



ANNUAL REPORT OF ACTIVITIES 2016 – 17

Summary

Playback Theatre is a participatory improvisational theatre form that is designed to strengthen communities, build resilience and enable positive change.

Playback Theatre South West engages marginalised and minority groups. We provide the opportunity and environment for people to share their enlightening stories, ideas, emotions and experiences through the medium of Playback Theatre. Two groups deliver performances. Mirror Mirror works with all genders and all ages; Tarte Noire works with women of all ages and backgrounds.

In 2016 – 2017 Playback Theatre South West has provided activities to support the refugee community and develop skills that support their social integration in Plymouth.

We have provided opportunities for women to gain understanding of issues that affect their lives, strengthen their voices in their communities and build confidence to take leadership roles. Women from different cultures have grown understanding of each other's lives and built connections promoting equality and diversity and social integration.

We have built social cohesion through regular performances in community venues in Devon. We have involved people with learning disabilities in our activities in Totnes.

We took part in Clinical Psychology events at Plymouth University; Liverpool University and we assisted the British Psychological Society in the national launch of the Experts by Experience Strategy – supporting dialogue between professionals and Experts by Experience.

We have visited a secure mental health hospital to support men in their recovery and we were involved making a film with Recovery Devon to celebrate projects people with mental health issues had done in their communities promoting and supporting mental wellbeing.

We were involved in a conference for understanding emotional wellbeing in schools developing skills for support workers and teachers.

We provided training for Playback Theatre practitioners for UK School of Playback Theatre and School of Playback Theatre Italy to develop their skills. We participated in peer supervision for Accredited Trainers to share good practice.

The main activities of the charity are overseen and approved by the Trustees to ensure they are in accordance with the declaration issued by the Charity Commission on public benefit.



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Trustees and members of the performing companies Mirror Mirror and Tarte Noire volunteer in the following ways; fundraising; awareness raising; promotional activities; rehearsal time; administrative support.

The performance of the organisation has strengthened – The Trustees have worked together establishing roles and responsibilities.

Long term projects

Sharing Stories Sharing Support - A community project for refugees in Plymouth

This one year project brought people together in workshops and groups where 120 refugees of all ages; 16 work placement students from Plymouth University; 12 BME women along with 24 volunteers participated in theatre activities. 30 workshops and performances provided a safe place to share lived experiences and gain support for difficult life experiences as well as issues of integration; an understanding of different cultures as well as improved speaking and listening of English language.

Tarte Noire Project - A community project for women in Devon

A women's theatre company at the heart of this project developed skills to give 12 performances in local venues for women of all ages to explore issues that affect women's lives together. The company offered 24 workshops and performances for 75 refugee women in Plymouth. Women audiences gained understanding of issues they face; felt less isolated and strengthened their voice in the community as a result of their engagement with the activities. Mixed audiences explored issues of violence towards women and children and gained understanding in order to speak out to prevent this.

Mardi Dah - A community project for people with learning disabilities in Torbay

Members of Mardi Dah theatre company and their families and carers (18) participated in 6 Mirror Mirror Playback Theatre events in Totnes where opportunities for social integration between people with different learning needs were offered and life experiences were shared and understood.

Community Performances



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Mirror Mirror and Tarte Noire gave 15 performances in local venues in Teignmouth, Totnes, Exeter and Plymouth where women only audiences and mixed audiences were invited to share their enlightening stories. Regular performances have supported people to explore personal and social issues that affect their lives. People feel less isolated and social cohesion is built as a result.

Young Carers in Torbay

Playback Theatre South West has built a strong links with Torbay Carers - an organisation that supports 160 young carers in schools in Torbay - to collaborate on delivering a Playback Theatre support programme of workshops and performances for young carers groups in 6 schools. Funding applications to continue this important work are in process.

Short term projects

British Psychological Society – Dept Clinical Psychology Experts by Experience Strategy National Launch

National launch of the Experts by Experience Strategy – whereby people with experience as service users shared their insights with members of DCP and vice versa. Mirror Mirror helped break down potential barriers and give the professionals and the experts by experience an equal platform to explore the issues they are facing.

The use of Playback Theatre as a facilitatory tool can be seen to have been an effective way of bringing two sides of a community together and for all voices to be heard. The recreations of each other's concerns helped to build common ground upon

Liverpool University - Dept Clinical Psychology Annual Review Day

Clinical psychologists from around the northwest, together with trainees, Experts by Experience, representatives from local community groups and course staff all attended the Programme Annual Review Day on 1st December 2016. Playback Theatre South West facilitated the day with improvisational performances based on dialogue and contributions of attendees.

The event has generated much feeling, passion, discussion and debate with many positive comments about your Playback Theatre work. Dr. Laura Golding - Programme Director

Plymouth University Dept Clinical Psychology – End of Training Feedback



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Mirror Mirror reflected the learning experiences of graduates at the end of the 3 year Clinical Psychology PHD programme.

Mental Health engagement

Recovery Devon invited Mirror Mirror to support a day to celebrate the success of projects run by service users and supported by Recovery Devon. Stories were shared about projects that built awareness of mental illness and offered support in creative ways to communities in Devon. A film was made to show these successes.

Langdon Hospital invited Mirror Mirror to support the recovery of men in a secure mental health unit. A workshop and performance gave men an opportunity to share with others the steps they are taking towards recovery.

Thrive - Emotional wellbeing in Education Away Day

Thrive invited Playback Theatre South West to offer skills development workshops for support workers and teachers across Devon at a conference day in Exeter.

Training Activities

We have raised the standard of our training delivery by supporting two practitioners to gain international Accreditation for Trainers from the Centre for Playback Theatre. Our training is aligned with international standards and is affiliated with the UK School of Playback Theatre. We have ensured practitioners have professional supervision, ongoing skills development and opportunities to share good practise with the wider Playback Theatre community. Three local courses have been run for the public in Totnes and short courses for students of the UK School and the Italian School. Tarte Noire have had Open Rehearsals for women who have attended a training course.