



The story so far:

Viewfinder

Beacon Films CIC
Final report

JANUARY 2019

VIEWFINDER

'The Story so Far'
Beacon Films CIC
Final Report, January 2019



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Viewfinder, Beacon Films CIC

Final Report, January 2019

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The website that accompanies this report can be found at www.beaconfilms.org.uk/viewfinder

*On here you will find ‘**behind the scenes**’ films that demonstrate the processes and impact on individuals, **examples of the work** produced during the filmmaker surgeries and the six professional films made in partnership with external organisations, and **an easy read version** of the Executive Summary.*



1/ Executive Summary

Viewfinder, Beacon Films' talent development programme, ran between September 2015 and December 2018.

1) Discover filmmaking talents

Over the programme a total of 47 members attended a total of 72 two and a half hour long sessions organised into nine blocks. When asked on a scale of 1- 5 if the project was helping participants "(you) to become a better filmmaker?" the average response of 46 people was 4 out of 5.

"Skills can be applied to more than films: I've got more confident"

What we achieved

- ✓ Support from each other
- ✓ Support from Beacon Films
- ✓ Master classes

What we could do better

More time...

- Longer sessions
- More sessions
- More blocks

And sometimes

- More kit
- More facilitators



2) Develop professional skills

During the programme 32 members worked on 6 commissions producing 11 films through 1562 volunteer hours. Additionally members took part in a Skillset (industry skills council) skills workshop, a mentoring and a volunteering programme.

Members reported (through two different surveys):

- 81% think project is helping them work better with others
- 68% think project is helping them do more by themselves
- 73% think project is helping them achieve their chosen volunteering skill/goal
- 91% think project is helping them achieve their chosen filmmaking skill/goal

"Our skills at filming get better each time"

What we achieved

- ✓ Working as a team
- ✓ Responding to a brief
- ✓ Range of roles... sometimes beyond comfort zone

What we could do better

- Sometimes beyond comfort zone
- Linking with individual interests
- Skills beyond film making

3) Work on Film Commissions

Commissions were delivered for: Go Wild in Nature CIC, Food Nation

CIC, Connect in the North, St Camillus Care, BBC Tours Newcastle and Drummond Central. 68% of members who attended filmmaker surgeries then took part in a Film Factory. An additional 27 films have been produced for 6 further clients.

“What we did was high quality products. The factories are getting better.”

What we achieved

- ✓ High quality finished products
- ✓ Liked by commissioners and audiences
- ✓ Diverse subjects and styles ; we are a unique film making society

What we could do better

- Bigger range of commissioners
- Bigger audiences

4) Become independent filmmakers

“Independent means a film maker in our own way, but no film is easy when you’re doing it on your own”

What we achieved

- ✓ Many of us are doing it – Viewfinder and elsewhere
- ✓ Support when we need it

What we could do better

- Difficult to get opportunities beyond Beacon Films



- Support to work together outside Beacon Films
- Sometimes more kit

5) Showcase films, skills and talents

It is conservatively estimated that total audience for the commissioned films produced as part of the programme is 15,543.

In a survey of the audience attended the 2018 premiere 94% of respondents agreed with the statement that "films made by Beacon Films increase awareness in communities of the potential of disabled people".

What we achieved

- ✓ Premieres
- ✓ Festivals and exhibitions
- ✓ Films being used by commissioners

What we could do better

- Broader range of festivals and audiences
- Involving members more in promoting work



2/ Introduction

This is the final evaluation report of the Viewfinder programme run by Beacon Films (known as Beacon Hill Arts until late 2017) between September 2015 and December 2018. It follows the interim report of October 2017.

A review of the interim report and all subsequent evidence was used to develop an initial set of headline findings which were discussed with members and then workers. The results of this process are included in the Executive Summary. The Overview section illustrates the programme's core elements and includes case studies of members and programme activity. Evidence is selected to illustrate the delivery of the priority Outcomes in the subsequent section with a brief set of Conclusions being drawn.

If you would like further details of the programme or the evaluation please contact us at Beacon Films, Key House, Tankerville Place, Newcastle-upon-Tyne, NE2 3AT, on 0191 580 7000 or through www.beaconfilms.org.uk

Many thanks to all members, their circles of support, all Beacon Film workers - particularly Emma Tilney and Will Sadler, whose work this report draws on extensively - and others for their participation in this work, including Spirit of 2012 and Sir James Knott Trust who provided funding and support.

Best endeavours have been made to ensure the accuracy of this report, however all errors remain the author's.

3/ Overview

Viewfinder was a talent development programme that ran between September 2015 and December 2018. This section aims to give a brief overview of the programme's activity, illustrating the two core elements of work. The standard route for participants to join the programme was through completion of Beacon Film's entry-level BFI Film Academy.

Blocks ("Surgeries") of 8 x 2.5 hour training sessions were run on a fortnightly basis where members worked individually and in small groups on their own individual film making projects supported by other members and Beacon Films staff. The focus was on developing a range of personal and professional skills, competencies, knowledge, and experiences. Each block also included 1 or 2 masterclasses where sessions led by external professionals or agencies focused on particular industry-specific skills.

Where possible the final session of each block comprised a sharing event to which parents and carers were invited. This gave members the opportunity to showcase and receive feedback on their work. It was also used to engage in reflection and dialogue, so informing organisational and delivery developments as well as generating evaluative evidence.

The nine blocks completed during the programme were attended by a total of 47 members. 17 people attended 1 block only; 11 people attended 2; 8 people attended 3; 6 people attended 4; 4 people attended 5 and 1 person attended 6 of the 9 blocks.

The second element of the project, the “Film Factory”, was structured as a professional short film commission engaging members in a supported voluntary work experience. Working to the client’s brief, each production deployed a team of members in specific creative and/or technical roles to complete the commission. All the films can be viewed at **beaconfilms.org.uk/viewfinder**

- Go Wild in Nature CIC: promotion of this Newcastle based organisation working with schools
- Food Nation CIC: four films promoting the value of eating locally sourced food
- Connect on the North: three films about internet safety
- St Camillus Care; “We can Work”, a film about the value of including disabled people in the workforce
- BBC Tours Newcastle: introductory film for people attending tours of BBC Newcastle Studio
- Drummond Central: a film that celebrates the value of creativity

In addition to these two core elements of the Viewfinder programme a wide range of “value-add” opportunities were developed and delivered over the programme’s life. These included:

- The Search for the Spirit of 2012: commissioned to mark Spirit’s second birthday the work also provided an important pilot of the Film Factory delivery model.
- Newcastle Castle Hidden Histories: an interactive presentation featuring three films with an accompanying music project.
- Inclusion in the Digital Revolution: a mentoring programme to enable members to produce work for online exhibition and distribution.
- Life Animated: two members contributed articles to an education booklet with one person being on a panel at a special screening event at Tyneside Cinema.
- Random Acts North: a member was commissioned to write and direct their first short film.
- BHA Luminaries: filmmakers embed the skills developed in Viewfinder further by taking up volunteering roles within and beyond the organisation.
- Making Routes: commission for Spirit of 2012 with two Beacon Film filmmakers working as paid crew.
- Ebb & Flow: a video installation at Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival 2017 and live performance of the film alongside the music at Beacon Film Premiere 2018.
- Grace Darling: 3 films and interactive presentation, with UK tour of RNLI venues during 2019
- Spirit of 2012 Introducing Films: 17 films commissioned by for Spirit of 2012 with four Beacon Film filmmakers working as paid crew.

Viewfinder has a total membership of 47, made up of 37 men and 10 women. All but two members regard themselves as having a disability. All identify themselves as white except for one person who stated “other”. 32 people were aged between 15 and 25 years at the point of joining, 15 were older. 68% (32 people) of those that attended filmmaker surgeries went on to take part in a Film Factory.

Audiences

In addition to independent use by the commissioner, the films were distributed online, promoted to festivals and shown at Beacon Films' annual Premiere at Playhouse Whitley Bay, which provides a showcase for work by Beacon Films and other creative agencies working with people with learning disabilities, autism and additional needs on Tyneside. An estimated 442 individuals have attended the premieres during the course of Viewfinder.



Up to December 2018 the estimated total audience for the first four films produced by the programme is 15,543. This includes through social media, on-line views and use at conferences etc by commissioners. It is important to note that this figure is before the final two films have been exhibited or used by the client. It does not include audience figures from film festivals nor the "value-add" films.

Festivals:

- *Virus*: Nominated, International Category, YOUKI, Austria, 2018; Screening, Come On Down Festival, Blyth, UK, 2018; Official Selection, Webisode Film Festival, Houston, Texas 2019
- *Fake News*: Nominated, North East Young Filmmakers Awards, South Shields, UK, 2018; Screening, Come On Down Festival, Blyth, UK, 2018
- *Ebb and Flow*: Exhibition, Berwick Film and Media Arts Festival, UK, 2017
- *Hidden Histories*: Winner, "Best Contribution to a Heritage Project by Young People", Historic Angel Award 2017, Historic England
- *Hidden Histories*: William Heron, Hammer of the Poor Winner, "Best Community Film Award", Cinemagic, Belfast, 2017

4/ Case Study – Individuals

The subjects of the case studies have given permission for the following extracts to be shared publicly. If you wish to see full versions of the case studies, please contact Will Sadler at Beacon Films in the first instance.

Paul

“I have autism but rather than see it as a barrier, I use it as a tool to come up with great ideas. My autism can give me challenges though. Things have to be perfect in my head and sometimes I struggle to take in information, it needs to be precise. I sometimes find it difficult to explain things myself, but that is getting better now. I am always trying to improve my social skills by meeting and working with other people, but alone-time in my own space is important.



When I was first told I was autistic, I never knew what it meant but as the years went, I now know what it can do, what effects it can do to you, the good, the bad. It can make you do things that you don't really mean to do or that you can't control but it can also give you a great imagination and special skills that no normal person can do. I no longer treat my autism as a curse that holds me back in what I want to do, I now treat it as the perfect tool to add with my skills and filming because autism may be hard to deal with but there is potential within it.

I may have problems with my autism but the best I can do is deal with them and focus on using the good side of it and rise up against its problems. I now say this directly to any other autistic person out there in the world. You may find it hard to deal with in life but I tell you now, use it to your advantage like I do and treat it not as a curse but as a tool to what you truly want to do in the future. So keep fighting and rise up from it.

All of this wouldn't have been possible without the help, support and opportunities that I have been given by Beacon Hill Arts and its staff. I thank them sincerely.

Viewfinder is a place where Beacon Hill Arts members can work with each other on their own projects in filming: projects with others who are willing to help you. I have been working on a film in my own time and in Viewfinder sessions. I was really surprised at how many wanted to help me. Group members gave me ideas that I could put in my film. They showed their own style of how they do it. They showed what they were capable of. They gave me suggestions of how I could change it, make it better and my film is better as a result.

I can communicate perfectly when I'm with Beacon Hill Arts. It's an environment where I have things in common with people. They understand what I'm looking for and what I want to

do. It's more than just a school, a college or a university. Beacon Hill Arts is on top of the pyramid. It's the easiest place to go, to be with people who have similarities to me.

Sometimes things feel like I'm going round a maze, I'm not sure where to go, but Beacon Hill Arts feels like a smaller one. I am trying to build a more confident spurt in me – I can use my new skills in other ways. I was made a student lecturer at college, on the Health and Social Care course, telling my life story, showing my video [of a speech Paul gave]

I wouldn't have done that before Beacon Hill Arts. I tell the students what autism can be like, and what it can do to you... We do stuff that ordinary people cannot do. With my autism I have an enormous imagination. It's important to say we at Beacon Hill Arts are filmmakers with learning disabilities and autism. We are no ordinary filmmaking place. We are a unique and special filmmaking society."

Dean

"Hello my name is Dean, I will tell you a bit about my life and what I get up to in my week.

I have a little dog called Daisy. I work at McDonalds on Wednesdays. I work on DA, and "DA" stands for "Dining Area", where I clean the tables and chairs. I have friends at McDonalds, like Jess. I clean the tables to make them nice and clean, especially for customers and staff."



"I am one of the original members of Beacon Hill Arts. I've been involved in lots of projects: "Dust is Us", "Dr Lava", "Middle of Nowhere", "The Rules of Independent Travel" and "Mario and the Rockbiters."

"I had always wanted to make a CV film... I told Andrew and he wrote it in the red book (*the project diary*). I borrowed the iPad and filmed my CV film. We did a few takes, there are quite a few outtakes. I planned it out in the Viewfinder sessions and then borrowed iPad. We got a bag for the iPad, I signed the iPad out to say that I was borrowing it."

"Esme and my mum (Sandra) filmed it and I was directing; I told them what to do. I have directed before at Beacon Hill Arts. When editing it I used "I" for in point and "O" for out point. This says where clips start and stop. I used Final Cut X to edit my CV film. I found other clips of my work like "Dust is Us" and layered those into my CV film too. I had to reduce the music when people were speaking and raise it when they stopped talking, using the bar (*the software interface*)"

“Making the CV film in my own time made me feel happier because it involved making it with my family and including my family in the film... Making a film in my own time was something completely new.

“The people I want to see my CV film are: celebrities, and I could show the film to other people who might give me a job if I wanted more jobs than my McDonalds job. They’ll think ‘I want to interview this person.’”

“I liked coming up with questions for my film. I like asking questions. I like to find out about people, because I’m interested in who people are. I’d like to interview Scarlet off “I’m a Celebrity Get Me Out of Here”. I was interviewed as part of my job at McDonalds so questions are useful to know about”.

“Acting is what I’m most interested in. It is interesting and makes me feel happy and joyful. People will look at me and think I want to be like this person”

“Viewfinder is about friendships and filmmaking.”

From Sandra’s perspective:

“It’s difficult to organise meet ups... Viewfinder and Beacon Hill Arts is a place where these friendships can continue. It’s really important because it’s a big gap that Beacon Hill Arts fills. At special school, you leave at 19 and there’s no chance to continue friendships unless they do the same activities... With Beacon Hill Arts, it’s the links to the past and continuing friendships that’s exciting.”

“Dust is Us” brings tears to my eyes. Everyone has specific needs and here they are doing such amazing things. Andy (*Sandra’s husband*) showed “Dust is Us” at his office and they all had tears in their eyes.

“The comradery at BHA helps to build Dean’s confidence to speak to people and develop friendships. It is very helpful and important for work. Dean recently went back to McDonalds after not seeing them for so long due to ill health. Everyone came out to say hello, including the senior manager... It was clear that he was a valued member of the team. It’s the only bit of his life which is not a disability environment, it’s fantastic, and friendships form such a vital part of Dean’s happiness at work.

“I am aware that people are becoming more inclusive of people with learning disabilities. When we go places like the hospital, people will ask Dean now, not me. You see lots more stuff on television regarding disability. I like to think that Dean’s CV film is a part of that. It’s changing people’s attitudes, its making people with learning disabilities more visible, showing people what you are doing, putting it out into the community, making it fun.”

You can watch Dean’s CV Film at www.beaconfilms.org.uk/viewfinder and by clicking on ‘The Story so Far’

Anonymous

The project member wished to remain anonymous. In this we will refer to her as 'PM'

PM has always had an interest in technical things, including computers and I.T. and enjoys being creative.

PM considers herself to have a disability. She struggles with new routines, and trying new things.

She has been a member of Viewfinder since June 2018 and so far, has taken part in:

- Five days of introductory filmmaking activity
- Eight alternate Saturday mornings of talent development where she worked as crew on personal projects and developed specific film skills.

In late Spring 2018, PM started attending a weekly art workshop run by a local third sector organisation. Before this, she didn't get out of the house very much. She had been doing some volunteering at a charity shop, but this had come to an end.

PM's sister says:

"She was quite isolated, and wasn't going out or meeting anyone, I wanted to encourage her to do more."

PM found she really enjoyed the art workshops and when Dani found out about Viewfinder, she encouraged PM to try it out so that she had another opportunity to develop her creativity.

PM says:

"Generally, I don't like trying new things."

Her sister adds:

"When I mentioned the filmmaking workshops to her, at first she said 'no' but I said to her, 'go along, see what it's like and if you don't like it, you don't have to go back'"

PM says: "At first I thought that the course was only a week long, but I liked it and wanted to do more. I liked being behind the camera: the technical stuff and the editing. Rebecca, [who I had met in the art workshops] was there. I felt happy when I saw her, it's nice to start something new and see someone you know.

I worked on a film about a vampire with toothache and another about a lip-stick lightsabre. I really liked the stop-motion animation masterclass. I thought I'd have to be in front of the camera, but I didn't, I can do the behind the scenes stuff like the camera and the editing.

At first I found doing the camera quite difficult. All the different settings – it can be difficult to know which ones to use, but I learned. Putting the camera on the tripod was hard to start off with but easier as time went on.

When the Saturday morning sessions started I got to do more of the technical stuff like filming and editing. I'm more confident using my camcorder at home now and like to film my cats and dogs."

Her sister says:

"PM seems a lot happier than she was. She started a creative arts course at Westgate College in September [2018], and she'd never have done something like this before."

PM explains:

"I do an art course: painting, drawing, the history of art. I wanted to learn more things [to do with art] like working with clay. I loved the stop frame animation masterclass [at Viewfinder] and perhaps I could do stop frame animation on my course using the clay."

Getting more involved in my community makes me happy. I have got more friends now, makes me more confident trying new things now that I have friends who are doing it too"

PM is keen to remain on the Viewfinder project. The next activity she will be involved in through Viewfinder is volunteering as a filmmaker for an artisan bakery: a local social enterprise.

"I think it'll make me more confident", PM says. "I struggle to speak with strangers so this will help me to talk to them more. In the charity shop I was sorting clothes out upstairs and this project will mean I'm dealing with people. I'd like to do camera work on the project – the technical stuff."

I think volunteering as a group would be easier for me than volunteering alone because I'm more comfortable with strangers in a group than I am alone."

5/ Case Study - Filmmaker Surgery & Film Factory

Filmmaker Surgery Block 5:

The fifth block of Filmmaker Surgeries ran from mid-January to late April 2017 with 12 members. It followed the standard pattern of 2.5 hour sessions on alternate Saturday mornings. The intention is to develop self-directed individual or small film projects with the support of other members and Beacon Film facilitators, supplemented by two master classes.



The first of these focusing on animation was run by Dogwoof, the largest UK documentaries distributor. The second was a technical session on the use of steadicam run by the producer/director of photography at Meerkat Films. At the final session eight pieces of work

were shared, illustrating the usual diversity of work in progress: five short films, a reading the opening from an early draft script, an introduction to a piece being re conceived following the Dogwoof master class, and some scenes from a feature film which a member gradually remade over the three years of Viewfinder, premiering it before the Beacon Films 2018 Christmas party.

Some of the participants' experiences of the block is recorded in the Outcomes section of this report under 'discover filmmaking talents'.

Facilitators perspectives

The following, which are drawn from 2 small group and 3 individual interviews with workers held during and immediately after the block, aims to give a sense of the work and atmosphere during the sessions:

- There's a layering of creative, technical, personal, social and emotion development; all moving forward across time.
- There's a supportiveness to new people from participants as well as workers... There's support around ideas as well as people...
- The work follows this [individual interests and collaborations] rather than any existing structure of a shared project. The ideas are there and they're often strong. This is part of giving people a voice...
- It's about establishing common ground. There's ... not a preciousness. There's a willingness to try, and move on.
- Typically you see it [confidence] evolving across the blocks... There's an increased independence of practice.
- It [issues around quality] comes from working together rather than any curatorial overview. At the end of the day it's their creativity on the screen. There's an individuality there...
- The continuity between sessions is a function of the activity. The parameters are about time, so it's often a scene rather than a film.
- Social skills, self motivation, confidence is developed through the blocks, then in film factory there's a development of professional practice.

Within this context individuals' progress can be identified:

- At film academy [name] wasn't wanting to act at all... Now [name's] pushing himself as he feels safer.
- Perhaps a bit on periphery. [Name] struggles with motivation although as an individual is very funny and creative, by nature a collaborator... speaking out when things go wrong.
- Being on set brought home how unbelievable it is to work without a storyboard, no visual aids. He knows the geography of the scene; visualising story board is incredibly advanced; not about spontaneity.
- [Name was] not rattled, adapted to the situation when a prop was missing. He did several takes in spite of this... At the moment he's very much a collaborator...It's about how he sees his role.

- He's lacking in confidence of his creative ability, but he seems so confident. This is true of many people....
- Very capable but does not seem able to produce any work... Perhaps he needs to be constantly pushed, encouraged.
- [Name] needed most help... found it very challenging to remember choreography.
- Short attention and stamina...He's more at ease in the situation, accepting of the structure. He has sustained his engagement.
- A truly independent film... a genre [facilitator] knows nothing about.

Parents and carers perspectives

As well as sharing the work produced through the block, the final session was an opportunity to work with member's parents and carers. On this occasion this included discussions on priorities amongst project outcomes, members' understanding of volunteering and the additional support Beacon Films might be able to offer to members in moving towards the labour market. Circles of support were also asked what if any impact the project had on them. Responses included:

- The only respite I get in my waking hours [a working parent].
- Leeway for me ; time for self and support.
- Only thing he really enjoys, he absolutely loves it. It makes my life easier when he wants to do things.
- One of the only groups where I can actually leave her; normally sitting outside in corridor or café.
- Downside is having to reorganise holidays, rearrange events to enable him to come. I've done this very willingly because of what he gets out of it.

Developing evaluation practice

During this block, as with many there was also the development and testing of ways to capture participants' experience. In this case a facilitated small group discussion of members was used to end each session. This was successful in supporting reflective thinking, generating evidence, and as a ritual of closure and has been used since. Some of the evidence from these discussions is included in the outcomes section.

Case Study - Film Factory 4.

Extract from ***Infomercial brief for filmmakers. Client: St Camillus Care Group January 2018***

St Camillus own and operate hospitality training facilities in Gateshead, Newcastle and Blackpool for people with Autism and/or Learning Disabilities.

These include: Rivers Hotel (known as The Vault), The Giraffe Lounge and La Tour Hotel.

We believe that by training people with disabilities in commercial venues, we can match them to paid employment opportunities which meet their career aspirations and individual needs.



St Camillus's aims are also to support employers to access a diverse workforce and to promote social inclusion within the work place. Recruiting skilled and motivated personnel is becoming more of a challenge for employers than ever before, at St Camillus we can give employers access to skilled and motivated members of staff who have completed at least six months training with us.

Film Brief: *you need to produce a short film, no longer than 2 minutes, which will communicate the following message in a creative and engaging way: To show why employing a disabled person makes good business sense, i.e.: they can bring skills, motivation and dedication to a role.*

The following materials are drawn from a review of evidence and discussions with members, St Camillus staff and Beacon Film workers (7 discussions in total with 11 people).

The project came from workers with Beacon Films and St Camillus meeting while they were both running stalls at a Parents and Carers Forum event in North Tyneside. St Camillus was trying to organise a placement for a student at the Tyneside Cinema, so they got talking...

The Rivers Hotel in Gateshead provides education and on the job training between 9am and 5pm: between 5pm and 9am it is run as any hotel. About 85% of employees have a learning disability. There was one person who at the time was attending both the Rivers Hotel and Beacon Films. On one day of filming at the hotel several people working at the hotel became involved in the filming.

The crew from Beacon Films consisted of 11 members with 2 film-maker facilitators and 2 support workers, along with administrative/organisational support. The project was delivered over 6 days work between mid February and late March 2018, with some disruption by snow. For 2 participants this was their first experience as volunteers working on a commission. For the other participants there was a familiarity with the roles as well as the technical skills.

The brief made sense to one volunteer "Just because your disabled does say you cannot work", while for another, "It was hard to figure out what it said."

The preparatory work started with a morning of research including a visit to the hotel. Participants reported: "We met and talked to [St Camillus worker]. Found out what the hotel does; why employing people with disabilities can boost the industry. We asked what she liked. Was thinking about a drama, but she wanted something real. It was good to get a

steer.” On-line research identified an intentionally provocative post giving “reasons why you shouldn’t employ people with disabilities. That fired people up!”

One volunteer had seen the ‘This Girl Can’ campaign. An analysis of that was undertaken looking at the use of text, and the structure of the film. This volunteer saw it as a day at work; “we transferred that to our work. This became the structure: arriving, working, break, working, leaving.” (facilitator)

“After being inspired we came up with the idea of jobs in Rivers Hotel and people in other work places.” (volunteer) Six of the volunteers had some form of work or volunteering beyond Beacon Films, so people were talking about their days at work. “We weren’t able to cover all these with 2 days filming.” (facilitator)

Pre filming work included developing a shot list of things that the crew would like to film, story boarding some elements – “those that were a bit tricky” (facilitator) - some test filming and editing, and choosing the music: “Doing test shots, test films... was fun and got to see how to make it work.” (volunteer)

On the two days of filming volunteers worked as two groups. The first day was at the hotel. “At the hotel there was lots we weren’t allowed to film. The kitchen. The Health and Safety issues were too big.” (facilitator)

“When on location there’s an awareness of where people are. A professionalism as part of the film crew. ‘I’m doing a job here’. It gets people out of their comfort zones.” (support worker)

Behind the camera there was a rotation of roles between direction, camera, and sound recording. People used Go-pro – a camera that can fit into very small spaces - for the first time. “You could see members were excited by this.” There were complex shots in a bathroom with “lots of lights and camera and people”. Filming in the bar was “challenging as the last thing we did and everybody was exhausted.” (facilitator)

The second day included some filming at Beacon Film offices. “It was generally a more relaxed schedule”. (facilitator) “People were a lot more relaxed and confident with it (Go Pro)” (facilitator) and “having done some of the editing (we) understood shots going for, what was needed.” (volunteer)

There was filming on location at a volunteer’s place of work and their home. The former was an NHS library. “No one else had been there before and we were working in a library so we had to be quite.” “It was hard work.” (volunteer)

Then the editing process, summarised by volunteers as:

- Timing shots to music - that was new. Challenging but also fun. Hard to begin with. Strong possibility will use in my own films in future.
- Editing... clips to music and cutting between clips. Watching and thinking about how I was going to construct that.

Volunteers provided the following reflections:

- Sometimes I need a lead when it's a bit difficult.
- Sometimes I prefer to work on own and sometimes with others depending who else is on the team.
- Have to do it to a brief and have to keep going back to get it right, even when we think it is right.
- Normally I do the filming. It's strange editing as you don't know what there is because not do the filming. I didn't like being in the film. It's easier being behind the camera than in front.
- Volunteering at Beacon Films is kind of weird... to come in as a volunteer I'm not used to it. Now I'm used to it so it's not so difficult... I'm not used to working to some ones brief rather than doing what I want to do.
- Probably directing, I enjoyed that. For once you can tell people what to do rather than people telling you what to do.
- I really learnt about planning to a commission and working with a client to make a film they want and are interested in.

From a client perspective "It's been really easy. Time is precious and we've not had to do anything.... Working with the group on filming days... It was good and easy. The students really enjoyed the day, and it didn't affect the staff's working day."

The use of the finished film during summer 2017 included St Camillus Celebration & Information day at River's Hotel, and being posted on their website then under development. It had also been circulated to South Tyneside Disability Partnership for use around a targeted week of activities.

"Hearing from [commissioner] where and how the film will be used is key. It gives a sense of accomplishment. Their work will be used, not just shown in the usual places. It will be reaching a wider audience beyond Beacon Films, beyond learning disabled communities. It provides validations." (support worker)

6/ Outcomes

In this section the key outcomes of the programme are illustrated by reporting a piece the evidence for each element of the logic chain. At the end of this section a table outlines the relationships between the programme's initial priority outcomes and Beacon Film's logic chain. Additionally evidence of member's wellbeing is reported.



Discover Filmmaking Talents:

"Project members become more aware of and more confident in their skills and creative abilities"

During the programme a total of 47 individuals attended the nine blocks, a total of 72 sessions each 2.5 hours long. As recorded above some people attended more than one block.

Following the interim report a new survey was designed enabling participants to identify specific areas of development that they would like to focus on at the beginning of a piece of work, with subsequent reflection. The first set of respondents recorded “a 13% improvement in self assessed filmmaking skills. 91% ranked the extent to which the project was helping them to achieve this 7/10 or above.”

Continued >>

The following table records members' activity during one block, excluding the master-classes. It is the same block that is recorded in the case study – see previous section. Participants were responding to one of two questions:

- Can you tell me about what you've done in the session this morning?
- What have you done today? And what do you think of the work you've done?

	14 January	28 January	11 February	11 March	25 March
Member 1	Took part in a group film about the clown – did sound and editing	Putting sound effects on the mini movie [from last session]; I've enjoyed making it more hilarious and slapstick	Practicing the movement for the plushie movie and creating the storyboard	Filming of the plush movie and helping Member and Member make Member's film. I've done well with filming – for me I did better.	Put in clips of the Plush movie into movie file
2	Showed my holiday film of Budapest. Looked for SFX on my phone (harry potter) – I'll look for fantastic beasts as well. Helped with set calls.	We did a plan for Fantastic Beast film – storyboards; I picked the parts of the film	Greenscreen for my Fantastic Beasts film; Acting and directing, I made props at home and brought them in	Greenscreen for my film – I shook the beast. Working in a team with Member, Member and BF worker.	Editing
3	Came up with ideas for my film; helped Member – loads of films – studying creatures of the night to help Member	Showing BF worker my ideas – drawing storyboards of lightsabre fight – “a piece of cake”	Practicing film about Sith Lord and his revenge	I head of Sith Lord. My film is twisted. Me and Member lightsabre duel. I brilliant idea.	Working with BF worker making an ending to my twisted film

4	Found some clips I liked for my film, for my mood reel	Working on mood reel – half vampire/half werewolf; it was tricky, I've never done anything like it before. I didn't know what it was until last session	n/a	n/a	Working out the story of my life
5	Set calls; using tablet; showing photos of what I've been doing	Listening to Member's ideas and watching the 2 trailers. It's [Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them] to Harry Potter movies – it's been different	I've done greenscreen and acting	n/a	Been watching Member doing editing making a Star Wars film – had eagle eyes to spot any mistakes
6	Acting as a clown; script writing for mini-film; story development	I've come up with an outline for a short film. It's come out well, people who've read it thought it was funny. It took me a while to figure out but now it will be easier to write the script.	Writing – have got some of the dialogue done for the script	Writing more script – I'm about halfway through (the murder just happened). Quite happy.	Writing script and did some acting in Member's film

7	Helped with camera, sound and acting; helped with ideas	Came up with ideas for storyboard that Member did – it was great	Have done some acting on the Fantastic Beasts film	Working on Fantastic Beasts – been very enjoyable – doing the camera.	I've been helping with Member's editing and watching
8	n/a	I've joined in Member's spoof of Fantastic Beasts – it was good	Have been helping out with people where I could. Was in between two things. Helped Member with sound on his film.	Worked on Fantastic Beasts – acting, sound and directing. It was good.	Writing down the lyrics to Jonny B Goode; helped Member with stop motion animation
9	Shown Member my film script – area where Member's character will be. Discussed ideas about voice, make it more interesting. Shown Member part of my film too	Directing more of my film; helping with camera and; acting. Think it turned out well – only I didn't have enough time [to get everything done]	Done more filming for my movie	Asked Member to come to the session to film a special section of my film. Filmed a different scene and then helped on someone else's project. Gone very well today.	Continuing to direct/act in own film – two new actors, Member and Member
10	Working with Member, discussing ideas about the character I'll be in the film	Did a few scenes and camera work [for Members movie] It went really well	Some more acting	Directing, using camera on Member's and Member's films. Thought work today was good.	Continuing to help Member with his film – help with setting up, putting up greenscreen and operating camera

11	I helped make a film about a clown with no sense of humour. I did storyboard, camera and directing	Documenting by taking photographs – enjoyed doing that	Photography and filming Member film	Edited a clip to look and feel differently (Able is different ways using colour and sound) “Impressed with what I’ve produced”	Helping BF worker with some work using greenscreen and play mobil characters. Structured a storyboard for three little pigs.
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Develop Professional Skills:

“Project members become more skilled and confident filmmakers”

In film factories, the focus is on producing a piece of work in response to a commission, with all the professional skills development that this

requires. During the programme 32 members worked on 6 commissions producing 11 films through 1562 volunteer hours. This refers solely to the core Viewfinder programme. As outlined on page 6 considerable ‘value added’ work was also under taken.



The new survey used since 2018 enabled project members to identify personal goals in three categories: improving one volunteering skill (choosing from an ONS-defined volunteering skill), one filmmaking skill and one 'other goal' that could be anything else they chose. This was then used for reflection at the end of the work. When asked to what extent they felt that the project was helping them to develop the skills they had identified, 73% rated this 7/10 or above in relation to the volunteering skill that they chose and 91% rated this 7/10 or above in relation to filmmaking skill that they chose.

Records of Achievement were introduced following discussions with parents and carers about how Beacon Films could enhance its support for members. As well as being of value to participants they were designed to evidence and inform other people including those providing opportunities in education, volunteering and work, of members' skills, knowledge and achievements.

Continued >>

Record of Achievement

Rowan Simpson volunteered on a professional Beacon Hill Arts film production co-commissioned by Connect in the North. The brief was to create three very short films optimised for online audiences that explored three aspects of e-safety.

Rowan throughout volunteering for Film Factory 3 has gained experience and developed skills in:



- Developing ideas for a series of films in response to a client's set brief
- Worked as a team/collaborated with others to create three films in response to a client's brief
- More confident in expressing ideas and opinions
- More knowledge of editing
- Co-created storyboards and scripts
- Development of IT skills
- Acting skills

Rowan throughout the project has developed his confidence and experience in using the technical equipment and software for filming and editing. In particular he has developed his knowledge of SFX and shown initiative in suggesting new ideas and problem-solving during the editing sessions.

Sarah Wheatley, from Connect in the North says: "I run sessions for people with learning disabilities and their supporters about web safety. I will use the films to start discussions about virus protection, cyber bullying and fake news. Connect in the North will promote the films using social media and our website."

Signed:

Date: 17.1.2018

**Will Sadler, Development Director
Beacon Hill Arts**

Reference: Zosia Feher
Film Factory 4: Jan – Mar 2018

Film Factory volunteers worked alongside St Camillus Care Group to create a short film about the contribution people with learning difficulties and autism make to workplaces. You can watch the film by visiting www.tinyurl.com/wecanwork

Throughout volunteering for Film Factory 4, Zosia has gained experience and developed skills in:

- Developing ideas for a film in response to a client's set brief concerning people with learning disabilities and autism finding work
- Working as a team/collaborating with others to create a film in response to a client's brief
- Confidence in expressing ideas and opinions
- Knowledge of editing
- Co-creating storyboards and scripts

Zosia has developed her editing skills, learning to edit to music in creating this film and worked outside of the projects sessions to finish editing the film that was produced.

We have thoroughly enjoyed working with her.

If you would like to discuss her work with us, please don't hesitate to contact me.



Will Sadler, Development Director, Beacon Films CIC
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Find out more about our work at www.beaconfilms.org.uk

Work on Film Commissions:

“Members develop a greater understanding of the working environment and their potential contribution towards it.”

The evidence included in this section draws from the final two Film Factories, which produced work for BCC Tours Newcastle and Drummond Central. The



former provides members of the public attending a tour at BBC Newcastle studios with background information. Drummond Central is a marketing agency based in Newcastle. They intend to use their film “as an internal piece to help motivate staff to get involved with more groups outside of the agency walls” as well as on their company website and through their social media accounts. (In January 2019 there were about 880 followers across 3 platforms).

Commissioners:

- The actual film produced is in a word brilliant; so inventive, creative, fun and informative, completely fitting the brief and also encapsulating the feeling our tours aim to give our guests.
- They... created an end product we can be proud to be a part of.
- Loved the ideas. There were so many it was difficult to choose.
- The experience of working with Beacon Film was very professional. What was most impressive above all was how approachable the team were and how at all times we, the client, were paramount in all their thinking.
- ...impressed by how quickly the film was made and how professional the whole process has been. Really good with the restrictions on space.
- ... Beacon Film were able to work with us with ease and were respectful of all restrictions to works and caveats we asked of them.
- Group were good working in this environment; didn't disturb the team.
- Feedback on the filming days and then end product was very positive across the board. Praise was given for both how professional and great to work with the filmmakers were and for how well the crew explained their intentions to our cast.

Volunteers:

The different intentions of the two clients are reflected in the comments gathered from members.

- BBC [Tours Newcastle] turned down the first idea which was different to the other projects I've been involved in. I don't understand why they didn't like it as when we went to see them they gave use clear guidelines which we followed for our initial pitch but in their email feedback it implied we hadn't. It was quite a dark feeling that they'd said that.
- Professionalism got increased due to the rules around it...

- Less freedom in content and story.
- For us and the BBC [Tours Newcastle] it was important. There's not [a] profoundly deep message. It helps, is important in terms of exposure of our work and skills base.
- Enjoyed acting and beeping the golden nose.
- Doing the camera work for it and the whole concept of it.
- I think each film we do we should get issued a new challenge. This one was the props.
- Location sometimes small.
- Filming in a working environment - had to keep in time with events during the day.
- Time is always against us.
- We have each others backs.

Members were asked if there was any difference working for Drummond Central as a commercial agency rather than a voluntary organisation:

- No. It just felt the same. Same atmosphere just shorter time.
- A little bit different promoting a company never heard of before.
- I think it is different... not sure why.

Become independent filmmakers:

“Project members get involved/more involved in community participation & volunteering (including using their filmmaking skills wherever possible).”

There has been a clear aspiration throughout Viewfinder to support members in becoming increasingly engaged on an equitable basis in activity and communities beyond Viewfinder.

Beyond the value-add elements of Beacon Films work, this has been largely reactive led by member's interests and responding to opportunities. In some cases, there is clear evidence from either members or their families of the effect of Viewfinder in this broader engagement. In others the evidence is less clear, although it seems likely that Viewfinder has made a varying contribution.



The following examples illustrate some facets of this:

- A member who developed an interest in acting through Beacon Films, was referred to a local theatre company (the Lawnmowers), got an opportunity to audition for a play, was the only autistic actor in a play about autism performed at Northern Stage and subsequently toured.
- A member who remade a 90 minute feature film as part of Viewfinder. It was premiered at Beacon Films 2018 Christmas party.
- A member who has started regularly volunteering for Beacon Films as a video editor.
- A member who got an NHS work placement linked to media. Then, because his placement officer was aware of the work he'd done with Beacon Films, he got a work placement with Tyne & Wear TV.

- A member who was asked to be a previewer for Newcastle International Film Festival.
- A member who has become a YouTube vlogger and uses Viewfinder as a way to develop film skills. He also regularly volunteers at Beacon Films as a vlogger, documenting projects and their impact.
- A member who made a film at home with his father after developing his filmmaking skills with us, and who has been paid crew on Beacon Films projects.
- A member who applied for and received a Channel 4 / Arts Council First Act that was screened on Random Acts website. He also does paid crew work for Beacon Films.
- A member who did his college film project in partnership with Beacon Films. This support enabled him to achieve an important part of an accredited course. He made a film for another charity based in the same building as Beacon Films, which has received around 2000 views online.
- A member who was very socially isolated, started an art course, then came to Viewfinder and is now starting an art/animation-linked college course.
- Two members who have taken on paid co-facilitator roles, running workshops alongside Beacon Films' Creative Director.

Showcase films skills and talents:

“Communities become more aware of the potential of disabled people.”

The annual Beacon Films premiere was held on 19 November 2018 at Whitley Bay Playhouse. Eighteen people completed an on-line survey. Half of the respondents (9) had previously attended a premiere, 5 had “never seen Beacon Films work before and 4 had not been to a premiere but had “seen Beacon Films work elsewhere (eg online, at an event etc).”



- The average score for the quality of the work was 9/10.
- 83% thought the films were better than they expected them to be.
- 94% strongly agreed with the statement that "films made by Beacon Films increase awareness in communities of the potential of disabled people".

As a final question, respondents were asked “Is there anything else you'd like to say?”

- I thought the event was very well organised and welcoming. It was really professional without being too slick.
- Presentation by the two presenters was fab, kept us interested, was the right pace and very funny. The venue and your team were great.
- ... I loved the variety of the content and the huge variation of skills shown were amazing. I loved how informative the videos were and the music performed were sensational! You felt involved with the whole premiere, just being there felt like part of

a community that should be incredibly proud of the hard work and dedication shown...

- ... Love the new logo and look and feel of Beacon Films. I think the thing that you could do to improve is to think about how you go deeper with some of the themes that the work is touching on.... There's a wonderful warmth and humour to many of the BF pieces, but with that I think comes a risk that everything defaults to humour. I'm not saying you're there now - but just something to be aware of.
- You could tell that all the ideas had come directly from the members and that they had taken control from start to finish during the process. I would love your members to deliver a film making workshop or something to my young people!
- The music at the end was another high point for me. The inclusiveness of the band and the song that they performed were great...
- I really liked the way the presentation told the story of Beacon Films and the journeys of the project members. It really worked well linking everything to the development of individual skills as youngsters became more involved....

Wellbeing:

The evidence reported in the table below is considered to be of limited value for three reasons: the small sample means that a change in one persons circumstances (due perhaps to illness) has a significant effect; some members have difficulty with some of the concepts (eg 'satisfied', 'worthwhile'); following the interim report a new methods of gathering and recording data were introduced.

However, when participants were asked "Do you feel better about your life and future as a result of being involved in this project/event?" 88% of people, in the old survey, and 92% in the new, stated that they did. This, along with much other data, gives a high degree of confidence that the work had a positive impact on people's wellbeing.

	Baseline Average of all responses	Baseline % of Positive Respondents	Endline Average of all responses	Endline % of Positive Respondents	Percentage Change
Survey to Dec 17 - Overall, how satisfied are you with your life?	8	74%	7	67%	-7%
Modified survey – same question as above	9	92%	9	100	+8%
Survey to Dec 17 - Overall, how much do	8	75%	8	75%	0

you feel the things you do in your life are worthwhile?					
Modified survey – same question as above	9	100%	9	100%	0
Survey to Dec 17 - Overall, how happy did you feel yesterday?	8	68%	8	72%	4%
Modified survey – same question as above	9	100%	9	100%	-8%
Survey to Dec 17 - Overall, how anxious did you feel yesterday?	2	75%	2	67%	-8%
Modified survey – same question as above	3	55%	3	80%	25%

The 'Perceptions of Disability' Question:

One of the priority outcomes was that “disabled and non-disabled people overcome (self-) limiting beliefs, increase confidence and have more positive attitudes towards participation”. This complex outcome points towards audiences and members, exploring multiple facets. Reflecting on “how we arrived at where we are today” in trying to capture the important issues that underlie the outcome, one Beacon Film worker, records:
 “Firstly (in 2015) we asked 'stock' questions about perceptions of disability to parents and carers:

- Generally speaking, do you think there is a lot of prejudice in Britain against disabled people? (please tick): a lot – a little – hardly any – don't know

- To what extent do you think disabled people are affected in their daily lives by the following issues? (please tick): no affect - minor affect – moderate affect – major affect – don't know
 - Stigma and Discrimination
 - Disability Equality Issues
 - Access to Services
 - Independent Living

We did so because we felt that the questions were too inaccessible for all project members to be able to understand. But inevitably we felt uncomfortable about this because first and foremost shouldn't it be disabled people who are asked questions about the perceptions of disabled people? Asking circles of support (mainly parents and carers) these questions didn't guarantee this.

We felt we had to change the 'perceptions of disability' question to one that:

- asked the right people (people who consider themselves to have a disability)
- was understandable for all
- was relevant for all.

After attending a session at Spirit of 2012 (April 2017) about approaches to the 'perceptions of disability' question, we ditched our old method and opted instead for the ONS question: How positive do you feel about participating in your community?

We chose this because

- we felt it was potentially understandable for all (if it was asked in the right way)
- we felt it was relevant to the people we wanted to ask (our project members, the vast majority of whom consider themselves to have a disability)

This began a fascinating process for us, because firstly we had to establish that project members understood the question. So we started by unpacking the meanings of 'positive', 'participating' and 'community'. Then we asked them for examples of where they do this, followed by how 'positive' they feel, followed by whether they think Viewfinder helps, followed by what we can do to help more.

What we discovered - and which has led to changes we made to the survey in the final re-draft in August - is that this has the effect of people only referring to 'positive' things they do in their community. So the revised question (for Viewfinder Plus) asks people to describe what they do in their community before they rank how positive they feel about it (not at the same time).

We feel that now, we have a robust way to capture quantitative as well as qualitative data for this question and will start doing so in Viewfinder Plus."

Continued >>>

Viewfinder priority outcomes	Viewfinder summary logic chain	Beacon Films Logic Chain (v June 2018)
Wellbeing		Cross-cutting: Project members will improve their wellbeing by being involved in the project
Disabled and non-disabled people overcome (self-) limiting beliefs, increase confidence and have more positive attitudes towards participation	Discover filmmaking talents	Project members become more aware of and more confident in their skills and creative abilities
Participants become more skilled and confident filmmakers	Develop professional skills	Project members become more skilled and confident filmmakers
Participants enjoy volunteering, understand the value of their contribution and feel appreciated	Work on film commissions	(Through supported filmmaker-volunteering) members develop a greater understanding of the working environment and their potential contribution towards it.
Participants enjoy volunteering, understand the value of their contribution and feel appreciated	Become independent film makers	Project members get involved/more involved in community participation & volunteering (including using their filmmaking skills wherever possible)
Increased awareness in communities of potential of disabled people	Showcase films skills and talents	Communities become more aware of the potential of disabled people.
		Project members feel more able to advocate for themselves and others.
Participants closer to the labour market		Project members feel integrated in society and can participate equally in activities, the community and the world of work

7/ Conclusions

The delivery of all the programme outcomes and outputs, as these have evolved during the programme, can be claimed with confidence. It is clear that members have benefitted as citizens, film makers and volunteers. Broader societal changes are slower, but the programmes contribution can be evidenced.

These claims are illustrated in this report which along with the interim report and other data generated through programme delivery provides a substantial body of evidence using diverse research approaches to engage with relevant stakeholders. While largely qualitative, some outcomes can be assessed through a triangulation of sources.

During the programme, there has been considerable evolution of evaluative practice, perhaps most importantly the embedding of evidence generation into administrative and delivery mechanisms. The evaluation has been framed by an initial theory of change which was subsequently reworked into a logic model. There is evidence that this has had significant impact at an organisational and strategic level. The next challenge in this respect is to sustain consistency while being responsive to the particular circumstances of individual members and programmes of activity.

The two-part model, of sessions focused on member-led projects followed by commissioned films where members volunteer as part of crew, has been developed and refined during the programme. It has provided a core programme to which significant additional elements have been added. Refinements have included clarifying the distinction between the two elements with participation in the film crew being increasingly understood as volunteering and valued by participants as such. The introduction of records of achievement is one example of Beacon Films being responsive to participant needs as well as supporting member's broader engagement with local communities and organisations.

The focus on increasing independence of members is essential not only in terms of social justice but also in managing the mismatch between the capacity of and demand for Beacon Films provision.

Two practice-focused conversations were on going during the production of this report. One was about the extent to which films should be focused round the concerns and experiences of people with learning disabilities, autisms and other additional needs. The other was around the emerging house style of commissioned films produced through the programme. Organisationally such debates are important in identifying future possible commissioners and sources of income generation. More immediately they illustrate the confidence and competence of members as filmmakers.