



# digital:works

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annual report 2020-21

# About digital:works



## **Participation Through Creative Skills**

digital:works is a group of artists and trainers who work with local communities, providing training and creative assistance, to produce arts and media projects.

We are committed to a participatory approach. Creative arts are an exciting way for people of all ages and backgrounds to engage with and learn more about others from their local community – especially if they are the ones shaping and leading the creative process.

Thanks to our breadth of experience and expertise, we can provide training and creative support in a wide range of media, from web development, video and digital animation, to textile and oral history projects.

## **Accessible Projects for All**

Our commitment to participation means we place great emphasis on inclusivity.

Our projects actively involve people from all corners of the community – be they young or old, visually or hearing impaired, or someone for whom English is not the first language.

The skills required in taking part in our projects do not depend on advanced media literacy or prior experience with digital equipment.

## **Community Ownership**

Our goal with all projects is to encourage and maintain participants' sense of ownership of both the process and the final product. This, we believe, is the guiding principle of true participation work.

# Chair's Report

Like many organisations it has been a year of curtailments, postponements and cancellations. Our Push Up Brentford project interviews were curtailed by COVID-19 but we managed a couple more once restrictions lifted slightly which was enough to allow us to complete the project.

Our On the Post project, due to take place in schools post-SATs, was cancelled but Heritage Lottery Fund allowed us to use the grant on other activities that could be achieved during lockdown or when restrictions were less severe. One of these was the development of our podcast channel. Not only did we utilise the time to create seven podcasts from the Push Up Brentford interviews but we also revisited past projects.

We believed that restrictions easing would allow us to run an adult volunteer-led project looking at Cinema Projectionists with the BFI more easily than a schools' project relying on many partners. HLF agreed that we could use the remainder of the On the Post grant for this. We set the project up twice and twice it was postponed due to further lockdowns. Although frustrating we are pleased to say it did go ahead successfully in 2021-22.

We reapplied for the On the Post project to HLF and were once again successful with the bid and were able to run it in 2021-22 as a post-SATs project.

The one project we were able to start and finish within the year was Every Kinda People, a commission for Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association. We interviewed some of their residents about music and how it shaped different eras of their lives. These were turned into podcasts with clips of their music choices and streamed online.

2021-22 has already proved to be a busy year as we complete the projects that were postponed and hope that we can continue to be actively involved in working face-to-face with schools and communities to tell people's stories.

**Peter McKenna**, *Chair*

# Review of the Year

digital:works have completed one National Lottery Heritage Funded project this year, an oral history of Brentford Football Club, and one commission from Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association. We also developed and launched our new podcast channel which is to become an integral part of our work in the future.



*A Socially distanced launch at the Water and Steam Museum*

## **Push Up Brentford! - An Oral History of Brentford Football Club**

This project was created to coincide with Brentford Football Club leaving their home of 116 years to move into a new, purpose-built stadium less than a mile away. A very emotional time for fans of the club.

A group of 16 volunteers aged between 16 and 73 (mostly but not entirely fans of the club) were trained in oral history, sound recording and interviewing techniques, conducted historical research at the local archives and were treated to a tour of the club's ground and a history workshop before developing questions for fans, former players and managers.

They conducted 21 interviews before lockdown and two more when restrictions were lifted. We used lockdown to create a series of seven very well-received podcasts from the interviews collected [an idea that came from one of the volunteers].

Lockdown meant that the project required a time extension to complete the film documentary which was launched at the Water and Steam Museum in Kew in October 2020 to a socially distanced audience. Our partners Brentford FC Community Sports Trust developed learning material based on the film and took them into local primary schools and ran workshops around the themes it brings up. Bees United - the Supporters Trust - also used the film as an integral part of their new semi-permanent exhibition of the history of the club at the Water and Steam Museum in Kew.

[www.pushupbrentford.org.uk](http://www.pushupbrentford.org.uk)

## Every Kinda People

We were commissioned by Notting Hill Genesis Housing Association to run an oral history podcast project built around how music shaped people's lives. The original intention was to train up some of their residents to conduct the interviews but it was felt COVID-19 might return to make that difficult, so we conducted the interviews ourselves. The completed podcasts include extracts from the songs/pieces of music chosen by the interviewees and are streamed on MixCloud. It was a fascinating project to be part of and the finished pieces are both very enjoyable to listen to and often very emotional.



## Digital-works Podcast Channel

As the first lockdown hit and we were unable to run our Heritage Lottery Funded On the Post project we were allowed to divert some of the grant towards creating some podcasts. We created a series of seven podcasts for the Push Up Brentford project while waiting for restrictions to lift so we could carry on with the film side of the project. We released these on the Beesotted podcast channel who have built up over 2,000 subscribers. We then looked

back over some of our previous projects and created many more series. These radio documentary style podcasts allow us much more time to showcase the material we have collected for each project, in an accessible format, than we could in our films. We have now created our own channel which people subscribe to using any major podcast app or they can be accessed via the digital-works website or the individual project website.



## Future Projects

Confirmed projects for 2021/22 include our On the Post project for which we successfully reapplied to Heritage Lottery Fund. Westminster Archives Cato Street Conspiracy project postponed from last year will run in the Summer of 2021. Autumn 2021 will see us run our adult volunteer-led oral history project with cinema projectionists. We have been commissioned by the Pothohar Association to work with adult volunteers to record the history of their community and their journey to the UK. We have also been successful in our bid to extend our work in sporting heritage to explore the history of AFC Wimbledon in early 2022.

# Financial Report

The independent examination covered the year 6th April 2020 to 5th April 2021.

Our total income for the period was £47,760 [£130,412] made up mainly from Restricted Funds (successful funding applications) consisting of £19,970 [£98,912] accounted for mainly by the second instalment for the Brentford FC and final payment for the Evacuees project. Designated Income (commissions) amounted to £25,590 [£28,250]. The balance is made up from voluntary and management fees.

Our total expenditure to date is £55,033 [£116,330] which has mostly been spent directly on costs relating to the HLF funded projects £49,257 [£88,659], the commissions £3,900 [£25,750] and governance costs of £1,876 [£1,921] which includes insurance costs and accountancy fees.

The difference between income and expenditure over the year can be accounted for by projects being funded in one financial year while expenditure takes place in another.

We have no fixed assets as yet so are not affected by depreciation. We have no current liabilities.

Please contact us by email if you would like a copy of the full accounts.

*[Last year's figures in brackets]*

## Trustees

Peter McKenna (Chair)  
David Rogers (Treasurer)  
Sally Booth (Vice-Chair)  
Jenny Donaldson

## Workers

Sav Kyriacou  
Matthew Rosenberg  
Mona Carr  
Thanks to Peter Daniel



*The launch of Escaping the Blitz at the BFI*

**digital-works**   
documenting life-stories through creative participation

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