

ANNUAL REPORT



24

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ARTCORE

Who we are

Artcore is a visual arts charity. Nestled in the heart of Derby, UK, it stands as a vibrant international hub for contemporary art and creativity. Embracing the rich, cultural tapestry of Derby, the East Midlands, and beyond, the organisation serves as a dynamic platform for ever-evolving artistic expressions. Our diverse offerings include a rotating lineup of art exhibitions, engaging creative activities tailored for both adults and youth, thought-provoking film screenings, immersive artist residencies, enlightening talks, and vibrant festivals.

With our guiding principle of “together we stand,” we strive to foster meaningful connections with a broad spectrum of communities within Derby. Our outreach extends to society’s most marginalised and vulnerable, bridging gaps in access to the arts and igniting inspiration through innovative programmes tailored to underserved areas.

At the core of our mission lies the aspiration to cultivate a nurturing environment where talent and creativity flourish, and where art and culture are embraced by all. Our overarching goal is to infuse positivity and radiance into people’s lives, offering a platform for dialogue and connection across ages, abilities, and diverse cultural backgrounds through dynamic creative activities, skill-sharing initiatives, and personal development opportunities. Our commitment is reflected in our tailor-made workshops, catering to diverse groups, including senior citizens, recent immigrants facing language barriers, schoolchildren, youth, unemployed adults, individuals with physical disabilities, mental health issues, and members of BME and LGBTQI+ communities. This inclusive approach ensures that Artcore is a welcoming space for everyone, nurturing creativity and connection within a diverse range of individuals.

Presently, Artcore has two distinct hubs: the Community Hub and the Cultural Hub. The Community Hub, situated at 3 Charnwood Street, serves as the epicentre for our community-based activities and workshops. Recently, we’ve expanded our offerings with dedicated studio spaces available for local artists to rent, providing them with a conducive environment to nurture their craft.

Meanwhile, the Cultural Hub, centrally located within the city centre, pulsates with the energy of Artcore’s residencies and exhibitions. This dynamic space serves as a beacon for creative and cultural dialogue, inviting the public to engage with the vibrant artistic discourse unfolding within the city and beyond.

At Artcore, we are passionate about the power of creativity. We believe in art’s potential to enrich lives.

OVERVIEW

It has been a busy and exciting time for Artcore this year and I want to applaud the remarkable array of workshops, events, artistic residencies, and exhibitions organized by our team, particularly in extending our reach beyond the confines of Derby. Initiating an engaging artistic dialogue with Derby's twin city, Osnabruck, and forging numerous other enriching connections in India exemplifies our commitment to fostering cultural exchange. We've witnessed a notable surge in workshop attendance, with individuals eager to step out of their comfort zones and explore new avenues. In an era where finding a safe haven has become increasingly challenging for many vulnerable individuals, Artcore has diligently ensured that everyone, regardless of whether they're newcomers or long-time attendees, feels embraced and valued.

Following Phase 2 of The Artcore Gallery renovation, our gallery is becoming a destination venue for visual arts in Derby, with significant numbers attending our exhibitions and events, as well as dropping in to the cafe or to buy works from local artists.

The Gallery embodies Artcore's ongoing efforts toward achieving a sustainable building, a critical endeavour given the current environmental landscape. The unwavering dedication and creative vision of the Artcore team has not only sustained our work but also propelled it into unique and exciting new realms of development.



ANDY BALL
Chair

THE ARTCORE YEAR



RUCHITA SHAIKH
CEO Artcore

Artcore has made significant strides towards realising the charity's overarching goal of collaborating with audiences and communities to recover and reconstruct. Our commitment to enhancing the lives of individuals within our communities and supporting artists and creatives remains unwavering. We have concentrated on initiatives aimed at realising our vision of inspiring, sharing, and nurturing cultural heritage collectively.

A focal point of our efforts has been to enhance the mental and physical well-being of our community, a core value at the heart of Artcore. Collaborating with professional artists, we have engaged with diverse communities through workshops held at our Cultural Hub in the city centre and our Community Hub in Normanton. These inclusive programmes underscore the importance of art as a universal language while promoting mental health and well-being. Our initiatives tailored for young people aged 6-15, are centred around fostering self-esteem and themed around environmental sustainability.

The Artcore Gallery has undergone refurbishments, generously supported by match funding from Derby City Council, for which we express our gratitude. Following our event in May 2022, the building reopened its doors. We extend our appreciation to all our staff for their diligent efforts throughout the refurbishment of the ground floor. We take pride in offering an inviting and accessible arts venue to all. Phase 2 of the refurbishments, supported by a capital grant from Arts Council England, has facilitated further enhancements to the environmental sustainability of our building and the gallery itself.

Our exhibition and residency programme, aimed at supporting early, mid-career, and established artists in addressing pressing social, political, and environmental issues, has fostered initiatives such as The Silence of Growing Things, Terra, StandUP, Champions 4 Change, etc. Artcore provides a platform for artists in the UK to collaborate with their counterparts from various countries, fostering international cultural exchange. An international residency in January 2024 (The Silence of Growing Things) provided emerging artists with the opportunity to explore, connect, and engage with artists from diverse backgrounds. In May 2023, the team visited Osnabruck, Derby's twin city fostering connections during the Maiwoche Festival. Securing funding from NPO bid to Arts Council England 2023/26, the National Lottery Community Fund from 2022-25, and the Postcode Community Trust 2022-25, we eagerly anticipate the opportunity to deliver on our commitments.

Finally, I extend my gratitude to the staff team and the Board of Trustees for their unwavering support throughout the year. I also express appreciation to our funders, audiences, artists, and participants, without whom our achievements would not be possible.



ARTCORE: ARTS & CULTURE

LOCAL Residencies, Exhibitions and Talks

Supporting Midlands-based artists

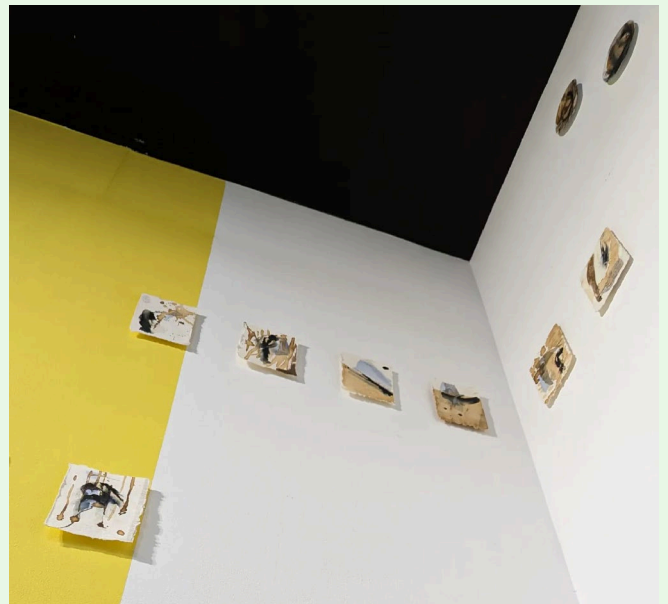
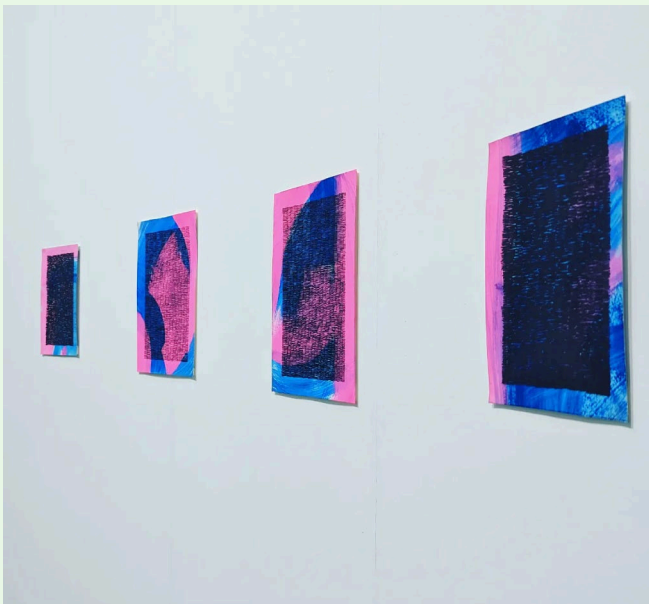
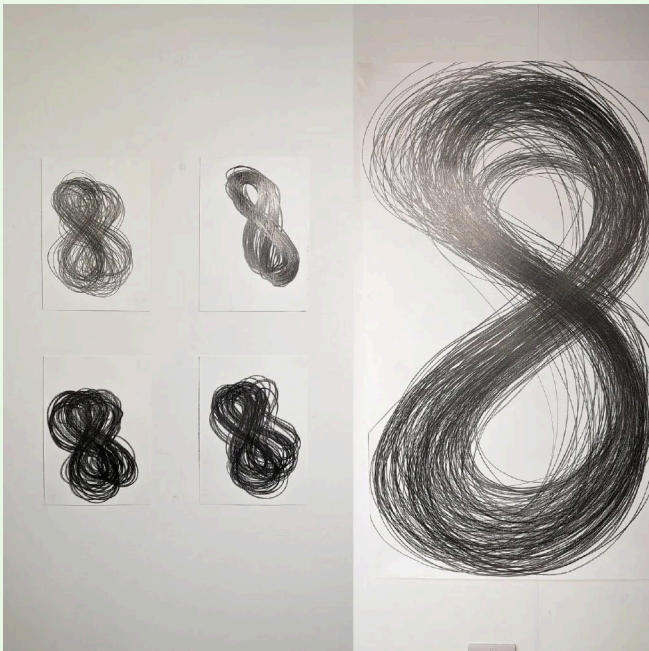
Artcore offers fully and semi-funded artist residencies throughout the year. These are awarded following an open call and application process, and are aimed at contemporary artists and makers at all stages of their careers. Artist-residents are given the time, space, freedom and financial and mentoring support to create new work and focus on their artistic development.

Each year we host thematic residencies for emerging artists in the East Midlands, providing them with a studio space, a bursary and curatorial support to help them develop professionally and artistically. We also offer residencies for established UK and international artists and select a group of arts graduates from the region, helping them to make the leap from art school/university to becoming successful professional artists through an intensive residency project and professional development programme.

UNTITLED

Drawing residency and exhibition in Derby, England

The residency aimed to explore the historical significance of mark-making, deeply rooted in human expression and communication rituals. It investigated the evolution of drawing, initially seen as a precursor to final artworks, but later recognised in modern and postmodern contexts as a valuable medium for experimentation in its own right.



With a focus on reconsidering the role of drawing in contemporary art, particularly in light of the rapid digital advancements accelerated by the post-COVID era, the residency brought together selected artists Emily Bottommer and Nicki Dennett, both based in Derby.

During their two-month drawing-based residency at Artcore, Dennett and Bottommer dedicated their time to exploring the intricacies of drawing and its significance as a creative medium.

Emily Bottommer delved into the intricacies of her identity and personal history as a working-class British woman raised in a diverse Christian environment. Employing techniques that were both labour-intensive and time-consuming, her artistic processes held equal significance to the final artworks. Using graphite, charcoal, and paints, she crafted pieces that juxtaposed shadow and darkness with vibrant, luminous colours. Often working on a larger scale, Bottommer investigated the significance and relevance of both drawing and painting within contemporary fine art.

Nicki Dennett's art was deeply grounded in nature, drawing inspiration from the changing seasons, patterns, and textures of the landscape, as well as the interplay of light on surfaces. Bold and bright hues were a prominent feature, capturing the energy and vitality of the natural world. Her work resonated with viewers of all ages and backgrounds, offering a unique perspective on the surrounding world. Whether depicting the beauty of nature or the complexity of human emotion, her work celebrated life, energy, and creativity.



UNTITLED

exhibition by
Emily Bottomer and Nicki Dennett





TERRA

Ceramic residency and exhibition in Derby, England

“Terra” was a ceramics-focused local residency in Derby. During the residency, participating artists were given the opportunity to delve into Derby’s rich ceramic heritage, drawing inspiration from renowned brands like Royal Crown Derby and Denby Pottery. The nearby Stoke-on-Trent, a ceramic epicentre, also provided valuable insights. The artists had studio access, received a generous materials stipend, exhibited their work, and gave a talk (Forming of Terra) along with Elizabeth Woledge, Curator of Royal Crown Derby and Kathryn Borg, a ceramic artist. Kathryn was also assigned as the mentor to both these artists.

The exhibition featured artworks by Hayley Blackwell and Kate-Langrish Smith. Hayley’s unique perspective, derived from her hands-on experience on the ceramics production line at Royal Crown Derby, delved into the dedication and craftsmanship that goes into every ceramic piece, even in a world of mass production. Meanwhile, Kate, with her roots in Sheffield, drew inspiration from the diverse cast tools and components intricately intertwined in the railings alongside Derby Midlands railway station, serving as a tribute to the city’s rich locomotive industry history. Terra embodied the spirit of Derby’s ceramic heritage, symbolising the deep-rooted connection between our city and the art of contemporary ceramics.



FORMING OF TERRA

Artist Talk

“The Forming of Terra:” a ceramic based artist talk followed the Terra Residency.

The event enabled local artists to share their creative journeys, discuss their work, and engage directly with the community. By hosting these talks, we foster a supportive environment where artists can gain visibility, exchange ideas, and build creative connections with the wider arts network within Derby and the East Midlands.

The evening comprised of:

1. A talk by Elizabeth Woledge, Director of the Royal Crown Derby Museum. Woledge delved into the fascinating history of ceramics in Derbyshire and the legacy of the Royal Crown Derby, one of England’s oldest porcelain manufacturers, celebrated for its exquisite commissions and the use of fine bone china.
2. A talk featuring Artcore’s resident artists of “Terra”, Hayley Blackwell and Kate Langrish-Smith. The pair shared their Artcore experience and the development of their artistic practices.

Through these conversations, we aim to celebrate artistic expression and strengthen the bonds within our local arts community.



EVOCATIVE EXPRESSIONS

Artcore fundraiser auction involving local artists

“Evocative Expressions” was a private, fine art fundraising event organised by His Majesty’s Lord Lieutenant Elizabeth Fothergill CBE at Artcore showcasing the works of 11 artists - Phoebe Shaw, Samson Tudor, Martin Hyde, Caroline Ainsworth, Kathryn Borg, Ana Milenkovic, Nicki Dennett, Emily Bottomer, Ray Gumbley, Masood Sarwer, and Kevin Dunbar. Attending this event offered an opportunity to viewers to view and purchase original works of art, engage in hands-on art-making and also savour the culinary delights of Artcore’s vegan and vegetarian cafe. Buyers could meaningfully contribute towards supporting the various programs and initiatives that Artcore has in place to give back to society.



MA DEGREE SHOW: REVEALED

University of Derby

Artcore hosted the University of Derby MA Arts Graduate Show “REVEALED” at Artcore Gallery, showcasing the fantastic work by MA Arts (Fine Art and Photography) students.

It was a successful opening event with inspiring and engaging artworks on display. Thank you to everyone involved in curating this exhibition!



DERBYSHIRE WINDRUSH EXHIBITION

“The Derbyshire Windrush Exhibition” was a tribute to the enduring legacy of the African Caribbean community in Derbyshire. Curated by George Grignon, it traced their remarkable voyage from Jamaica and the broader Caribbean area since the momentous arrival of the HMT Empire Windrush in the UK in 1948. The exhibit commemorated and acknowledged the priceless contributions made by this community to both Derbyshire and the United Kingdom. It featured never-seen-before historical photos and depictions of Derbyshire’s Windrush pioneers and influential figures, along with valuable first-hand accounts from members of the African Caribbean community in Derbyshire.



STAND UP!

An exhibition celebrating artworks by women

The third edition of “STAND UP!” exhibition was curated in commemoration of International Women’s Day, bringing together a diverse array of contemporary British and international artists to explore themes of gender equality, digital empowerment, and personal narratives.

The launch event, held on Friday, 8th March, was a success, with attendees from near and far gathering to experience the powerful artworks and engage in thought-provoking discussions. Throughout the evening, guests had the opportunity to immerse themselves in a variety of media, including film, textiles, digital collage, photography, and painting, each offering a unique perspective on the intersection of gender, technology, and identity.

The exhibition launch not only showcased the talent and creativity of the participating artists but also served as a platform to initiate meaningful dialogue around crucial issues such as mental health, representation, and the human experience.



STANDING IN THIS PLACE:

Speak Her Name

“Standing In This Place: Speak Her Name” featured collaborative creations by Rachel Carter, Anisha Parmar, and Ismail Khokon.

In 2020, Rachel volunteered to explore the burial slabs of cotton mill workers in Darley Abbey’s churchyard, which led her to delve into the lives of her ancestors, particularly focusing on the role of women and girls in cotton mills.

“Speak Her Name” was part of the broader initiative, “Standing In This Place”, an arts and heritage project aimed at spotlighting the connections between white mill workers and black enslaved women in the Americas. It illustrated their interconnected stories, bound by cotton, sorrow, strength, and resilience.

As part of “Speak Her Name,” Rachel joined forces with artists Anisha Parmar and Ismail Khokon to conduct creative workshops at Artcore’s Cultural and Community Hubs. These sessions, which saw significant local community participation, reflected the global cotton narrative, the Swadeshi movement in South Asia, and women’s struggles, suffering, and triumphs in shaping our shared histories.

The artworks created by these artists and Artcore’s workshop participants were showcased from 26th January to 27th February.



3C EVENT

Artist networking event

The 3C (Creative Community Collab) networking event was held at Artcore's Charnwood Street Building, where artists were invited to showcase the diverse opportunities available within the organisation. An exhibition featuring artworks produced during Artcore's "Art of Healing" workshops throughout the year was organised. Our "Art of Healing" programme is specially designed to improve mental health by bringing the local community together to create artwork and explore different mediums. We are incredibly proud of all the work our participants have made over the past year, and we loved creating an exhibition where they could celebrate and showcase their achievements.

Additionally, the event served as the occasion for unveiling information about the new building to the wider public. The intention was to encourage artists to engage in networking with Artcore as an organisation. We also welcomed guest speakers, Mike Brown, Arts Development Manager at Derby City Council, to talk about the new Make and Trade Grant, and Vijay Kumari, Officer for Midlands National Lottery Community Fund.



INTERNATIONAL Residencies



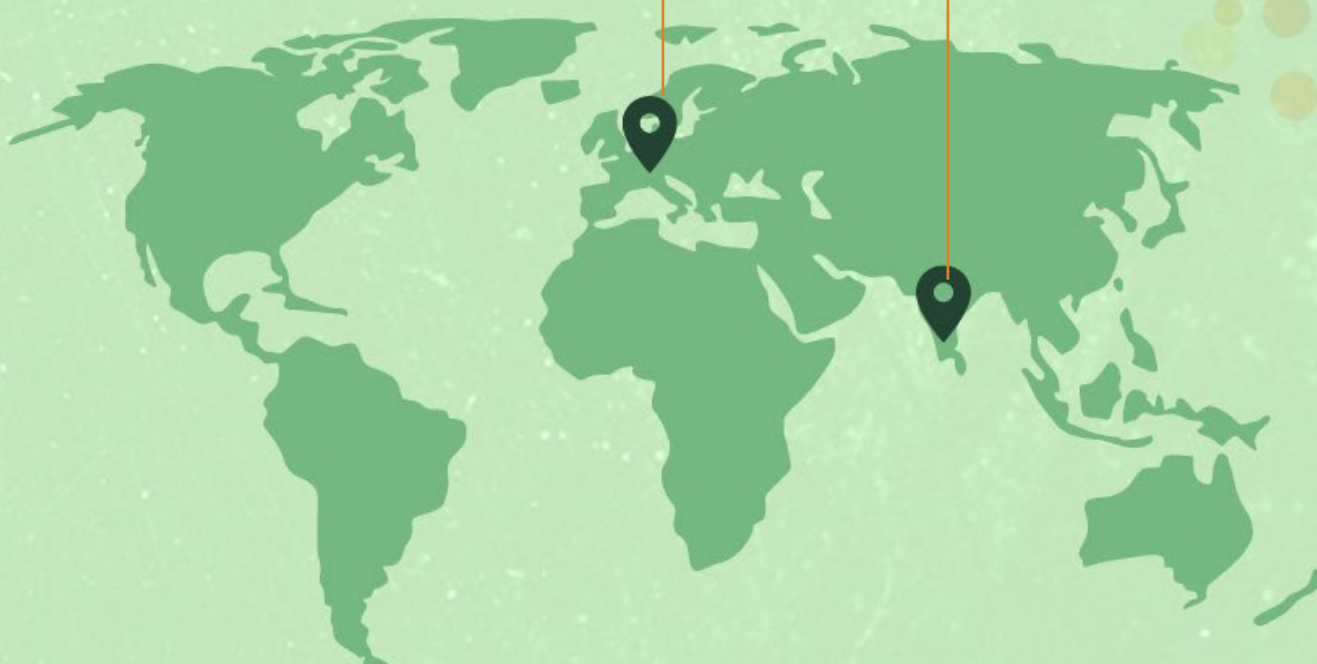
In 2018, Artcore made a decision to provide a special opportunity for artists in the UK to work and learn together with artists from different countries. Our inaugural international residency occurred in January 2019, coinciding with the vibrant kite festival of Uttarayan/Utran in India. The success of this residency inspired us to organise more residencies, particularly during festivals that unite people and communities in celebration of their traditions and culture.

Festivals serve as a platform where art and craft converge, creating an atmosphere of vibrancy and inclusivity. Having immersed ourselves in such an environment, we have witnessed firsthand the joy of communal gatherings, the richness of ancient customs, the allure of colourful costumes, and the delight of shared culinary experiences. As a result, we planned a few more residencies, with one scheduled during India's Holi festival in March 2023, and an additional one in Bangalore, India, in January 2024 along with comprehensive exhibitions and cultural programming. We also planned two residencies and more projects in Osnabruck, Derby's twin city.

ZAHIR SHAIKH
Artistic Director
Artcore

OSNABRUCK, GERMANY
Derby's twin city

INDIA - Multiple locations
Artcore's Origins



HOLI HAI!

An international residency in Gujarat, India

The exhibition “Holi Hai!” was held in conjunction with the gallery’s reopening. It featured works by Manchester-based artist Nikki Culley, India-based Masood Sarwer, Derby-based Phil Basi, and Huw Davies, showcasing the diversity and vibrancy of their impressions and experiences of India. These interpretations reflected the rich cultural tapestry of the region.

The exhibition followed a two-week residency in Chhotaudepur, India, in early March 2023. This residency offered both UK and Indian artists a unique opportunity to explore disappearing tribal cultures and traditional ways of life in the tribal-rich district of Chhota Udaipur, Gujarat. They documented the vibrant festival of Holi through lens-based and related media. During their residency, the artists visited local fairs and markets, UNESCO World Heritage sites, and learned about the various traditions and rituals surrounding Holi.





THE SILENCE OF GROWING THINGS

An international residency in Karnataka, India



“The Silence of Growing Things” was an international residency opportunity that was hosted in Bangalore, India, in collaboration with 1 Shanthi Road. It catered to artists whose works concerned post-colonial themes, ecological degradation, and landscapes. Bangalore’s history as a colonial Cantonment Town, its transformation into Karnataka’s capital, and its tech-industry prominence provided a rich context for artistic exploration. Notably, the city’s lush gardens owe their beauty to the pioneering work of Mr. Krumbiegel, a German horticulturist. The selected artists, Freya Gabie and Arjuna Keshvani-Ham, are currently preparing for their upcoming exhibition in Derby in May 2024.



SMRITI DIXIT

International artist in residence



Artcore was delighted to host international artist Smriti Dixit; 'an abstract mixed media artist from Mumbai, India. During her residency, she created an installation in the Artcore Gallery.

The artwork, which evokes natural forms, draws its inspiration from the petunias that adorn the exterior of the gallery. Using simple techniques such as coiling, Dixit meticulously fashioned this piece using surplus fabric scraps. Her artistic approach is deeply rooted in nature, as she strives to replicate organic elements like flowers and spider webs. Dixit's artistic philosophy revolves around a sense of wonder and detachment, where her aim is to remove any preconceived utility and historical associations from her materials. In her creative process, she engages all her senses, including taste and smell.



OSNABRÜCK

Partnership

DERBY - OSNABRÜCK PROJECTS



365 SQUARES FOR PEACE

In 2023, the twinning ambassadors in Osnabrück celebrated the 375 years since the peace treaty for the 30 Year War was signed in Osnabrück. They developed a project to create '375 Squares for Peace'. They collected 375 handmade textile squares from people all over the world and produced 6 artworks to commemorate the anniversary.

Our participants at Artcore and other local communities in Derby took part in this project. The artwork was exhibited in Osnabrück throughout summer and was brought to Derby to be exhibited at Derby's Council House during Peace Week in September, where we celebrated our twinned city.

It was a great moment as we unveiled the '375 Squares For Peace' project at the Derby City Council House.



ARTCORE VISIT

Derby ambassador and Osnabrück citizens visit Artcore

We were honoured to welcome a visiting group from our twinned city of Osnabrück at Artcore gallery on 22nd July 2023.

This gathering marked a cross-cultural celebration of creativity, fostering a unique bond between the two cities through their shared love for artistic expression.

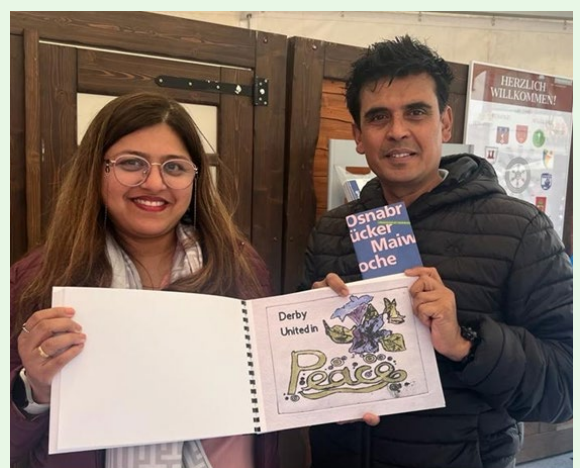
Accompanied by representatives from the Osnabrück twinning office and Derby's ambassador Rosie Jones, the group experienced an introduction to Artcore, an arts workshop and enjoyed freshly prepared food from Artcore Cafe. We look forward to welcoming them all again next year!





PEACE BOOK

As part of the anniversary celebration of the peace treaty, Derby's twinned city of Osnabrück created a 'Peace Book'. The ambassadors in the Osnabrück Twinning Office made their own handmade paper and sent it to partner cities. At Artcore, our workshop participants' worked collaboratively to create four unique peace themed designs for the pages that were gifted to Derby. These designs were then printed onto the handmade paper and it was then returned to Osnabrück. The pages have been bound into a book with artwork from all over the world and is now displayed in the 'Peace Hall' in the Town Hall, in Osnabrück where the original Peace Treaty was signed in 1648.



Artcore team visits Osnabrück for Maiwoche festival

Artcore team visits Osnabrück for Maiwoche festival

Heiko Schlatermund – Chair, Felix Nussbaum Museum and Member, City Council of Osnabrück, took the Artcore team to the Town Hall. Here, we witnessed a scaled model of Osnabrück city with its original walls. Along with the artists, we visited many museums and galleries to get a taste of the contemporary arts scene in Osnabrück.

POSTCARD EXCHANGE

Artcore team visits Osnabrück for Maiwoche festival

Our artist, Jon Legge, is an experienced photographer who has been facilitating engaging and creative workshops for our participants. After communicating with the Anglo-German club in Osnabrück, we set up a postcard exchange. The Artcore participants created their own postcards and hand wrote messages to Osnabrück in German and English. We are excited to have received postcards from Osnabrück too!



EXCHANGE EVENING



Derby's city ambassador in Osnabrück, Rosie Jones, hosted an exchange evening in Osnabrück on the 20th of June. She invited Artcore to provide a video talking about the projects that Artcore has been planning in conjunction with Osnabrück.

BUILDING BRIDGES

An international residency in Osnabrück, Germany



“Building Bridges” was a fully funded international residency and exchange programme organised by Artcore in collaboration with hase29 in Osnabrück, Germany. The first phase of the residency supported two artists based in Derbyshire, facilitating opportunities for them to establish international connections and gain insights from cross-cultural experiences. It provided participants with the chance to immerse themselves in Osnabrück’s artistic scene, including attending the Maiwoche Festival and exploring various cultural institutions such as museums and galleries. Martin Hyde and Caroline Ainsworth were the selected artists for this phase.

Following this, Artcore extended an invitation to two artists, Eva Gruter and Vivian Blum, from Osnabrück to join them in Derby in August. During their residency, the artists collaborated on an exhibition alongside Derbyshire-based artists Martin Hyde and Caroline Ainsworth, resulting in a highly successful showcase. Their performance piece garnered positive feedback, and the artists also conducted workshops at the Community Hub.

The exhibition was also continued to be displayed at City Labs, hosted by Marketing Derby, from 29 August 2023 for two weeks.



ARTCORE: ART IN THE COMMUNITY



OUR AIM:

The community is at the heart of Artcore. We are committed to bringing positive change into the lives of people of all ages, abilities, cultural and ethnic backgrounds through creative activities. Artcore's strength lies in our ability to connect with diverse communities by offering a welcoming safe space and removing the barriers faced by people from ethnically diverse backgrounds.

Our community hub is located on Charnwood Street in Derby in the heart of the communities we serve.

Our building is multi-functional and includes offices for our staff, a meeting room, a multi-purpose studio area where we run our workshops, a kiln room and a community room/gallery space. Outside we have a covered car park, which also becomes part of our events space.

UNTOLD STORIES

"When I first found Artcore, I was in a very bad place. I saw Artcore, walked in and I haven't left since. I find it very inspirational, Artcore has helped me a lot, it has made me a better person. I have made lots of nice friends and I have learnt a lot of new art techniques. Artcore has helped me to be in a really good place with my wellbeing and I thank Artcore for that."

– Participant



Our project 'Untold Stories', supported by the Baring Foundation, focuses on working with recent immigrants, refugees, asylum seekers and members of Derby's Bosnian and South Asian communities.

We are delivering a programme of workshops which invite individuals to share their stories alongside those from Derby's diverse communities, through engagement with creative art activities. Working alongside professional artists, we have developed a programme of workshops that highlight the importance of using art as a universal language to break down barriers to communication and to support creativity, confidence building, the development of social skills and improvement of mental health and wellbeing.

Through this project we have been exploring the diverse stories and experiences that are interwoven through our community's rich heritage. Art enriches lives and is a catalyst for creativity and it can build confidence as well as a sense of identity, whilst also improving mental well-being.

UNTOLD STORIES AT BOSNIA & HERZEGOVINA CENTRE

This year we have delivered a number of successful workshops at the Bosnia & Herzegovina Centre in Derby. These sessions focused on working with refugees and asylum seekers and supporting them to tell their stories through book-making and printmaking. The final outcomes of these workshops are emotive and powerful reflections of the journeys experienced by those who attended.



UNTOLD STORIES AT SAHAHRA CENTRE



During summer 2023, we also delivered workshops for the “Untold Stories” project at the Sahahra centre. Participants made their own ‘journey diaries’ and ceramic tiles that responded to their life and ideas of ‘home’. The group also experimented with weaving recycled materials, exploring fabrics and threads from different cultures. The participants were proud of their creations and in the final workshop, they celebrated their learning, achievement and outcomes, through group review and critique.

UNTOLD STORIES AT ARTCORE

Since the beginning of 2024, we are holding regular “Untold Stories” workshops at Artcore Community Hub. To date, participants have painted onto canvas, creating depictions of ‘home’, whilst also exploring concepts of identity and relationships within the community. The group were introduced to the artist Alberto Giacometti and have since produced fantastic models of their own. These sessions have been varied with activities ranging from embroidered family trees onto functional homeware to the creation of ‘zines’ celebrating cultures and self-empowerment.



ART OF HEALING: COMMUNITY

Our “Art of Healing Community” workshops have thrived over the past year, drawing in participants from diverse communities and sparking creative inspiration. We’ve been fortunate to have many different artists leading our workshops since they launched in 2022, each bringing their own unique creative ideas. Participants have had the opportunity to explore everything from painting to set design and even creative writing and music composition!

These workshops continue to support adults in our community to make positive connections in a creative and engaging way, whilst also learning and developing new skills and experiencing art in a fun and relaxed environment.

ART OF HEALING COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHTS 23/24

This year Artcore developed a new partnership with Milestone House in Derby City Centre, who provide emergency accommodation for Derby’s homeless and rough sleepers. The participants of our community workshops worked collaboratively to produce inspiring and colourful paintings which have been displayed inside Milestone House for all to enjoy. The group have also created ceramic plaques with positive messages and symbols, which will be installed as a mural in the outside space of the hostel. The staff at Milestone House have been really grateful to receive the artworks which are now bringing joy to those who see them.



We also welcomed an experienced musician and song-writer to Artcore who delivered workshops for our community groups. These workshops were an insight into the world of creative writing. Each participant learnt the skills for writing music. They explored everything from writing verses for a 'Blues' song to tapping out rhythms for an 'Artcore Rap'. Participants then developed these outcomes by exploring set design in miniature. Each participant created maquettes of miniature theatres, including props and puppets to bring their stories to life.

The community group have also delved into the world of model making. Following group discussions about important figures in the community, participants developed their ideas into 3D models using mod-rock, wire and clay. The final outcomes were impactful and the group were really proud of what they achieved.

"Artcore has been an amazing experience, it is a way to get me to meet new people and help further my love of art. Art for me is everything and this is why Artcore is important. There's a blank canvas for everyone and Artcore helps me to develop different skills in art that I never knew about. Artcore has helped me to create Art that I can be proud of."

- Participant



ART OF HEALING: HEALTH & WELLBEING

Over the past year, our “Art of Healing Health and Wellbeing” workshops have been well valued, attracting a wide range of participants from diverse communities, who have valued the opportunity to explore the therapeutic benefits associated with the arts. Our workshops are designed to promote socialisation and improve participant’s physical and mental wellbeing.

Since commencing the “Art of Healing” programme, we have welcomed over 15 delivery artists, each sharing their own unique approaches to the therapeutic arts, enriching our workshops with a broad range of creative techniques and insights.



“I feel like I’m achieving something day by day by coming to Artcore. For example, today we were making clay wall mountings that will decorate a space in a local homelessness hostel. I’m really pleased with what I’ve made. Before I came to Artcore I wouldn’t have been able to achieve that, I feel that I am improving. I have learnt better communication skills and I am enjoying learning.”

- Participant

ART OF HEALING HEALTH & WELLBEING HIGHLIGHTS 23/24

Participants had the opportunity to make their own ceramic watercolour paint palette and brush holder. The artist's aim was to enable the group to use what they have made at home if they wanted to continue being creative and "spread the Artcore goodness" on the days when they are at home.



Recently, participants have been exploring a sculptural project involving the creation of craft clay wall mounts depicting wildlife. From charming hedgehogs to graceful butterflies and everything in between. These unique pieces of art will soon embellish the garden walls of our local homelessness hostel Milestone House in Derby, spreading joy to those who need it most. Through these workshops we blend creativity with compassion, making a positive impact in our community.

NUMBER NARRATIVES

"Since coming to Artcore my confidence has increased, and I have been able to be creative and meet new friends. I enjoy getting messy with paint and clay. I have attended the Number Narratives workshops and now I am feeling more confident to use maths in everyday life. Before attending the class, I hated maths but now I don't hate it anymore, I've even now got a clock in my bedroom and I am learning to tell the time."

- Participant

Through our "Number Narratives" sessions, our participants have found what many describe as a 'safe space' within our centres, with the freedom to explore maths using art as a tool, in a fun, warm and inclusive way.

We worked with our professional artists to develop effective projects supporting our participants, to increase their confidence in using maths in everyday life, for example with budgeting their finances. We worked collaboratively to foster an enjoyable, creative and stress-free learning environment to support our participants in what can be seen as a daunting subject.





The participants have explored a varied range of creative projects, including hand building their own clay breakfast set. The participants were shown how to measure, weigh, calculate volume and use angles in repeating pattern to produce their sets.

The group also worked with a photographer who delivered engaging workshops, incorporating maths into elements of photography. For example; using maths to calculate the area of the wall space in the workshop room and using grid coordinates to assemble their giant portrait photos in the correct order. Participants also explored simple geometry to create their own kaleidoscopes and even made their own pinhole cameras, developing their photographs in a dark room.

EMPOWERMENT FOR EMPLOYMENT

Our “Empowerment for Employment” workshops are designed to support individuals as they develop employability skills, gain confidence and life skills. Through this course, participants have learnt craft making skills, developed knowledge of branding, packaging and selling work, in addition to exploring steps to set up a small business. Participants experienced artist led workshops designed to teach new skills, build confidence and create a strong and supportive network of fellow makers. Participants created outcomes that they successfully displayed and sold at Artcore’s Winter Craft-Fair.

“I first joined the sew and socialise session at Artcore Gallery and through that, I was invited to the Artcore Community Hub workshops. I was nervous to attend at first, but everyone made me feel really welcome so I kept coming back!

I don’t get to explore art in my everyday life so it has all been new to me and I have enjoyed being experimental with art materials which has been really fun.

Coming to Artcore has given me a routine and allowed me to socialise, because I am off work at the moment.”

- Participant



The “Empowerment for Employment” participants drew inspiration from Gillian Wearing’s artwork ‘Signs’ to enhance their CV writing skills. They crafted personal statements highlighting their skills and qualities, which were then photographed to reflective Wearing’s distinctive style.



We were pleased to welcome a small business owner and printmaker to deliver a workshop specialising in how to market one's products and effectively photograph outcomes. Participants enjoyed having a go at photographing their outcomes, using backgrounds and props.

During the project we were visited by a guest speaker from East Midlands Chambers, who introduced the group to the concept of self-employment in an engaging and accessible way, exploring the array of support services available through East Midlands Chambers for start-up businesses.

The "Empowerment for Employment" project used art as a catalyst for developing valuable life skills. The workshops also provided opportunities for participants to gain volunteer experience in the charity sector. Through creative engagement, the sessions have empowered participants through the development of employability skills.

Artcore has also delivered a number of additional "Empowerment for Employment" classes at our partner organisation, Derby Bosnia and Herzegovina Centre. The classes have supported refugees and asylum seekers to develop their creative, problem solving and fine motor skills. These workshops provided an opportunity for the participants to explore their talents, express themselves, and gain confidence.

CULTURAL THREADS

CULTURAL THREADS AT CITY LAB

This year, Artcore introduced Cultural Threads, an ESOL workshop encouraging participants to learn English while celebrating their diverse cultures through artistic expression.

The initial launch was held at Derby City Lab on St James Street at the beginning of November and consisted of a series of workshops over two weeks. The workshops provided a space for community members to engage with a variety of artistic mediums, including textiles, clay, and print, and encouraged them to collaborate and create a display that celebrated the diverse qualities, or 'threads', that make the fabric of our city so unique.

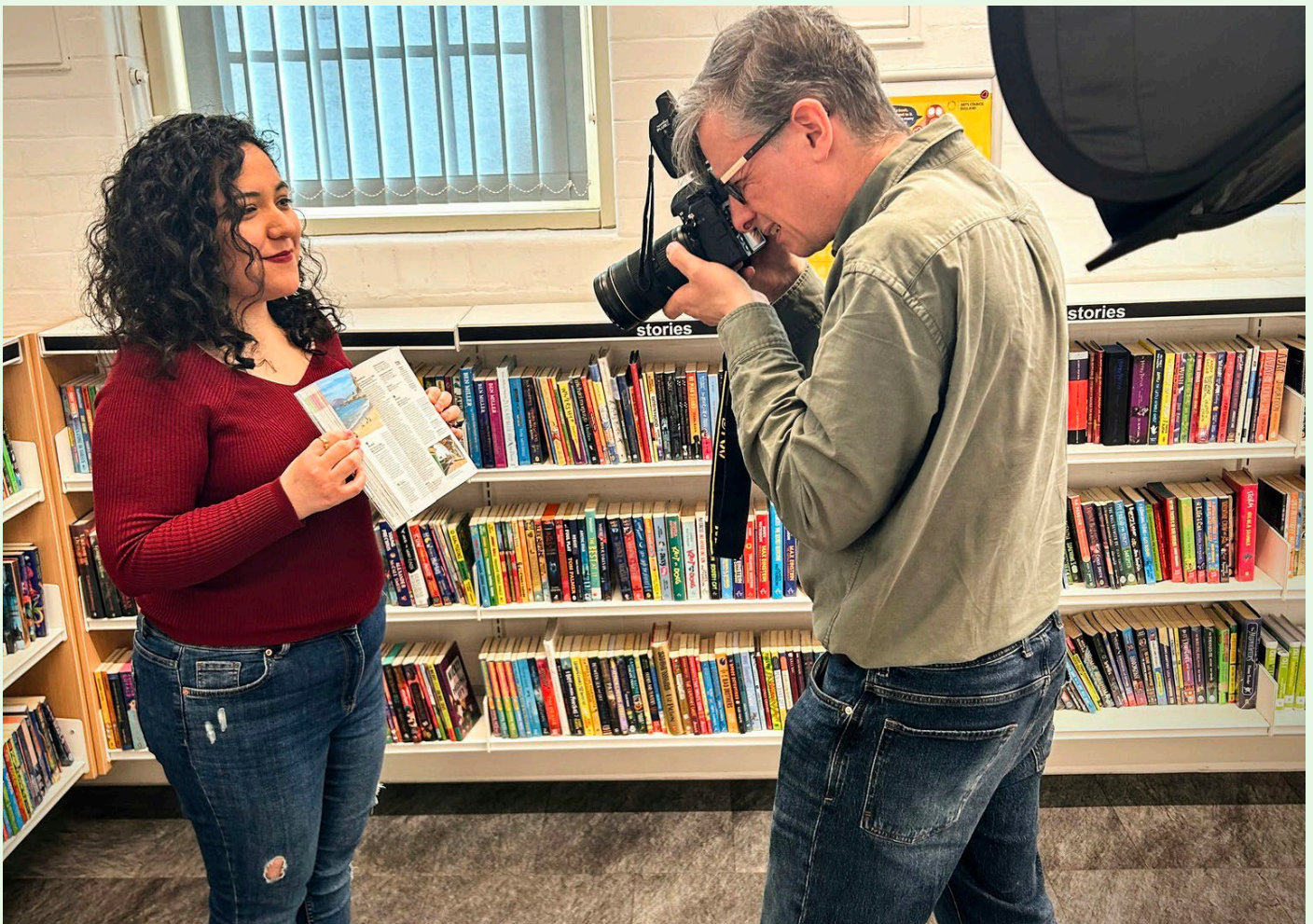
Participants enjoyed carefully crafting clay diyas and fish, and stamping cultural symbols onto vibrant fabrics. Through verbal interactions and discussing their individual cultures and backgrounds, participants improved their English proficiency in a fun and creative manner.



CULTURAL THREADS AT ARTCORE

The New Year saw the launch of “Cultural Threads” at Artcore Community Hub, where participants engaged with specialist sessions in lino printing, photography, and calligraphy led by professional artists. These creative arts workshops have improved our participants’ proficiency in both speaking and reading English while fostering an inspiring and creative environment. Feedback from “Cultural Threads” has highlighted the significant role Artcore has played in increasing confidence in English skills and feeling more relaxed in social settings.

In February, the “Cultural Threads” group visited Normanton Library for the Warm Welcome coffee morning, where they had a tour of all the books on offer and were given the opportunity to register for the local library. Participants explored different genres of books in a wide range of languages, whilst practicing reading in English with specially designed ESOL books. Photographer, Jon Legge, captured the participants with some of their book selections and the following week they each wrote about their experiences in English.



ARTCORE: ARTS & EDUCATION



OUR AIM:

We at Artcore encourage and involve people from all ages and abilities into art activities. Our engagement with various school clubs, youth groups, family learning initiatives and school curriculum workshops have resulted in great collaborations. We support and enhance skills of young people as they develop their understanding in different visual art mediums. In our workshops participants are encouraged to take control of their projects from the design stage to completion as well as develop transferable skills such as time keeping, organisation, planning and communication.

Artcore's learning programme aims to discover, inspire and encourage people of all ages and abilities to engage with arts and culture. As an arts charity rooted in our diverse Derby community, Artcore aims to foster a nourishing environment for everybody to grow and learn new skills, and to nurture the next generation of local artists from early years to adulthood. We work with a variety of organisations such as local schools, youth groups and family learning initiatives, encouraging our community to see a wide range of art, meet artists and make work themselves. Our targeted programmes such as "Champions for Change", "Art of Healing Children" and "Your Space My Space" enable us to provide focused learning and development to those most in need.

DARLEY SWIFTS



For our 'Darley Swifts' project we worked with a group of students at Walter Evans Primary School, to create a mosaic arts-trail in response to the declining population of Swifts in Britain. Focusing on the area of Darley Park, the students explored conservation ideas and issues, and immersed themselves in nature. The students consolidated their experiences and learning into meaningful outcomes, each creating their own unique mosaic.

The mosaics have been permanently installed and displayed at Darley Park in Derby as an arts trail along with QR codes which link to facts and information about the conservation of the Swifts.

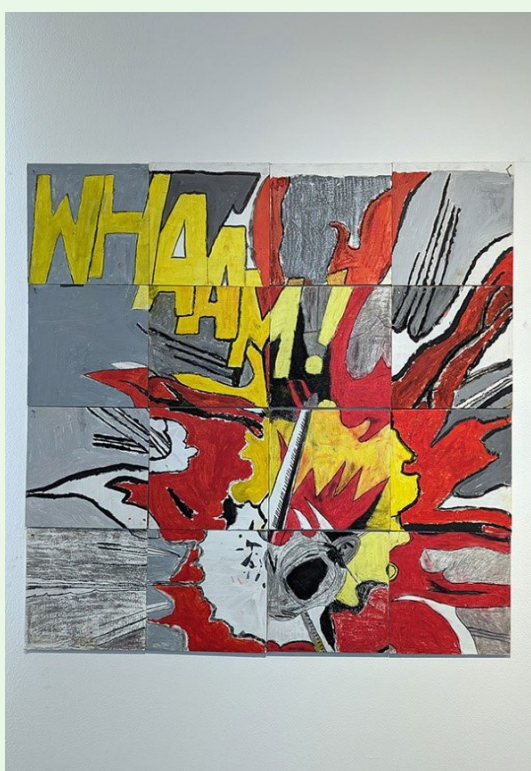
On June 22nd, we were honoured to have the students from Walter Evans, their families, the headmaster David Brown and Councillor Alison Martin join us for the opening. The students were all awarded a certificate of completion. Artist Nicki Dennett who facilitated the mosaic workshops for the children, and Mick Hardwick from the Derby Swift Conservation Project spoke a few words regarding the success of this project.

We were also honoured to receive words of support for our Darley Swifts project from TV personalities and BBC Springwatch presenters Michaela Strachan and Megan McCubin.

SHAPE YOUR FUTURE

"Since coming to Artcore, my daughter has enjoyed making new friends and has grown more confident. Attending the art classes is improving her social skills, her art development, and overall Lily enjoys her time with everyone at Artcore."

- Lily's mum



Artcore is currently working with students from Horizons Sixth Form and introducing them to a variety of art mediums such as different paints, pastels, papier-mâché, and clay. These sessions also support the students in developing transferable life skills while teaching them about the five themes of Horizons - 'SHAPE': Safety, Health and Happiness, Aspiration and Achievement, Positive Contribution, and Enterprise.

In July, the students worked collaboratively to create an extensive body of work to showcase in the "Shape Your Future" exhibition at Artcore Community Hub. The exhibition featured commentary and exploration of important contemporary topics such as internet safety, anti-bullying, anti-violence, and health. The exhibition was a celebration of their achievements and an opportunity for these blossoming young artists to co-curate and share their work for the first time in a professional art setting.

CHAMPIONS 4 CHANGE

"Children's art classes at Artcore play a crucial role in helping children learn about and accept people from different cultures. These classes provide a safe and nurturing environment where children can freely express themselves, explore their creativity, and relax. By engaging in collaborative art projects and discussions about diverse artistic traditions, children gain a deeper appreciation for cultural diversity, fostering empathy and understanding. Additionally, the inclusive atmosphere of art classes encourages open-mindedness and helps children develop social skills, making them more adaptable and accepting of different perspectives and backgrounds."

- Martin Hyde - Delivery Artist



The talented group of young artists in our 'Champions for Change' sessions have been exploring their relationship to the environment and how to become eco superheroes. Through a diverse array of mixed media techniques, such as clay sculpting and collage, the workshops aim to encourage young artists to explore these issues in a hands-on and imaginative way.

Through collaborative projects, participants have not only developed their artistic skills but have also developed a deeper sense of responsibility towards the environment and discovered how to create change. As we look ahead, we remain committed to nurturing the creativity of young minds and fostering a generation of change-makers who will continue to champion environmental conservation through their art and actions.

YOUR SPACE MY SPACE

“Your Space My Space” is our new series of workshops designed for young people aged 10-15 years. The project focuses on the environments that we live in.

The workshops take place at the Sahahra Centre, located on Arboretum Park. These sessions explore the history of Arboretum park as the first public park in Britain (and model for New York’s Central Park). Young people also learnt about the role of art in the environment.

At the beginning of the project, the young people had an introduction to the history of the Arboretum Park which they responded to in their own sketchbooks, exploring sketching outside and observing the landmarks and landscaping in the park. The group have also been delving into the iconic painting style of L.S Lowry, even creating their own mini sculptures for the park. Through hands-on exploration and artistic expression, these workshops not only foster creativity but also instil a deeper appreciation for the rich history and natural beauty of Arboretum Park

“I asked the young people in my class why they think creativity is important? The students thought creativity was very important for improving mental and physical wellbeing. The creative workshops at Artcore help them to overcome communication barriers by being expressive in their art when they find it hard to communicate verbally. Sometimes if the children are having any difficulties at school or at home or with their individual life challenges it takes them away and they have a focus on something else that they enjoy. I have found art to be a powerful tool in my art classes, for example; when I ask a question and the group aren’t confident to answer, I will give them a piece of paper they will write or draw the answer with no problem.”

- Nicki Dennett - Delivery Artist



ART OF HEALING: CHILDREN



Our Art of Healing Children sessions are creative workshops for young people aged 6-15 years. The workshop engages and supports young people in meaningful creative activities, which aim to build confidence and self-esteem.

In the past year these workshops have offered young participants a vibrant range of creative projects that have sparked their imaginations. Through these sessions, children have learned valuable new skills and also formed new friendships. A supportive environment has been created for the young people where they can share ideas with one another. To this end, we have noted a marked improvement in their ability to create, make and share. These workshops provide a safe space for expression, fostering resilience, emotional wellbeing and creative empowerment.

ART OF HEALING CHILDREN HIGHLIGHTS 23/24

The “Art of Healing” Children’s group had a fantastic time exploring light painting techniques. With guidance from the artist, they experimented with light, creating vibrant and dynamic images. This was a fun workshop which allowed each young person to express their creativity through movement and colour. The group were able to see their light drawings appear like magic before their eyes, instilling a sense of awe and wonder.

During December, we continued our commitment to cultural celebration, as the group explored various crafts with the theme of Christmas. The young people were proud to create their own Christmas cards and pine-cone Christmas trees to sell at our Artcore ‘Winter Wonderland Craft Fair’, all in aid of Children in Need. To celebrate their achievements, the group had a wonderfully festive Christmas party complete with their own games that they created collaboratively.

During our ‘Creative Summer’ school holiday workshops, the group had fun turning ‘trash into tunes!’. Our young eco-artists rocked our craft session by transforming recycled materials into awesome musical instruments. The aim of the workshop was to ‘make music while saving the planet!’. Parents and staff were treated to an extra special performance by the young people using their recycled instruments.



*“At Artcore they engage young groups with different amazing visual art medium. My daughter enjoys the classes thoroughly and does not want to miss any of the children’s projects that run throughout the week at Artcore. Brilliant place and very helpful staff.
10 out of 10”*

- Aashwini’s mum

SPECIAL EVENT: WINTER WONDERLAND CRAFT FAIR



Artcore Gallery and Café was transformed into a winter wonderland to host our festive craft fair, which supported over 20 local artists and makers over the course of two days. We were pleased to see such brilliant support from the community, and stallholders who all had such interesting and unique work for sale.

Participants from our community workshops, “Empowerment for Employment” and “Art of Healing – Children”, also participated by selling artwork and cards they had made in the sessions. The money raised by the children’s table was donated to BBC Children in Need to support the vital work that they do for children and young people across the UK.

We also hosted a free craft table, where guests of all ages could sit down, relax, and create vibrant greeting cards for friends and family.

DIWALI CELEBRATION



To mark the end of the “Cultural Threads” sessions at Derby City Lab, participants and staff were invited to join in Artcore’s Diwali celebration. Brightly coloured decorations adorned the space and the atmosphere was filled with warmth and togetherness. Everyone involved had the opportunity to learn more about the significance of Diwali and its customs while exchanging stories, sharing delicious food, and dancing to traditional music. The event was a testament to the power of cultural celebration in fostering unity and connection within our diverse community in Derby.



ARTCORE CAFÈ

Our Artcore Cafè is inspired by the aromatics of south asian food. We serve a variety of vegan and vegetarian dishes, perfect for everyday lunches and also small special events or corporate buffets. Our menu features popular items like wraps and sandwiches, jacket potato combos, curry deals, Indian platters, cake deals, samosas, pakoras, and, of course, our famous chai.

In addition to providing a diverse menu, we emphasise the importance of preparing freshly made dishes. This commitment ensures that our offerings are not only flavourful but also nutritious. Our cafè has become a go-to spot for those seeking delicious plant-based meals in a welcoming atmosphere, whether for a casual meal or a catered event. We have recently introduced a coffee loyalty card to reward our regular customers, monthly puzzle cards to engage with, and community workshops for those interested in joining over a cup of chai. Additionally, a variety of snacks are available for purchase on our countertop.





STATISTICS

16

DELIVERY
ARTISTS

398

WORKSHOPS

4775

PARTICIPANTS

15

WORK
EXPERIENCE

18

VOLUNTEERS

65

ARTISTS
SUPPORTED

65151

WEBSITE
VISITORS

663

LINKED-IN
SUBSCRIBERS

20515

YOUTUBE
VIEWS

5531

FACEBOOK
FOLLOWERS

3839

INSTAGRAM
FOLLOWERS

3142

TWITTER
FOLLOWERS

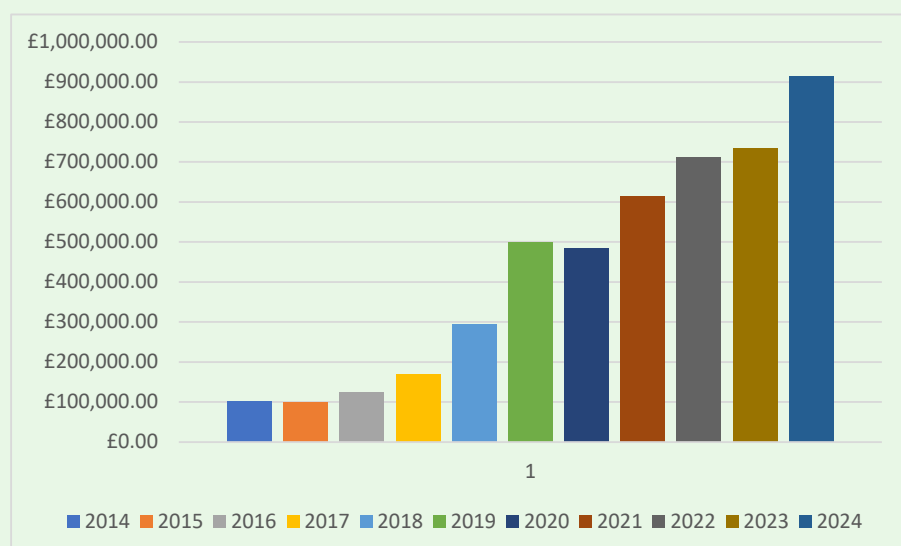
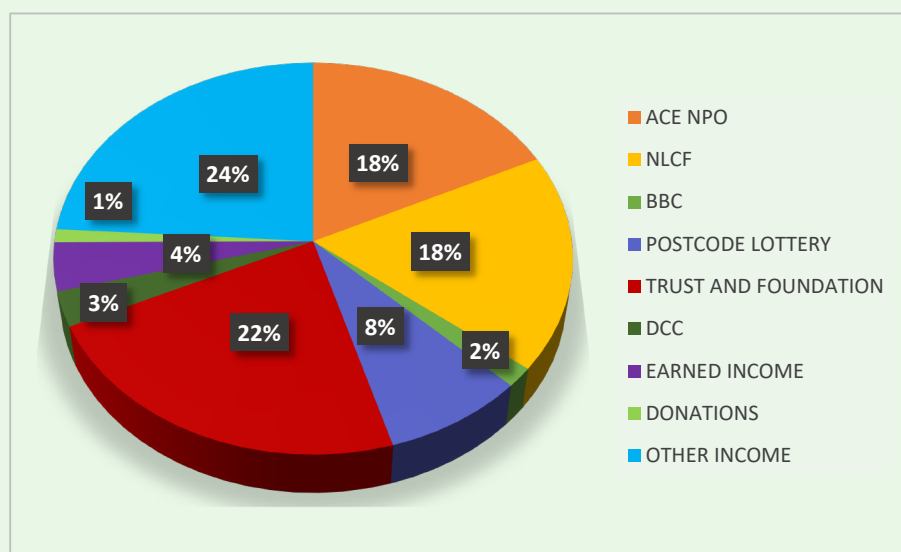
FINANCIAL SUMMARY 23/24

Financial Report 2023/24 Summary:

Artcore experienced a positive fiscal year marked by significant achievements and milestones. The company's successful ventures include the inauguration of a refurbished art gallery space and the completion of capital projects, alongside new developments at the community hub.

Artcore reported maintaining a robust financial standing throughout the year; with an annual income of £914,529 coupled with an expenditure of £ 704,469. Notably, the company accomplished the full repayment of its mortgage on the Albert Street property, acquired in 2019. Additionally, Artcore executed the trading of its commercial subsidiary, Craftcore Derby Limited, which oversees operations at the café and shop within the Artcore premises.

The year witnessed commendable income generation for Artcore, underscored by securing several grants, including those from BBC Children in Need and UKSPF funding from DCC as well as the Museums and Galleries Exhibition Tax Relief, further fortified the company's financial position.



Despite significant financial challenges, our organisation has actively pursued multiple income sources to ensure sustainability. By diversifying our revenue streams, Artcore has become more resilient and adaptable in the face of adversity. This strategic approach has allowed us to not only weather financial storms but also to thrive and grow. Throughout this journey, we have maintained a steadfast commitment to focusing on the positive aspects and opportunities that arise, continually driving our mission forward.

- Ruchita Shaikh - CEO

The 2024 numbers are from our draft accounts and are subject to change.

BUILDING UPDATES

Capital funding and Phase 2

The recent refurbishment of our building emphasises a commitment to sustainability, integrating a range of eco-friendly features that enhance both functionality and environmental responsibility. This project includes significant upgrades to the gallery and café, the installation of solar panels, a new central heating system, and the implementation of low emission lighting.

Solar Panels

A key component of the refurbishment is the installation of solar panels on the building's roof. These panels generate a significant portion of the building's energy needs, reducing reliance on non-renewable energy sources. By harnessing solar power, the building will decrease its carbon footprint and contribute to long-term energy savings.

New Central Heating System

The new energy efficient system optimises temperature control ensuring a comfortable environment for occupants while significantly reducing energy consumption.

Low Emission Lighting

The installation of low emission lighting throughout the building marks another critical improvement. These lights consume less energy and have a longer lifespan compared to traditional lighting solutions. Additionally, they provide superior illumination, creating a brighter and more welcoming atmosphere in all areas of the building.

Cafe + Awnings

Our cafe now has brand new equipment as well as the addition of Awnings on the exterior providing a great space to enjoy delicious food and drink looking out into Osnabruck Square. The design of the awnings complement the Market Hall and results in an inviting and vibrant area for the summer.

This comprehensive refurbishment underscores our commitment to sustainability and environmental stewardship. By integrating these advanced sustainable features, we not only improve the functionality and appeal of our building but also contribute positively to the environment. The upgraded gallery and café, combined with the new solar panels, central heating system, and low emission lighting, position our building as a model of sustainable development in the community.



OUR FUNDERS & SUPPORTERS



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**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**



Derby City Council



**The Baring
Foundation**



Derby Adult Learning Service

Learning Opportunities for Adults



Project funded by:
Jennifer Anne Thorpe Trust

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