

CHANGING RELATIONS

Annual Report

November 2022 - October 2023
Breaking down gender barriers,
fostering healthy relationships,
transforming lives.



CHANGING RELATIONS
Creative methods. Challenging thinking.

CHANGING RELATIONS



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An introduction from our core team

Lisa Charlotte Davis

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Managing Director

Pulling together our annual report is always a lovely moment from the point of view that it allows you to look back and say, wow, did we really do all of that this year!!!

2023 was an amazing year for us as a company. It was also pretty challenging for me personally. One of my lovely new peers on the **Creative UK North East Create Growth** programme introduced me to a gorgeous concept that beautifully illustrates how something new can develop out of something tricky and, as I think facilitating authenticity is a core value of our practice in Changing Relations, I'd like to share this with you.

In September, in full swing of a number of projects, proposals, resource development and training delivery, I experienced a burnout which knocked me for six. It forced me to consider how some aspects of my entrepreneurial approach map onto possible (previously unacknowledged) ADHD traits, which have the potential to cause repeated burnouts without adjustments in my approach to self-care.

I wasn't sure how I would manage my sprawling to do list or if my colleagues would panic about my capacity to keep moving things forward. What I found was care, trust, understanding and a depth of support that I believe will make Changing Relations stronger as we embrace 2024.

My brilliant Non-Exec Directors Alix Collingwood and Rachael Barnwell supported without question my need to build greater time for decompression into my work. I can't tell you how empowering it is to know your team-mates trust your capability even whilst you show your vulnerability.

Business collaborators were patient as I pushed back meetings and deadlines to reduce the extent I had to juggle multiple activity streams at once.

My fabulous Creative Producers Kate Gorman and Sarah Stamp were supportive and encouraging, developing more integrated ways of workload-sharing to move projects forward.

And a wonderful friend offered to step in to help me at the peak of my burnout as and when I needed with any admin, drafting and editing tasks I didn't have capacity for.

The concept I alluded to is kintsugi - the Japanese art of transforming broken pottery by filling the cracks with gold paint to create a new artwork - that shows us a completely different way of looking at vulnerability. Being a bit broken doesn't have to mean the bin and we don't need to pretend there hasn't been any breakage along the way. We can be vulnerable and we can also be valuable in what we have to offer the world. We can need time to rest and still be productive in our work.

I love this concept and am profoundly grateful for the support of the friends and colleagues who give me confidence that we begin 2024 with the complementary skills, care and commitment to shape a more robust, resilient company... as a team.

You are the gold paint.



But what of all those fabulous developments as a company I alluded to?!

I am hugely proud of the artwork and creative resources we have developed this year, not to mention the reach we have achieved. You will see from the overview within this report that we have worked with significantly more schools and businesses than in previous years, and have developed content that is clearly really resonating with the zeitgeist, from addressing teacher concerns about the influence of Andrew Tate on boys' attitudes and behaviour to reframing domestic abuse as "toxic teen relationships" to help young people and educators conceptualise

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“ its relevance to this age group, which is at the highest risk for intimate partner violence. It was an absolute delight to see tickets for the performance of our play, A is for Amy, flying off the shelves and to see the Little Theatre full of engaged young people, who asked fabulously pertinent questions on our Q&A night.

This year saw us invited to attend the Domestic Abuse Commissioner’s first conference for the sector. It was so rewarding to see children and young people’s experiences of abuse included as one of the core pillars of her office and to know that our work is pre-emptively contributing to this theme as we develop resources, confidence and awareness to ensure that young people’s adverse childhood experiences do not overly influence their future life trajectories.

A further development I feel proud of centres around the wellbeing of our delivery teams. Having encouraged businesses for years to incorporate domestic abuse into their staff duty of care, we made a crucial move to walk the walk this year, by introducing supervision for our freelance creative practitioners, akin to that provided to counsellors who regularly receive disclosures of traumatic experiences. We know this is something our practitioners have appreciated and are committed developing and codifying our practice of care as we move into 2024.

Before I sign off for another year, I should probably mention that I was shortlisted for an Inspiring Females Award in the small business category by the Northeast Chamber of Commerce! It’s amazing to see all the hard work that goes into Changing Relations recognised and I’m especially grateful to our Steering Group Co-Chair Billie Jenkins for having written my entry.

There’s so much fantastic stuff on the cards for 2024 and it’s really lovely to see a well-matched, kind and supportive, super-capable and committed core team forming around our mission, who I’ll hand over to share their thoughts on the last year in Changing Relations’ life...

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We created employment opportunities, internships and work placements for **36** students and creative practitioners.

We reached **839** people with our creative programming.

We delivered training to **39** schools and businesses, and collaborated with a further **16** in our project activity.



Non-Executive Directors

We are so grateful to our fabulous Non-Executive Directors, who have supported our continued growth and development over the last business year with an acuity of insight and depth of engagement and commitment that is truly above and beyond. Here are their reflections on the last business year.

Rachael Barnwell



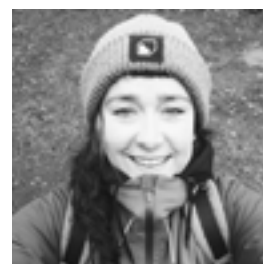
“ This year marks my first full year as a Non-Executive Director at Changing Relations. It was a year that saw expansion of training provision to schools and businesses, matching the unique strengths of the expanding Changing Relations team with growing and urgent needs of young people and those who support and care for them. We reached over 800 people through creative programming, bringing on board two new creative producers who have brought their skill, experience, sensitivity, and knowledge to projects that are socially engaged and transformative for the communities we serve. We also supported skills and creative careers for the students and creative practitioners who represent both the current talent and talented future of arts and culture organisations like ours.

We've taken steps to model the good practice we want to see in other organisations by developing and testing a supervision approach for the creative practitioners who are at the coalface of Changing Relations' work, modelled on the well-established approach of counselling and therapeutic professions. Traumatic experiences underlie much of the need we respond to, and we recognise the need to support those who, through their work with us, are likely to receive difficult disclosures about peoples' lived experiences. This person-centred innovation showcases the ways Changing Relations continues to grow and develop in line with its values, and as a leader in socially-engaged arts practice regionally and nationally.

It's been a particular joy to see Changing Relations' excellence receiving recognition in 2023. Our Managing Director Lisa was nominated for a North East Chamber of Commerce Inspiring Females Award, and was invited to attend the inaugural Domestic Abuse Commissioners conference. Lisa's passion, commitment, and expert knowledge is at the very foundation and heart of Changing Relations' work. This year, Lisa has also chosen to publicly share an honest view of the personal challenges that she faced as an entrepreneur leading a growing organisation, responding to pressing and developing needs at pace. In a culture that can glamourise the grind and expect perfection on our social media pages, her openness showed real leadership and commitment to values in action - I couldn't be prouder to support Lisa and the wider Changing Relations team, and I look forward to seeing what's in store for us in 2024.

”

Alix Collingwood-Swinburn



“ This year has been a particularly thought-provoking one for Changing Relations, not without its challenges, but the dedication of all those involved to continue driving and growing the work we do is incredible. It has also acted as a timely reminder that the wellbeing of all those involved in what we do is a priority objective. What Changing Relations does is unique and the work we do is, perhaps now more than ever, crucial. In a particularly challenging social and economic environment, our work with schools and businesses has grown substantially over the last year and continues to make a significant impact within the sector. Working with regional creatives on project delivery and training facilitation has not only enabled us to continue supporting the regional creative economy through paid work and skills development, but has also enabled expansion in delivery and impact. Over the last year, we have delivered high profile projects focused on intimate partner violence in young people (the highest risk age group for this behaviour), the influence of toxic masculinity currently prolific online, domestic abuse, and unhealthy sexual behaviours in student communities via peer to peer learning programmes. The influence of this work is noted nationally through Lisa's nomination for an Inspiring Females Award and participation in the Creative UK North East Create Growth programme. It is a privilege to be part of this unique team.

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Steering Group Co-Chairs

Although we are in a time of transition in terms of our company Steering Group, Stephen and Billie have continued to support Changing Relations with huge dedication, bringing their different strengths and expertise to the table to support the thematic development of our work and our capacity to gain greater profile across the North East, respectively. We are so grateful to have them on our team.

Dr Stephen Burrell



“ It has been a pleasure and a privilege to be involved with Changing Relations again this year as a co-chair of the steering group. The steering group is going through a period of transformation currently, but it has always been a joy to meet different people from communities across the North East who are eager to connect with Changing Relations, and to hear about their views and experiences and the powerful ways in which Changing Relations’ work resonates with them. So many people are affected and I’m honoured to support Changing Relations as a Non-Executive Director at this exciting time as they continue their essential

work in the north-east: working with Lisa and the wider team is a privilege and an inspiration, and I congratulate all who have been involved in making this last year a success. ”

“ In the last year, the Steering Group and its members have made a valuable contribution to Changing Relations. Early in the year, the Group responded to the cost-of-living crisis by exploring barriers artists, beneficiaries and communities may face to working with Changing Relations and later reviewed changes to the Group’s role within the governance structure to support new organisational and social goals. In my view, the biggest achievement of the Steering Group has been through many members becoming embedded in individual projects or areas of personal interest and experience; such as policies on working with artists, developing complimentary projects or providing insights on lived experience of domestic abuse in working groups.

Billie Jenkins



To reflect governance developments within Changing Relations, mid-year the decision was taken to develop the existing Steering Group model to meet two goals: to enable more diverse voices to participate and to provide an opportunity for art-based co-production that is used in Changing Relations practice. I have no doubt, that this next chapter will offer exciting opportunities for hearing more individuals with lived experience, generate meaningful insights to help shape projects, policies and ways of working, and create a space to nurture a new chapter of ideas and talent within the organisations.

Myself, Stephen and team are incredibly grateful to the Group members who have shared their creativity, expertise and time to support Changing Relations to deliver change to the communities it serves and transform the way people think about gender stereotypes and relationship behaviours. ”

Creative Producers

An exciting new development this year has been the introduction of two new freelance creative producers to manage our two main artistic developments: our play *A is for Amy* and creative resource development *Rabbits in Headlights*. This has afforded us a significant expansion in our capacity to develop and deliver arts-based projects to achieve social impact and it has been an absolute pleasure working with Kate and Sarah. Here is what they have to say about their new roles with Changing Relations. Thank you for all you have done. You both bring so much to the team.

Kate Gorman



“ Having worked with Changing Relations in a number of guises since its inception, I came on board as a creative producer in 2023 for the *A is for Amy* project. It has been an amazing experience in terms of the people I have worked with, the impact of the project itself, and the values alignment between myself and Changing Relations as an organisation. I have particularly valued being able to explore care-based creative production methodologies and I very much look forward to developing these further as I work on the upcoming *Weaving Stories of Peer Sexual Abuse* project and the next phase of *A is for Amy*. ”

Sarah Stamp



“ I have really enjoyed my work with Changing Relations both as a creative producer and as an artist on the *Rabbits in Headlights* project.

The aims of the project and wider work of Changing Relations are something I feel are important and align with my values as a socially engaged arts worker. When I started working with Changing Relations I was impressed by their innovative approach of using creativity to think and talk about these challenging themes. It felt like the perfect ‘way in’ to not only introduce challenging themes but to then have people explore them for themselves. The creative element acts like a bubble around themes like abuse or consent making them safe and approachable. Meaning people are able to think about and explore issues they would otherwise have not been able to, which is quite special!

Being able to be part of work which deals with such important themes and has important social outcomes really is a privilege for me. I think most people working in a socially engaged way want to feel their work has this kind of impact on the people they work with.

Working alongside Lisa and academics from Durham University has been a learning opportunity in many ways. The project has been really multi-faceted and I have enjoyed working with children and young people to test out and develop creative activities, and working with teachers to engage young people and trial resources, working with other creative practitioners to develop the resources and website. This has meant for a busy project! But it keeps things varied and interesting for me and allows us to include the voices and people who Changing Relations’ work is relevant to. ”



What has been developed?

What we developed in 22/23

Demystifying Domestic Abuse professional training

- We delivered a webinar for Business Durham inviting employers to recognise domestic abuse as a business matter, working with associate creative practitioner Jayne Johnson to refine and run 4 taster training days. We have begun developing a franchise relationship with a leadership coach in Ireland, keen to adopt our training model.

Who Wears the Trousers and What's All the Fuss About?

- We ran a programme around our previously developed artistic content (**Who Wears the Trousers?** and **What's All the Fuss About?**) for Durham University students to further diversity and inclusion from the gender perspective and challenge unhealthy sexual attitudes and behaviours. This involved co-creating a workshop programme and social media campaign with students who then delivered this to their peers.
- We drew on the **What's All the Fuss About?** artistic content to develop a teacher CPD themed around Positive and Inclusive RSE (Relationships and Sex Education).
- We also used this imagery as the basis for some pilot creative workshops with young people in Groundworks youth clubs.

Lads, lads, lads

- We devised CPD for teachers and youth workers based around our **Lads, lads, lads** publication which we delivered to a range of schools, some of whom went on to incorporate it into their schemes of work.



Artwork by Megan Eekie Watson

Where next for this work in 23/24?

- We are hoping to win funding to facilitate the recruitment of a Business Development Manager who could support us in gaining a significantly wider reach for our **Demystifying Domestic Abuse** training programme.

- We will go on to create an educational toolkit based around this artistic content and the developed learning methodologies and discussion points for schools, students and youth workers.



Artwork by Sofia Burton

- We will run a consultation around the **Lads, lads, lads** publication with an academic partner at Northumbria University to understand how we could develop and refine the content to ensure we engage young men and boys. We also plan to supplement this content with additional material around boys' attitudes to environmental activism through connecting with the research of our Steering Group Co-Chair, Dr Stephen Burrell.

What we developed in 22/23

Sometimes it Hurts: Rabbits in Headlights

- We developed a series of creative pastoral support resources linked to the stories in our **Sometimes it Hurts** book to help professionals to start tricky conversations with affected young people to ensure they get better support. We reproduced the book as 6 separate picture books for a younger primary-aged audience. We ran a development day to encourage teachers and youth workers to trial the resources and worked with Durham University to bring a Research Assistant on board to evaluate how this went.

Training using our resources for educators

- In addition to developing and delivering training around our **Lads, lads, lads** and **What's All the Fuss About?** resources, we delivered training for youth workers across East Durham based around our **What Would You Do?** sexting-themed resource which we had redesigned in the previous business year.

Sometimes it Hurts: A is for Amy

- We additionally developed a play **A is for Amy** – using one of the stories as a starting point to explore toxic teen relationships, when and how a friend might notice the red flags and how they could helpfully signpost their friend to specialist support. We developed and trialled workshops for young people to support them taking this key learning from the experience of watching the play.



Where next for this work in 23/24?

- We will hold a conference together with Durham University to share the learning from the pilot phase of our **Rabbits in Headlights** project and develop training for teachers around talking constructively about domestic abuse and using the content in their context.



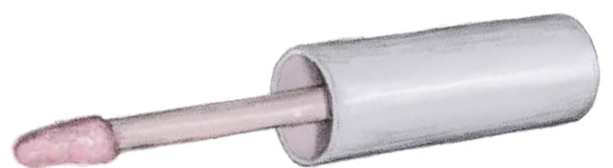
Artwork by Tamsin Rees

- We are looking to develop our website to clarify our portfolio of educational offers including resources and training opportunities.



Artwork by Merny Wernz

- We will raise funds to create a filmed version of A is for Amy and test a full scheme of work to accompany it, which we will capture in an educator toolkit. We will look at how we can use the teacher training and support resources developed in the Rabbits in Headlights project alongside the A is for Amy work to ensure that, where disclosures result from young people engaging in this programme of work, adults respond safely and supportively.



Artwork by Megan Eekie Watson

What we developed in 22/23

Visible Invisible (disability inclusion)

- We have been supporting artist Hope Simpson to develop an exhibition and engagement programme linked to the artwork and testimonies generated in the creation of our **Disability Inclusion & Equality Policy**.



Created by
Millie Stott

Weaving Stories of Peer Sexual Abuse

- We developed a partnership with the Rape Crisis service for Durham and Darlington (RSACC) to address peer sexual abuse and the ways in which schools respond to its occurrence. We assembled an artistic team and developed and submitted funding proposals to facilitate project delivery in 2024.

Where next for this work in 23/24?

- The **Visible Invisible** exhibition will be hosted by Durham County Council at Bishop Auckland Town Hall and Durham University. If funding allows, we hope to run a conference and workshop series to support opportunities for learning in relation to the themes.



Artwork by
Hope Simpson

- This work is now funded and will take place in 2024, working with a local school to co-produce an animation and linked workshops both for teachers and young people.



Artwork by Bettie Hope (aka Slutmouth)
from What's All The Fuss About

What we developed in 22/23

Business Planning

- We wrote a new, concise business plan to articulate our direction for funders, business partners and other stakeholders.



Where next for this work in 23/24?

- We will go on to develop a more detailed operational plan, with the support of the fantastic new mentor we have been paired with via the **Creative UK, North East Create Growth** programme, Catherine Johns. We will make both documents available on our website as part of our commitment to transparency around our aims and principles as an organisation.

Don't Look Away

- We ran a varied and in-depth consultation process around our plans to develop a community-based domestic abuse awareness-raising programme. This involved artist-in-residencies with partners Blackhall Community Centre, No More Nowt and The Auckland Project, as well as a sandpit event hosted by Durham University, including specialist support services as well as our local community project steering group.
- We will draw on the insights gained from this consultation to develop funding proposals to realise the **Don't Look Away** project, built around the concept of a "street museum," using our domestic abuse-themed artistic outputs to share key messaging, with a linked website and creative community engagement programme.



Artwork by Jayne Johson



Our numbers 2022-2023

Professional training, presentations and webinars

- 4 Northumbria University academics participated in workshop exploring the use of the arts for impact and engagement
- 30 Gateshead College drama students participated in workshop about work in the creative sector with a focus on socially-engaged art
- 23 Teachers from New College Durham and a range of Durham and North Tyneside Schools and youth groups participated in training about using our **Lads, lads, lads** resource to challenge thinking about masculinity
- 18 East Durham-based youth workers participated in training about how to use our sexting-themed resource, **What would you do?**
- 14 Teachers from Nelson Tomlinson School, Cumbria and Durham Sixth Form Centre participated in workshops about how a range of Changing Relations' resources could be used to supplement their RSE / PSHE delivery
- 120 North West-based health professionals participated in Safety Net conference workshop about listening to the voice of lived experience
- 30 Professionals participated in **Demystifying Domestic Abuse** training days
- 3 Professionals participated in webinar about domestic abuse as a workplace matter
- 40 Domestic abuse sector professionals participated in a presentation about our portfolio of domestic abuse-themed work
- 3 Teachers participated in a workshop around Positive and Inclusive RSE (Relationships and Sex Education) using our **What's All the Fuss About?** resource
- 12 Changing Lives and wider domestic abuse sector professionals participated in a critical friend event at which we presented the resources we had developed around men and relationships for Changing Lives
- 34 Durham University decision makers participated in presentations we co-delivered with our student steering group as part of the **Who Wears the Trousers? / What's All the Fuss About?** project development
- 20 Teachers and youth workers participated in **Rabbits in Headlights** project development days
- 20 Professionals participated in consultation event as part of **Don't Look Away** project development

Total project engagement during this business year: 371

General public audience and community participants

- 337 People saw our performance of **A is for Amy** in the Little Theatre, Gateshead (many of whom were young people from visiting schools and youth groups)
- 18 Local community members from Bishop Auckland and Blackhall took part in our **Don't Look Away** project Steering Group and creative consultation
- 19 Volunteers supported Changing Relations' project delivery

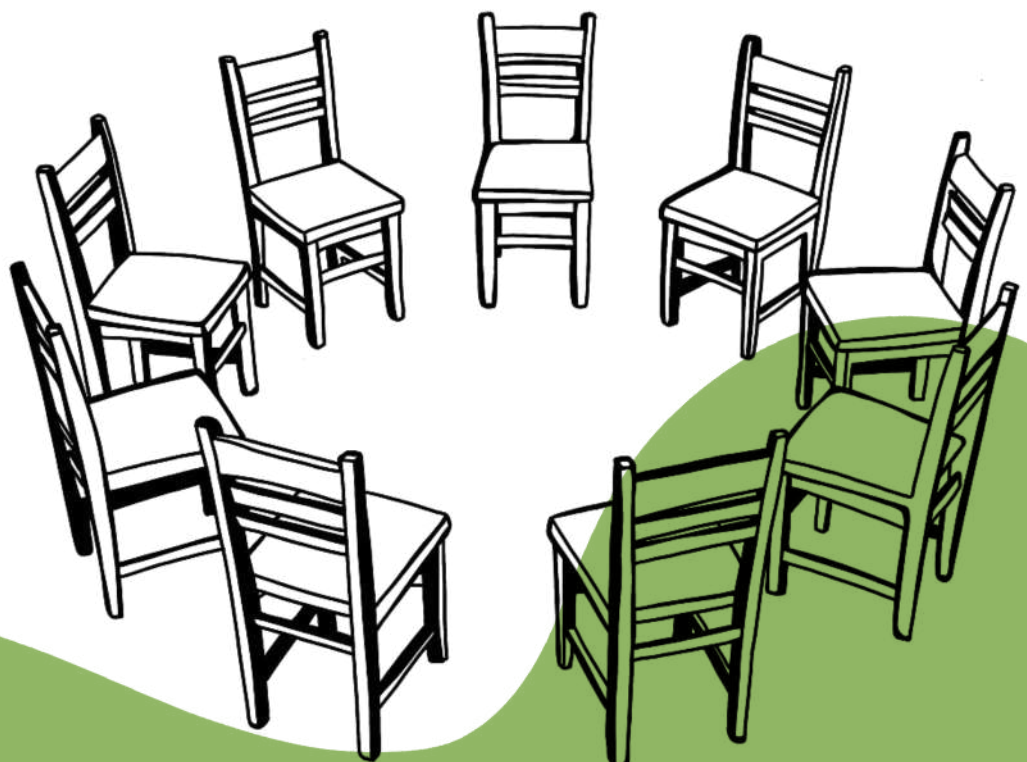
Total project engagement during this business year: 374

Young people

- 10 Young people from King James I Academy participated in a workshop themed around masculinity held in The Mining Art Gallery
- 16 Young people from Auckland Youth and Community Centre and Creative Youth Opportunities took part in the co-production of our play **A is for Amy**
- 20 Young people from Auckland Youth and Community Centre and George Stephenson High School participated in workshops linked to our play **A is for Amy** with many more after the end of the business year
- 48 Young people from schools across Bishop Auckland, Shildon and Newton Aycliffe participated in the co-creation of resources as part of our **Rabbits in Headlights** project

Total project engagement during this business year: 94

TOTAL ENGAGEMENT ACROSS ALL ACTIVITY THIS BUSINESS YEAR: 839



What did our participants say?

Professional training, presentations and webinars

Professionals who took part in our **Demystifying Domestic Abuse Workplace Training** taster days told us:

"[It] gave me more confidence to have those conversations."

"I want to reiterate how fantastic it was to experience the training you have developed as a participant (and a survivor)."

- 94% of participants felt strongly or very strongly that the workshop has made them more likely to ask someone if they are okay, if they thought they might be in an abusive/unhealthy relationship.
- 100% of participants felt strongly or very strongly that they would take new or different actions within their organization as a result of the workshop.



An attendee of our webinar exploring **Domestic Abuse as a Workplace Matter** commented:

"I think anyone who works in HR or who has line management responsibilities should attend one of these to help provide you with the knowledge and expertise should you ever encounter anything similar in your workplace. I feel much more confident about undertaking such support with a member of staff should I need to - thank you."

Teachers who took part in our **Positive and Inclusive Relationships and Sex Education CPD** told us:

"I learnt how the arts may be used as a starting point for difficult topics"

"How would I describe today? Revolutionary!"



- 85% of participants felt strongly or very strongly that the workshop raised their awareness of how to navigate consent and coercion in a more nuanced way, more applicable to students' real life relationships

Youth Workers who took part in our **Sexting** training told us:

"I feel more confident in how I would deliver this in a group setting"

Participants found it:

"informative, interesting, knowledgeable, fun, brilliant, engaging, educational, enjoyable, detailed, good resources, helpful, real"

- 94% felt the workshop made them more confident to explore the themes with their young people.



Who Wears the Trousers? and What's All the Fuss About?

Durham University students involved in our project **Steering Group** commented:

"I think it's really original to work through these topics through art and creation. Because I think it sort of, it creates a safe space to talk about these topics, the creativity from it then allows you to really delve deep into your own brain to remember more from your own experiences and you reflect more on whether you think you've done things right, the injustices that you've seen, perhaps how you could have addressed things differently. Yeah, just the creativity that it spurs within your own thought."

- 80% felt they developed leadership skills through the project
- Students overwhelmingly felt that their ideas were taken seriously and they were treated as equals
- 100% said they felt more confident to challenge unhealthy sexual or gender based attitudes and behaviours.

"[I am feeling] disheartened by the statistics: encouraged by the resources"

"I feel empowered to be HONEST, even in taboo situations"



Lads, lads, lads

Teachers attending our **Toxic Masculinity CPD** said:

"I learnt about the use of art to inspire debate"
"I will open up discussion with male students and colleagues around masculinity, what it means and its impact."



King James I Academy students attending our **Lads and the Mag** workshop at the Mining Art Gallery, Bishop Auckland, said:

"I am going to stop hiding how I feel from people"
"Some of my own language is not helpful. Some of the phrases I hear regularly should be challenged"
"I am going to remind my male friends that I am always there for them and that it is OK to be vulnerable"

Of our teaching and student participants:

- 95% felt strongly or very strongly that the workshop raised their awareness of alternative responses to men and boys.
- 95% found the learning approach and content effective or very effective.

Those in the audience of our play told us:

"We came away feeling that it was a very powerful piece of drama... I think drama and the arts is such a useful way to engage young people about these important topics."

"The young people I supported told me they found the performance easy to relate to and powerful. On the journey home the young people opened up about their own experiences. I think being an observer on the situation gave them a completely new perspective. I thought this production was absolutely fantastic.... If it was to show again I would definitely bring young people and encourage others to do the same... It was brilliant, please continue to produce such amazing education."

"I came away from the performance thinking to myself that every young person should be able to see something like this, and that there is probably no better way of making a young person aware of how an abusive relationship comes about."

"Pupils spoke about how they had not realised that some of their behaviours displayed were abusive, but now they understand that they are."



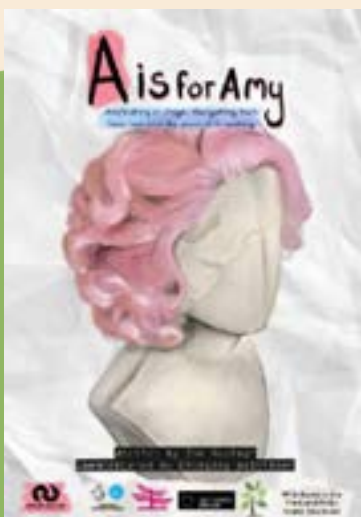
Young people attending the workshops run to develop the understanding linked to the play told us:

"[I feel] comfortable with this topic. I'd never talked about it until today."

"[I feel] empowered"

"Today's workshop was engaging and delivered superbly, and it's created the space for some essential conversations both in and out of the session. The students carried on discussing much of the content into the afternoon. It was particularly tough going for one or two, but it's given them the opportunity to talk about things that need to be talked about and given them the impetus to ask for help more openly. It has also reinforced so much of what we tell them; it's so valuable to have outside voices give them that same message that they aren't alone."

- 82% said that they now had a much greater knowledge of where to access support for people in an abusive relationship.
- 94% said that they were now much more confident that they could recognise that a friend's relationship was toxic
- 86% had a clear understanding of how hard it is to leave an abusive relationship



Rabbits in Headlights

- When we asked the young people who took part in our **Youth Creative Action Group**, as part of the process of developing our resources for the project website if they felt confident that they know what behaviours are ok and not ok in relationships, 100% agreed or strongly agreed.
- All of the supporting adults who attended the **Youth Creative Action Group** rated the approach of using creativity as a way to support young people explore themes as effective or very effective.

These supporting adults commented:

"The books are a great starting point for discussion."

"This approach allows expression without judgement."

"I have increased awareness of children's understanding of these issues."



Teachers attending the **Development Days** designed to give them confidence to trial the use of the resources as part of the project, told us:

"Thank you – great resources and an enjoyable course."

"I think that the resources are excellent and very child / young person friendly and I am sure that they will be well used."

"Thank you – a lot of ideas taken away."



Work placements and opportunities created

Over this year, we created opportunities for:

25 Freelance creative practitioners to work on our projects and training offers, including:

- Managing projects as creative producers
- Creating new artworks and learning materials
- Delivering training based around our creative outputs
- Drafting and editing proposals
- Designing publications and other creative communication tools

7 Student interns from a range of institutions, including:

- Durham University via the Social Enterprise Live Placement programme – 1 student
- Durham University via The Work of Art, Professional Skills and Work Placement in the Visual Arts. Module (open to students doing a BA degree in Liberal Arts or who study the history of art) – 1 student
- The Northern School of Art, providing 2 students for Assistant Stage Manager work placements – 2 students
- Gateshead College, providing a student for an Assistant Stage Manager work placement – 1 student
- The Northern School of Art, providing 2 students for Assistant Stage Manager work placements – 2 students
- Northumbria University via the Sociology department's internship scheme – 2 students

2 Research Assistants via Durham University.

We additionally provided mentoring / coaching support to:

2 Artists on an individual basis, supporting them to consider how they can take the next step in their professional practice, including considering how to approach developing and writing an Arts Council proposal.

TOTAL EMPLOYMENT / PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT RELATED OPPORTUNITIES CREATED: 36



Artwork by Lou Brown
(aka Good Strange Vibes)
in *What's All the Fuss About?*

Impact statements from creative practitioners we have supported or created work opportunities for



Zoë Murtagh was the fabulous script writer and director of our new play A is for Amy. Given the challenging theme of toxic teen relationships, we gave all the creative practitioners involved in the project the opportunity to access supervision with Sue Spencer, who provided a safe space for reflection and exploration. On working with Sue, Zoë commented,

“ The opportunity to spend some time working with Sue has been a crucial and valuable addition to my role on this project. The space to explore the themes, working practices, celebrations and challenges of the project has allowed me to focus and centre my energy on creating high quality work that reflects the stories participant collaborators have shared with us. By offering this supervision support, Changing Relations have acknowledged the specialist and highly skilful work Sue provides in protecting artists’ wellbeing whilst working on important and thematically difficult work. The sessions have given me time to reflect upon and analyse my practice. This funded support has proved how important it is to include reflection and wellbeing in socially engaged practice. ”

Zoë Murtagh



Alice Westall is a Durham University student who supported our Rabbits in Headlights project with a helpful literature review, highlighting the gaps in existing interventions supporting young people affected by domestic abuse in their homes, and the way in which our approach had something valuable to contribute.

“ During the Easter break in 2023, I was fortunate enough to be offered the opportunity to work as an independent researcher for Changing Relations. During the internship I conducted a desk-based literature review and mapping exercise to highlight the innovative and vital nature of their ‘Rabbits in Headlights’ initiative. The internship was particularly beneficial for me as it allowed me to apply the theoretic knowledge I had gained through my degree in a real-world setting and to contribute to something deeply important. With the support of Lisa as well as Nikki and Ladan at Durham University, the internship provided me the opportunity to strengthen my research, analysis, and project management skills, as well as develop a deep understanding of the complexities surrounding domestic abuse interventions and resources for children. My time interning at Changing Relations was an invaluable experience that not only equipped me with practical research skills and knowledge but also fostered a sense of accomplishment by enabling me to contributing to meaningful research that has the potential to make a positive impact in addressing domestic abuse. ”

Alice Westall



Hope Simpson is a talented young artist who has been on our company steering group for a number of years and was pivotal in shaping the Disability Equality and Inclusion Policy we produced in the last business year. This year we have worked closely with Hope to support her in developing the beautiful and insightful artworks she created as part of this process into a public exhibition which will materialise in 2024.

“ For many years I’ve worked as an independent artist, struggling with many health issues that have limited my capacity. Lisa’s approach to not only adapting projects to my needs, but stressing the importance of accessibility and self-advocacy within the work I take on, has been an invaluable lesson and something for me to take forward as I develop my career. As someone just emerging into the art and social enterprise world, she has always made me feel capable and strengthened my belief in my own abilities, while also being on hand whenever I need to seek guidance. She has given me a confidence boost that has majorly skyrocketed my ability to put myself out there and broaden both my artistic and community-based horizons. ”

Hope Simpson



Adina Corbos is a Northumbria University student who supported our A is for Amy project with evaluation tools and analysis.

“ Throughout my internship with Changing Relations, I had the opportunity to meet and work with amazing people. As a criminology student, this internship had a great impact by providing real-world experience. I have gained insight into many aspects of the criminal justice system and domestic abuse. My understanding has changed and helped me, and the participants, understand and recognise intimate partner violence. This experience enhanced my understanding of this criminological topic and helped me develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, communication and writing skills. Lastly, this internship helped me develop an idea for my undergraduate dissertation and it served as a great opportunity for networking and mentorship. ”

Adina Corbos



Megan Watson is a freelance designer who began working with us on a Kickstart placement coming out of the pandemic. She has grown immeasurably as an artist in the subsequent years, with a quick and intuitive grasp of our brand and themes which we value enormously.

“ I studied Design at Goldsmiths University. Following my graduation in 2020, during the pandemic, I sought a creative career and was fortunate enough to connect with Changing Relations. It has been a rewarding experience to collaborate with Lisa and various teams on such important and educational projects. Lisa’s creative approach to visual communication makes every project an exciting opportunity to try something new and push my artistic skill set. Over the years, my collaborative and creative skills have developed exponentially thanks to the opportunity presented by Changing Relations.

I am currently studying MA Fine Art at the Glasgow School of Art and look forward to applying my new knowledge to future projects. ”

Megan Eekie Watson

Our finances 2022-2023

Income

Income £112,675

Of which:

Sales comprised

£25,319 22% of total income

Grants comprised

£87,356 78% of total income

Expenditure

£121, 883

How we spent it:

What's All the Fuss about development

8%

Training delivery, development and core costs

16%

Rabbits in Headlights project

35%

A is for Amy

41%

Operating deficit

-£9,083

Whilst our accounts for this financial year show an operating deficit, we would note that this was in part due to income owing unpaid during this financial year and income deferred to the next financial year due to project grants running over multiple years with a tendency for front-loaded spend. Our cash flow is healthy, with a number of grants and commissions for projects due to take place in the next financial year being confirmed around the time of the current year end.

We're conscious that our income has dropped fractionally (by 2% from £115,413 to £112,675) but are confident that we should be due a significant increase in the next financial year, as, at the time of writing (March 2024), our confirmed income is already approaching our turnover for the whole of the financial year we are reporting on. The relatively stationary income recorded here is partially due to the longer-term approach we have been taking to project planning: we have been taking our time to develop larger-scale, carefully mapped out projects with strategic partners, as well as nurturing relationships that will result in commissions in the coming year.

We would finally acknowledge the drop in the proportion of earned vis-à-vis grant income from the previous to current year (from 45% to 22%). This is a reflection of our current lead generation capacity, which we hope to be able to redress in 2024 if we succeed in winning core business development funding that would enable us to hire a Business Development Manager. Watch this space...

Thank you to our funders and commissioners



Thank you to our delivery partners



Training delivered to

Karbon Homes
CIPD Tees Valley
Middlesbrough Council
Cornforth Partnership
Nelson Tomlinson School
Gateshead College
Humankind
New College
Northumberland Council
Creative Youth Opportunities
Shotton Community Centre
Harrogate and District NHS Foundation Trust
Groundwork North East and Cumbria
HR Alchemy
NHS North of England Commissioning Service
Silverdale School
Durham Sixth Form Centre
Hebburn School
King's Priory School
King James I Academy
Norham Academy
Aioi Nissay Dowa
Claire Rolston Law
Pioneering Care Partnership
Bridge Creative
Shelborn Asset Management
North of Tyne Combined Authority
George Stephenson High School
North Tyneside Council
John Spence Community high School
Burnside College
St Thomas More Academy
Rape and Sexual Assault Counselling Centre
Vane Road Primary School
Woodham Burn Primary School
Bishop Auckland College
St John's Primary School, Shildon
Copeland Road Primary School
Auckland Youth and Community Centre

Thank you to our Associate Creative Practitioners

Kate Gorman
Allie Young
Zoe Murtagh
Bridget Hamilton
Bridie Jackson
Jayne Johnson
Kamilla Jonsson
Becky Glendenning-Laycock
Sarah Stamp
Olivia Rowe
Megan Eekie Watson
Michelle Harland
Sam McCormick
Alice Fuller
Lucy Engelhart
Lucy Curry
Sue Spencer
Laura Lindow
Jonny Larman
Maya Torres
Kaitlyn Maxfield
Tamsin Rees
Jojo Kirtley
Ashlea Sanderson
Cath Easton

Thank you to our interns, research assistants and work placement students

Katy Scott
Lizzy Potter
Hannah Trafford
Lainey Shuyu Lin
Alice Westall
Luke Robson
Adina Corbos
Rivers Steanson
Cait Jobson

CHANGING RELATIONS

Annual Report

October 2022 - November 2023

