services are at capacity, so we anticipate an increased reliance on the third sector to meet this need.

Engagement

Over the last year we have faced difficulties in encouraging some to participate with distance services. Like all other organisations, we have been unable to provide clarity about when standard services will resume, leaving uncertainty. Additionally, not being able to meet in person has meant more of a divide and distance - we have gone from seeing participants on a weekly basis to not seeing some for over a year now. Our hope is that the restarting of in-person services will encourage individuals to reengage with the service - either through re-joining our Step 2 groups or by reengaging at Step 1 through an outreach centre. Most of our participants are still engaging with statutory mental health services, providing easier access to outreach groups.

LESSONS TO TAKE FORWARD

The last year has been a significant learning experience, with numerous adaptations, changes and developments needed at short notice.

Integration of Digital Services into our Standard Programme

Both tutors and participants have been surprised by the success of our online sessions.

Though our aim is to return to in-person groups, there is opportunity and justification to explore integrating some online sessions into our standard programme. We feel that this may encourage engagement from those who have health conditions preventing them from leaving home. Additionally, online classes are a great tool for engaging with the hardest to reach individuals who do not yet feel able to attend groups in person.

Using Creativity as a Tool for the Promotion of both Mental and Physical Health

The last year has emphasised the impact that poor physical health can have on wellbeing. By addressing health as its own section in our weekly creative magazines and encouraging health related activities on our blog (such as outdoor sketching in parks and creative photography when walking) we have been able to put focus on physical health in a creative way. Going forward, there is opportunity to develop this further in relation to the content of the sessions delivered at Step 2 and the potential to add outdoor, nature and health focused creative groups at Step 3.

Creative Activities Outside of Groups

Feedback on our craft at home packs and online tutorials has been very positive. Participants have noted benefits such as having more to do outside of class times, learning new creative skills and also being able to try creative activities with family members.

This is something that we plan to explore further when our standard services resume, both as an option for those who are needing extra structure to their week and also for individuals who want to develop their creative skills further.

WHAT NEXT?

Over the next reporting year, we will rebuild and regrow. This will involve:

- Restarting our standard, in person services when it is safe to do so.
- Reengaging with current participants.
- Adapting to accommodate the potential rise in new referrals
- Strengthening existing connections with partners, artists, freelance tutors and local organisations, as well as initiating and developing new relationships.
- Launching our volunteering programme fully, for both internal and external volunteers, and establishing links with academic institutions to offer student placements.
- Developing our Step 3 programme to offer more wider participation, specialised and skills based classes, as well as events based activities such as joint art projects, collective window displays, participant exhibitions and community events.
- Looking at appropriate and sustainable growth - new projects, new locations and new activities.
- Be actively involved in events, conferences and discussions around arts and creative participation for positive mental health.
- Identifying further funding opportunities to ensure that the service continues to grow.



YEAR DATA

1ST APRIL 2020 - 31ST MARCH 2021

ENGAGEMENT DATA

NUMBER OF OUR PARTICIPANTS WHO ENGAGED WITH THE SERVICE: 103

In addition to this number, we have reached many more people through our public pack stalls and those who have received our packs through their outreach centres.

NUMBERS ENGAGING IN:	
Weekly Mini Craft Magazine Service:	73 Participants
Online Classes - Step 1, 2 and 3:	51 Participants
Participant Pack Drop-In:	33 Participants
Craft Box Service:	11 Participants

Please note, most participants engaged with more than one activity.

ONLINE CLASSES

	1 Hour Sessions	Attendance	Activities
STEP 1: OUTREACH AND OPEN CLASSES	41	348	
Outreach	6	15	1
Singing for Breathing and Wellbeing	35	333	1
STEP 2: CRAFT SESSIONS	140	594	90
STEP 3: SKILLS AND FURTHER CLASSES	78	171*	
Choir	33	Data Unavailable	1
Sewing	42	163	22
Outdoor Arts	3	8	1

TOTAL: 259

ONLINE BLOG

TOTAL VISITS:	1,605
TUTORIALS:	99
PARTICIPANT PHOTOS SENT TO US:	659
BLOG UPDATE POSTS:	138

CRAFTING PACKS

	IN PERSON	SENT BY POST	TOTAL
Distributed to the Public:	286		286
General Crafting Packs for Participants:	778	401	1179
Crafting Packs for Outreach Centres	303		303
Class Material Packs	286	296	582
TOTAL:			2350

Number of Activities in General Packs:	114
Public Stall Sessions:	11
Drop in Sessions for Participants:	39

WEEKLY MINI CREATIVE MAGAZINE

Number of Packs Posted:	2337
Number of Weekly Magazines Made:	50

Wellbeing Activities:	108
Health Activities:	112
Creative Activities:	271
TOTAL:	
	491

LENDING LIBRARY

TOTAL DISTRIBUTED:	25
Crafting Equipment:	13
Digital Devices with Internet Access:	12

FURTHER INFORMATION

If you would like any further information about our work, please get in touch using the details below. You will also find information, resources and updates at the following sources:



[@Plantation.Productions](https://www.facebook.com/PlantationProductions)



[@PlantationP](https://twitter.com/PlantationP)



[@plantationp](https://www.instagram.com/plantationp)

Plantation Productions

The Portal
978 Govan Road
Glasgow
G51 3AJ

TEL: 0141 445 1666

EMAIL: info@plantation.org.uk

Creative Steps Programme

Gallery 966
966 Govan Road
Glasgow
G51 3AJ

TEL: 0141 387 2596

EMAIL: creativesteps@plantation.org.uk

www.creativesteps.org.uk



CREATIVE STEPS

Gallery 966, 966 Govan Road, Glasgow, G51 3AJ

creativesteps@plantation.org.uk

0141 387 2596

www.creativesteps.org.uk

