

**Bradford
Producing
Hub**



BRADFORD 2025
UK City of Culture

Bradford Producing Hub – Visual Arts Report

Progress: Sept 2023 - Nov 2024

Report author: Alison McIntyre, Visual Arts Instigator



we follow our communities
we need to challenge



All these guys are radicals
You want things to spiral the landscape but
navigation is still hard
there was loads of passion
demystify



Hope demands ^{ensure} action
We are all the creative

Nobody said to me that
show people like
guess

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Introduction

“This new report outlines what has happened since September 2023 against key priorities from the original needs analysis.”



Bradford Producing Hub Visual Arts
Progress: Sep 23 - Nov 24
Report Author: Alison McIntyre,
Visual Arts Instigator

I started in my role as Visual Arts Instigator with Bradford Producing Hub (BPH) in February 2023 and began six months of needs analysis with individual artists and organisations across the sector and the District, at the end of which I wrote a report (published and shared widely in September 2023). The introduction ended with these words...

“This report represents a shared, District-wide, responsibility that will need to be embraced by multiple partners in order to achieve the change that is needed. This process is the start.”

It’s now a year later and this new report outlines what has happened since September 2023 against key priorities from the needs analysis.

Whilst we acknowledge that BPH has initially taken the lead on this work, key to much of the progress has been the development of a new strategic group of core District-wide visual arts organisations – Bradford Council, Bradford 2025, Bradford Museums and Galleries, BPH, Bradford College, Impressions, Keighley Creative, South Square Centre and Yorkshire Visual Arts Network. Initially formed to address the needs outlined in the needs-analysis report, it has rapidly become a key strategic driver of action and change for visual arts in Bradford.

Whilst there are still significant gaps in the ecology of the visual arts sector in Bradford, rapid and impressive progress has been made by strategic visual arts organisations, BPH and individual artists to start to build the networks, events and initiatives that are needed.

As well as the key priorities outlined in the needs analysis, there are also broader themes to bear in mind as we progress. These include: supporting Bradford’s grassroots, DIY and collaborative traditions whilst developing a more sustainable and thriving sector, rather than working in opposition to it; looking at how Bradford 2025 develops and supports local artists and what legacy is left by it for the sector; and equal value being given to gallery and community based visual arts practices.

In the following sections, I outline what has been delivered by BPH and visual arts organisations across the District, against the key priorities of the initial report. This is not an exhaustive list of activity and development that has taken place, but aims to pull out some of the key activity in line with the needs identified through the original report.

1.

Individual Needs

“Whilst there are still significant gaps in the ecology of the visual arts sector in Bradford, rapid and impressive progress has been made by strategic visual arts organisations, BPH and individual artists to start to build the networks, events and initiatives that are needed.”



Professional Support

1. Need: Opportunities to get feedback – experienced artists

and

2. Need: Opportunities to get feedback – newer artists & marginalised communities

BPH seed-funded the establishment of regular crits at South Square Centre, Saltaire Gallery, Keighley Creative and Trapezium. 33 people have attended a crit (to date)

3. Need: Support to write funding bids and proposals

BPH have provided cross-artform support for fundraising and writing bids. £106,000 in successful visual arts bids have been supported through training, advice, guidance, letters of support and references.

4. Need: Developing skills in marketing, visibility and finding your audience

Alison McIntyre, Visual Arts Instigator at BPH, continues to offer monthly open and bookable 1-2-1 Support Sessions to artists at all stages of their careers. 52 people have received support to date.

See also Visual Artists Association Premium Membership (1.1.5 below)

5. Need: Commercial and business development support

BPH partnered with the Visual Artists Association to create 20 opportunities for artists to access Premium Membership for 1 year, including support that covers commercial and business development, selling work online, marketing, visibility, and finding your audience.

6. Need: Understanding the role of Visual Arts Producers

29 people attended a BPH hosted Producer Gathering for Dance and Visual Arts, which developed the sector's understanding of the role of visual arts producers and the nuances and differences in producing for different artforms.

See also Practice Bradford (1.1.7 below)

7. Need: Developing a successful freelance career

A new partnership with Yorkshire Contemporary led to Practice: Bradford - a development programme, part funded by Bradford 2025, that will be a highly focussed, tailored intervention designed to fast-track development and career progression for four talented, emerging visual artists from Bradford. It will culminate in an exhibition towards the end of 2025 and the programme will include workshops and events for the wider sector that meet a number of the priorities from the needs analysis:

- **Understanding the role of visual arts producers**
- **Developing a successful freelance career**
- **Understanding career pathways**
- **Writing about your work**
- **Targeted support for graduates into visual arts careers**
- **Technical skills such as how to hang an exhibition**

See also Visual Artists Association Premium Membership (1.1.5 above)

8. Need: Building confidence, self-belief and value

and

9. Need: Training on managing relationships

Visual Artists have benefited from BPH's Series of Care programme, a series of sessions including: Creative Confidence Coaching, Know Your Worth and Know Your Rights, which covered contracting, fees and working practices. Further sessions are planned including Maintaining Momentum (Nov '24) and Master Your Mindset (Jan '25). More development work is needed around managing relationships.

10. Need: Training on how to write about your work

BPH's Promote programme includes sessions in copywriting, social media and more. See also Practice Bradford (1.1.7 above) for workshops more focused on writing an artist statement and biography.



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11. Need: Targeted support for graduates into visual arts careers

BPH Creative Careers workshops: talks for schools and college students to help people understand career pathways in the visual arts. 399 students reached to date.

Saltaire Inspired 'In the Making': subsidised pitches to students from Bradford College as part of Saltaire Winter Makers Fair 2024, and placement opportunities for Shipley College students as part of their annual programme. Bradford College have suggested running a student-focussed Exhibitions Speed-dating Event (see 2.2.3).

See also Practice Bradford (1.1.7 above)

12. Need: Subject/artform based training

Bradford College Short Courses: A set of short FE courses / subject / artform based training are in development – aiming to enable new specialisms for existing artists and support for students / hobbyists to move into careers.

13. Need: Learning how to hang an exhibition

Progress on this need has not yet started, however we are in active discussions with gallery and exhibition partners, including Impressions Gallery and through Practice Bradford workshops, on how to embed opportunities for this learning.

14. Need: Understanding how to work with communities

Through partnership with Bradford 2025 and their Our Patch Cohort, BPH has delivered in depth training in Trauma Informed Practice and co-creation (by Displace Yourself Theatre). More work is needed to open up this training to the wider visual arts community.

15. Need: Supervision/care for artists working in communities

This is an area that needs further development and a broader approach. Processes are being developed and trialled with the Bradford 2025 Our Patch Cohort, including quarterly peer to peer reflection and support days.



Inspiration

1. Need: Go and Sees for visual arts

Open application Go & See trip to see The Manchester Open at HOME; Bradford Visual Arts Festival Steering Group trip to see The Turner Prize in London; more Visual Art Go and Sees in development for 2025. 15 people have taken part in Visual Art Go & Sees

2. Need: International collaborations

and

3. Need: Local inspiration (big name artists in Bradford)

Bradford 2025's programme will bring national and international visual artists and new collaboration opportunities to the District, including the already announced Osman Yousefzada; Nationhood: Memory and Hope; The Turner Prize; street art through BD:Walls; and Wild Uplands.

4. Need: Host a contemporary art/ sculpture Biennial

The Turner Prize is coming to Bradford as part of Bradford 2025, with discussions already underway about models for biennial / future opportunities

5. Need: Highlight BD talent

OUR TURN, Bradford Visual Arts Festival: A new festival is being developed by South Square Centre with funding from ACE and Bradford 2025 to showcase local artists when The Turner Prize spotlight is on us. South Square are in the process of writing an artist-led funding application and the steering group are keen to develop an ongoing Bradford Biennial/Visual Arts Festival as a legacy of OUR TURN, bringing in national and international artists as well as highlighting Bradford's talent.

Opportunities such as existing and new arts trails, Exhibitions Speed Dating (see 2.2.3 below) are all raising the profiles of local artists. Promotion and sharing of local exhibitions has improved. BPH's Visual Art Socials (see 1.3.3 below) have moved across District venues to help increase visibility and awareness.



Connection and Community

1. Need: Opportunities for collaboration and exchange

BPH's Explore Fund brought together a multi-artform cohort of artists and created space for artists to play and experiment. Two out of the eight successful applicants were visual artists. All artists had the opportunity to share their work with an invited audience including the wider artists network and strategic partners.

2. Need: Share career pathways

Most Visual Art Socials (see 1.3.3 below) have included at least one speaker sharing their career or organisational development. The Explore Fund (see 1.3.1 above) focussed on process over product. Creative Careers (see 1.1.11 above) talks for young people have shared career pathways.

3. Need: Visual Arts Socials

BPH have delivered five Visual Art Socials since September 2023, with careful planning to ensure collaboration and exchange opportunities, including offers and requests, materials swaps and introductions to local and national organisations. 198 people have attended in total.

4. Need: Connection in and between studio spaces

BPH are ensuring that support for artist-led communities goes hand-in-hand with any buildings and spaces development work (see 2.1 below). Connection in and between spaces has significantly strengthened through the new strategic network and the OUR TURN Visual Art Festival Steering Group (see 1.2.5 above)

5. Need: Space to play and experiment together

Visual Arts Play Day in May by the Art Doctors, provided opportunity for 9 artists to play and collaborate. Visual artists also engaged in BPH's wider set of multi-artform Play Days.

2.

Sector Needs

“BPH are ensuring that support for artist-led communities goes hand-in-hand with any buildings and spaces development work.”



Infrastructure/ Space

1. Need: A City Centre Art Gallery

Promising development is taking place with the new Bradford 2025 Loading Bay temporary space, which includes new gallery space. Conversation and agreement will be needed around how this space will be retained for the sector for 2026 onwards.

2. Need: Informal spaces for exhibition/installation

BPH have commissioned an R&D project from curator Court Spencer to identify which shops, cafes and bars are interested in being informal spaces for exhibition / installation in Bradford City Centre and what support they might need to develop an exhibition offer.

Conversations have taken place in relation to Kirkgate Centre and the potential of a window gallery during 2025 utilising empty shops. This is ongoing.

3. Need: A mid-scale experimental art space

BPH commissioned Rosie Freeman to create a Building and Space Needs Analysis that pulls together artists and organisations looking for space and potential spaces that could house them, along with outline financial models.

The new city centre Bradford 2025 temporary events space will provide facilities for mid-scale and experimental arts.

4. Need: Permanent rather than temporary spaces

Active discussion and progress is underway around a number of options for new permanent spaces including Bingley Town Hall, Bradford Resource Centre, Perkin House, the development of the Bradford 2025 city centre temporary events space and more.

Keighley Creative are completing the design for their new permanent visual arts space, in partnership with East Street Arts, that will house visual arts gallery/project and studio space in the centre of Keighley.

Saltaire Inspired continues to engage with Saltaire Collaboration Group convened by Bradford Council to identify opportunities for visual artists from across district to access space and resources within Saltaire / Shipley Bradford College are improving their strategy around hiring space external companies and artists, particularly the Dye House Gallery for external exhibitions. They currently hire space to Amber Lights, The Hive and Dance United and host The Leap.

5. Need: Maker Space

and

6. Need: A ceramics workshop

and

7. Need: A print workshop

Bradford Museums and Galleries are opening a Heritage Crafts Workshop in the Industrial Museum, through which freelancer artists and makers will deliver workshops, as well be able to rent for their own workshop delivery or practice. South Square Centre are considering, and looking for volunteer support, to create a Maker Space in their basement studio that will include 3D printing, laser cutting, risograph printing, and vinyl cutting.

HIVE have reopened in Shipley with excellent new maker spaces for pottery, woodworking and more.

There is potential for Shipley Print Studio to develop to meet this need.

8. Need: A community space for visual arts

Keighley Creative's new space will be a key convening point for visual artists.

The proposed Bingley Town Hall development would also aim to meet this need.

9. Need: More visual arts organisations

BPH Expanding Horizons business development support programme launches in November 2024 and will include support for visual arts organisations to establish and grow. BPH will also run an NPO development programme in 2025 and will ensure support is provided to visual arts organisations who wish to apply to become an NPO.

10. Need: Commitment to commissioning local artists

The OUR TURN Visual Arts Festival and BD: Walls have committed to commissioning local artists to create festival content and new street art. BPH has commissioned local artists to create new artwork for each of our Visual Arts Socials. Saltaire Inspired have expanded their long-running Arts Trail with larger-scale exhibitions by local artists in 2024 at Salts Mill, Caroline Street Social Club and Saltaire United Reform Church.

Information and Understanding

1. Need: A visual arts newsletter

While this hasn't been delivered as described, BPH has significantly increased sharing visual arts opportunities on their monthly newsletter and are now exploring further segmentation to create artform specific newsletters.

It's On In Bradford features visual arts venues, exhibitions and events.

2. Need: Regular information sessions

Alison McIntyre, Visual Arts Instigator at BPH offers monthly open and bookable 1-2-1 Support Sessions to artists at all stages of their careers. 55 people have received support to date.

Visual Arts Socials (see 1.3.3 above) always include an information sharing element with updates about upcoming projects, opportunities and events.

3. Need: Clarify commissioning and exhibiting processes

BPH delivered an Exhibitions Speed Dating Event in October 2024, where venues with gallery/exhibition spaces shared information about their opportunities for local artists and held 1-2-1s, creating a two-way conversation between organisations and artists. As a result of the event venues have been encouraged to share the same information on their websites. 31 people and 11 exhibition venues attended.

4. Need: A list of exhibition/gallery spaces

This was compiled as part of the original needs analysis work, along with a list of studio spaces, and is updated and maintained informally by BPH.

Exhibition and gallery spaces can also be found in the venues section of **It's On In Bradford**

5. Need: A central online What's On and Opportunities resource

It's On In Bradford went live in April 2024, providing a central online What's On resource and details of exhibition/gallery spaces. Further work is needed to develop a consistent place for Bradford creatives to find out about all opportunities.

Community and Connection

1. Need: Create a community of bar and café owners keen to exhibit work

The work Court Spencer (see 2.1.2 above) is carrying out has identified five bar and café owners keen to exhibit work in the city centre. The intention is to develop this into a trial over the coming year which will serve to encourage an expanded network of spaces.

2. Need: A District-wide Open Show

A District-wide Open Show combining individual and community work is planned as part of OUR TURN (see 1.2.5 above). Bren O'Callaghan, the Curator of The Manchester Open Show came to talk to the Visual Arts Festival Steering Group to support its development.

3. Need: District-wide Open Studios

New artist-led trails have started to emerge around Thornton and Keighley, which could develop into a district wide network of independent events, along with the long-established Ilkley and Saltaire Arts Trails.

4. Need: Training for arts organisations on how to work with communities

The Leap is carrying out significant work supporting and embedding community-led collaboration between communities and the arts.

BPH is supporting the Bradford 2025 Our Patch Cohort (see 1.1.14/15 above) to ensure they have the skills needed in socially engaged practice, to work well in and with communities.



5. Need: More visibility for work from marginalised communities (artists who identify as D/deaf, disabled, neurodivergent, come from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds, working class, LGBTQ+, theGlobal Majority)

There have been some significant projects over the past year, including: Bradford 2025's Osman Yousefzada 'Where It Began' exhibition and workshops; Cartwright Hall's 'Dreams and Songs to Sing' exhibition by Cath Muldowney, sharing the lives of Gypsy and Traveller communities including workshops and training; also just opened at Cartwright Hall, Sarah Maple's 'Mother Tongue; Trapezium's The Black Agenda Book Shop, Not A Minority and In The Shadow of a Good Dream; and Impressions Gallery's Performing Histories, We Are Here, Because You Were There, and Belongings, as well as talks by 18 artists.

6. Need: Encourage cross-cultural attendance at events/launches

This is being encouraged by all partners, including the Cultural Voice Forum which continues to be the main convener of all artforms and independent artists in Bradford.

7. Need: A Visual Arts Symposium

The OUR TURN Visual Arts Festival Steering Group (1.2.5 above) are planning to include a Visual Arts Symposium in the proposed programme



3.

Next Steps

“Whilst progress has been rapid and impressive, we are aware that there are still many gaps to fill to create a thriving and sustainable visual art sector in Bradford. “



Outstanding and new priorities

Sector

- Ensuring a strong legacy from Bradford 2025 for the visual arts, particularly in establishing a City Centre Art Gallery, potentially the continuation of Loading Bay gallery space, creating opportunities for international collaborations, bringing big name artists to Bradford
- Developing OUR TURN into a regular Visual Arts Festival.
- Continuing to push for the development of permanent buildings and spaces for visual arts use, including exhibition, studio, community and specialist making spaces.
- Supporting new visual arts organisations to develop, particularly looking at opportunities for new artist-led groups through the development of new visual arts buildings and spaces
- The establishment of a general visual arts NPO in the District
- More visibility and support for artists from marginalised communities
- More graduate support to keep students in Bradford and attract them from other nearby cities
- Work with It's On In Bradford to develop Opportunities section of the site.

Individual

- Training on: managing relationships; hanging exhibitions; working with communities
- Supervision/care for artists working in communities
- Greater understanding of the role of Visual Arts Producers and an increase in visual arts producing support
- Support to start again for artists who have had to take career breaks due to caring responsibilities
- Support to access small funding pots (under £1000) that can enable opportunities to exhibit (venue hire, framing costs etc)

BPH will continue to work with the strategic group to develop the fantastic work already happening, and to find ways to make it sustainable, allowing us to focus on new initiatives to address what still needs to happen.

This report, the actions and priorities identified, are an ongoing and shared process being led by BPH on behalf and in support of the visual arts sector across Bradford District. If you feel there is anything important missing, misrepresented, or incorrect, please let us know by emailing hello@bdproducinghub.co.uk.

Appendices

Current Exhibition Space

Please contact alison@bdproducinghub.co.uk to update any details or add your exhibition space to the list.

Last updated 25/11/2024

Organisation	Content	Application/hire details
<u>Impressions Gallery</u>	Contemporary Photography	Happy to receive unsolicited applications, but there are limited opportunities and at least 18 months lead in time. <u>More info</u>
<u>Bradford Museums and Galleries</u>	Cartwright Hall, Bradford Industrial Museum, Cliffe Castle Museum and Bolling Hall	Can only pursue a small proportion of applications received and need at least 12 months lead in time. <u>More info</u>
<u>Bradford School of Art</u>	<u>Dye House Gallery</u> available for free hire outside student exhibitions	Programmed two years in advance. Contact <u>Helen Farrah</u> to discuss ideas.
<u>Bradford Mechanics Institute</u>	Exhibition space to hire	Contact <u>Tricia Restorick</u> to discuss ideas.
<u>Trapezium Gallery</u>	Volunteer run exhibition space in temporary space, available to hire	Usually an 18 month waiting list for exhibitions. <u>More info</u>
<u>Kala Sangam</u> (Bradford Arts Centre)	Mostly performance but some exhibition space available (TBC on re-opening)	At least 12 months lead in time. Contact <u>Alex Corwin</u>
<u>South Square Centre, Thornton</u>	Community Arts Space and Gallery	For details on how to exhibit <u>Click here</u>
<u>Apothecary, Thornton</u>	Gallery and print-making studio run by Patrick Whitehead to exhibit his and others artwork.	Contact <u>Patrick Whitehead</u> to discuss.
<u>Saltaire Inspired</u>	Arts Trail and Makers Fair	Opportunities to exhibit publicised on website/ social media

Organisation	Content	Application/hire details
<u>Bronte Parsonage Museum, Haworth</u>	Programme of artist exhibitions displayed within museum.	Exhibitions have connections to the Bronte's work and landscape. Contact <u>Angela Clare</u> for details
<u>Ilkley Manor House and Solar Gallery, Ilkley</u>	Gallery in Grade 1 listed Manor House in centre of Ilkley. Solar Gallery is also within the building and programmed by the Solar Group.	<u>Contact by email</u> with details of what is to be exhibited, artists' statements, price ranges and high resolution images.
<u>Salts Mill</u>	Exhibitions of David Hockney's work and other artists they have built relationships with.	Open to proposals, though usually work with artists they have already built relationships with – <u>contact by email</u> with initial ideas
<u>Holding Space Gallery, Dandelion Cafe</u>	Café with exhibition space	<u>Contact by email</u>
<u>The Bingley Gallery</u>	David Starley is resident artist, but also exhibits other artists' work.	Contact through the <u>website</u>
<u>The Saltaire Gallery</u>	Commercial fine art gallery and workshop space set up by Nina Hunter/Saltaire Art School.	Follow on social media for open calls or <u>contact by email</u> to discuss.

Appendices

Current Studio Space

Please contact alison@bdproducinghub.co.uk to update any details or add your studio space to the list.

Last updated 25/11/2024

Studio Name	Info	Application/hire details
<u>Keighley Creative</u>	Studio space and plans for bigger space to include exhibition/project space. 10 studios currently, but up to 40 in new space.	Most £90 PCM, with largest space at £180 PCM
<u>Yarn Studios</u> , Shipley (previously Wharf Street Studios)	16 studio and large co-working space.	£230-£700 PCM
<u>Dockfield Road Creative Arts Hub</u> , Shipley	12 studios (4 in communal space)	From £120 - £300 PCM
<u>Salts Works</u> , Shipley	Co-working desk and workshops space	PCM for 2 days/week £59 Full time £121 Ad Hoc & 1/3/4/6 days/week also possible.
<u>South Square Centre</u> , Thornton	11 studios	From £100 to £200 (1 large £270) PCM





Bradford Producing Hub