



CHAT TRUST

Giving a voice to the voiceless since 1992

CHAT TRUST

Newsletter and appeal 2018



Churches Acting Together in Arthur's Hill turned 25 in 2017. Despite operating in a difficult financial climate we had one of our best years in terms of service delivery with a total of 531 sessions and 6870 attendances.



CHAT is known for the work that it does bringing together diverse groups of people from different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, building individual skills to help people become positive citizens, and even helping people to reach their dreams which include, appearing in award winning films, being invited to support high profile performers such as Akala on stage, achieving their bachelor's, master's or PhD degrees and securing jobs that they are passionate about.



It is fitting that before we start on the next phase of our journey that we take this opportunity to pause for a moment to remember, and thank all of the people who have made our work possible. After all, without the people who have worked tirelessly to support us, without the funders who have given most generously and without the people who have accessed our projects and services – we would not be here. THANK YOU





CHAT Trust: The BASE- our youth project for 12 – 21 year olds living in the West End of Newcastle delivered 454 sessions with 2601 attendances. Our core work included drop-in sessions designed to enable us to develop working relationships with the young people, Studio sessions for those who wished to develop their music skills, and support sessions to help with CV's, life skills, and problem solving.



Partnership work with GemArts, Patchwork Project, Streetwise, Fenham Association of Residents, and ISIS Arts brought extra activities and added value to what we offered thus enabling us to develop the deeper, stronger relationships with the young people that leads to positive change.



Highlights include 18 of our young people receiving their Bronze Arts Award and performing at The Sage Gateshead as part of the East By North East Project. The showcase at The Sage was awesome; everyone performed at the top of their game and the atmosphere was brilliant. CHAT took 7 acts: Gipsy Diamond, Gipsy Airmax, Provident Band, Gipsy Hairspray, Gipsy Lipstick, The Collective, and Kay Greyson – in all 30 young people.



Watching our young women gain in confidence through photography (ISIS Arts); going ice-skating (The Key + Streetwise); Conflict Resolution Training (Building A Stronger Britain Together, The Mix); and through general access to the Project.



Whilst we can have an impact over a short space of time, it is in the long term that we are seeing the outworking of our investment in young people. A number of our Alumni have achieved their degrees and are now working in their field of choice. Others have completed apprenticeships, or developed their skills to enable them to gain employment in the field of their choice. The next generations are also setting their sights on their futures and looking to what they need to do to succeed. Our cascade system, skill sharing, training, mentoring, volunteering, employment works.



Reclaim the Lanes – our environmental community engagement project run in partnership with Greening Wingrove CIC delivered 4 street sessions with 279 attendances. In addition smaller groups took to the back lane to paint more walls.



We ran a much shorter programme than normal for this project, and that wasn't all about funding or lack of it. The installation of the new communal bins has changed the nature of the back lanes and the scope for turning them into community spaces; as obviously the bins are a permanent feature and cannot be removed into back yards.



That said, the community street sessions were well attended and we added another mural made by local artist Matt Kelliher and our young women and painted a number of walls which has made a significant difference to the way a part of our back lane looks. We are hoping to extend the paint work so that more of the back lane is decorated.



We are often asked why we do this project, what is the point? From our perspective people are the solution to a lot of the problems we face. Residents want to live in a greener, cleaner environment so they have to be part of the solution. *Reclaim the Lanes* is an intervention to engage with local residents to involve them in the broader decision making process and to help them see that they are not powerless to effect change – they have a voice.



Involving young people in the decision making process as to what activities they would like to see as part of *Reclaim the Lanes* brought face painting, henna, music and green activities into the back lane. Involving them in the simpler decisions has encouraged them to get involved in training and helping to set the programme for CHAT. ISIS Arts brought photography in differing formats and wreath making, whilst Time Exchange provided different plants to take home and grow.



Outreach – new for 2017 was our outreach programme for 11 – 21 year olds based, until November, in the Bike Garden in Nunsmoor Park and then back at CHAT due to the dark nights and safety issues. Over the year we ran 43 sessions with 1306 attendances. Sessions were funded by Greening Wingrove and the Commissioner’s Fund.



Working with young people from diverse communities, we aimed to bring them together to promote understanding and build an integrated community. Young people benefited from our work through becoming involved in the decision-making process, primarily around the activities developed on the Friday evenings. They learnt about their place in the community, how their behaviour impacted on the broader community, and what they needed to be aware of as members of the community; how to contribute to the broader decision making process as to what happens in the development of the park and beyond.



Highlights of the Outreach work were the building of relationships with far more diverse groups of young people than being based in our regular building. We were also able to run mixed gender sessions, which worked given our access to both indoor and outdoor space. In addition, we began building relationships with young people who were not initially interested in accessing any kind of provision and had some very interesting conversations relating to our key aims.



Over the summer we were able to offer a placement to Andrew Teasdale who was working on his Forest School Certificate. For 6 weeks he provided forest school skills with a core group of young people attending the Outreach sessions. These were really well received and we are intending to offer these types of sessions again in future, funding permitting.





Events- In 2017 we were involved in 30 events with a combined total of 2684 attendances.

The biggest event for us was the partnership delivery of the Circus and Party in the Park. Held over 4 days at the beginning of June, CHAT Trust worked with Circus Central and Greening Wingrove to bring an excellent community opportunity to our local Nunsmoor Park. Together we organised 4 circus performances, 8 community workshops, 5 family workshops and 1 huge community party. CHAT Trust anchored both the bookings and attendances plus hosted the music stage on the Sunday with a number of young people and former participants enjoying entertaining the crowd. Our ongoing involvement with local residents helped us to engage with those deemed hard to reach which meant that between the partners the event was well attended and reflected the diversity of our local community.

With Nunsmoor Centre Trust we celebrated 10 years of Diversity and supported Fenham Association of Residents with their first music festival.

Independently, the main highlight for us would be the O2 shows later in the year held as fundraising events for the CHAT Trust. Both shows exceeded expectations thanks to the fantastic venue, awesome performers, and amazing crowd. Louis Thomas excelled himself in bringing together a combination of established stars on the Northern Hip Hop Scene and up and coming new talent. It really was something to celebrate and the events proved that CHAT Trust could put on evenings to remember. It was a great experience for our young people to see what was possible if you are prepared to put the work in and to see what being involved in a high profile event meant.

Support from the O2 means that there will be further events in 2018.



Building Refurbishment

We have a couple of wonderful volunteers who are currently transforming our building. Katrina Jordison and Michael Richardson originally asked if they could help CHAT Trust out by painting the kitchen.

Since then they have worked tirelessly, giving up most of their weekends, to refurbish the rest of the building. They have been helped by donations of laminate flooring and carpets which look wonderful in their new homes. Words cannot express how grateful we are for their investment in CHAT.

Their aim in helping us is to make the building a place that people would want to use. They have certainly succeeded in that, as bookings to use the space are on the increase as the building looks “less like a shed and more like a home”.

Appeal

During its 25 years the CHAT Trust has achieved a great deal, especially in its specific aim of transforming lives and we would like to continue doing that. Our world in which we live is a challenging one, and through our interventions we give people a space to come to so they can work through some of those challenges. We do not claim to be 100% effective we cannot fix people, but we can give them a voice and support them through their life choices.



We currently need your help in securing our future. Project funds are becoming



increasingly difficult to secure, and as a project we need to be robust financially to attract further funding. Trustees, employees, participants, and volunteers have been working on this endeavour since August last year. So far we are still here. We are looking for contributions to our core costs which are the general running costs of the charity which underpins what is needed for us to do our intervention work such as gas, electric, rent, salaries, equipment, repairs – these are the most difficult funds to secure.

In order to achieve this; we need to raise at least £5000. If you are interested in supporting our work, no matter how much that may be, or if you want more information about us before you decide please visit our website, www.chattrust.co.uk where you can see more of what we do, as well as find our donation link via TheBigGive near the bottom of the homepage.