



MAKING ROUTES FESTIVAL EVALUATION REPORT

SLG

**BATTERSEA
ARTS CENTRE**





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1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

In October 2017, The Making Routes project culminated in the Making Routes Festival – a three-day celebration of visual arts, theatre and play co-created by disabled and non-disabled children, young people and artists. Funded by Spirit 2012, the festival took place across three South London venues: Oasis Play (Oasis), the South London Gallery (SLG) and Battersea Arts Centre (BAC).

This report provides an overview of the Making Routes Festival and aims to reflect on the strengths and weakness of the event in relation to three key evaluation areas:

1. **Wellbeing:** To improve the wellbeing and life chances of disabled and non-disabled people
2. **Disability:** To bring about positive change in the perception, engagement and recruitment of disabled people
3. **Social Connectedness:** To work effectively in partnership to enhance social connectedness and encourage creative collaboration

The purpose of the report is share knowledge and good practice in relation to the planning and delivery of an inclusive arts event with any organisation or individual for whom this information may be of interest.

2. INTRODUCTION TO MAKING ROUTES FESTIVAL

Making Routes is a unique creative partnership between Oasis, SLG and BAC. The three South London organisations are neighbours, joined by a single bus route. Between July 2016 and October 2017, the project delivered eighteen artist-led residencies across the three Making Routes organisations. In October 2017, the project culminated in the Making Routes Festival. This event showcased the creative outputs of the project and the talents of its participants.

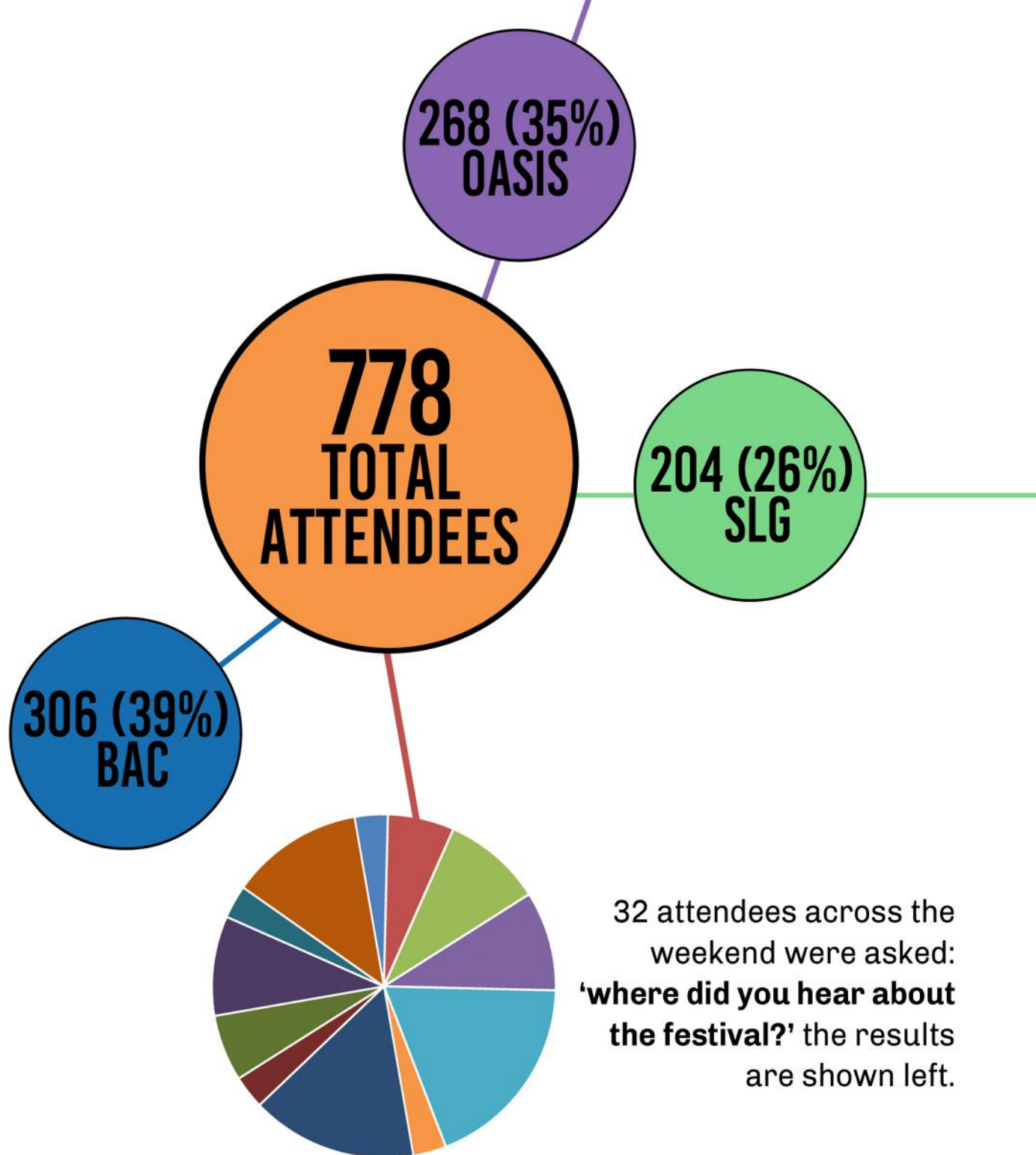
In January 2017, Making Routes recruited a group of fifteen disabled and non-disabled young people aged between sixteen and twenty-five to join the Making Routes Festival Team. This group of young people came together once a month between January and October 2017 to plan, programme and deliver the festival in collaboration with the Making Routes core team. The Festival Team aimed to:

- Place disabled and non-disabled young people at the heart of the planning and delivery of the Making Routes Festival
- Bring young people from different south London boroughs together as co-collaborators
- Ensure disabled young people are visible and valued within the cultural life of their city.

Making Routes also worked in collaboration with filmmakers with learning disabilities from Beacon Hill Arts (beaconhillarts.org.uk) to document activity across the weekend.







Teacher	1	Friends	2
Family	3	Leaflet through door	3
Oasis	6	BAC	1
SLG	5	George Shearing	1
Online	2	Hoop app	3
Local advert	1	Stockwell Community Centre	4

HAVING A BUNGEE, SWINGING, EVERYTHING AND GETTING FILMED
IT WAS REALLY FUN AND INTERESTING
THE ACTIVITIES AND STRUCTURES
IT HAD FUN ACTIVITIES AND IS REALLY INCLUSIVE OF EVERYONE
IT'S FUN AND EXCITING
FUN AND EDUCATIONAL FOR KIDS
THINGS FOR EVERYONE TO TAKE PART IN, BEATBOX WORKSHOP
I THINK IT WAS FANTASTIC. I LIKED THE FOOD, THE EXCITEMENT
AND PEOPLE PLAYING AND JOINING IN
I LIKE ALL THE THINGS ABOUT THE FESTIVAL
IT'S FUN – T-SHIRTS
LIKE THAT IT'S LOCAL AND FREE
TYRES AND FOAM
DAYO PERFORMANCE, FOAM ROOM, TYRES AND TENT
GARGLING
WAS REALLY GOOD AND FUN - MOTORBIKE

WHAT DID YOU LIKE ABOUT THE FESTIVAL?

ALL OF IT, TENTS, ART ROOM - DIDN'T KNOW THAT EXISTED
TYRES, THE FREEDOM OF IT, VERY RELAXED
GOT TO HAVE LOTS OF FUN, SWEETS, MAKE STUFF AND BREAK
STUFF
DAYO PERFORMANCE, TYRES, DRAWING ON BOXES IN ART BLOCK
FOOD, THE MOTORBIKE
TODAY WAS SO FUN - WE GOT TO PLAY AND GO ON THE TYRES AND
STUFF LIKE THAT. AND WE WENT IN A SHOW - THE SHOW WAS SO
FUN. WE GOT TO DO PUZZLES. IT WAS ABOUT HOW TO HELP THE
BOY.
IT WAS REALLY GOOD
PAINTING
SEEING ALL THE PEOPLE, THE COMIC WORKSHOP
THE VARIETY OF ACTIVITIES, THE PERFORMANCE AND
COLLABORATION
IT'S GENERALLY FANTASTIC, LOTS OF NICE PEOPLE WHO WORK
HERE

[OASIS]

**I WOULD HAVE RATHER BEEN ABLE TO PLAY THAN HAVE TO MOVE
I WOULD HAVE LIKED TO CARRY ON PLAYING AND COULD HAVE
BEEN A BIT MORE FREE
WE ENJOYED ALL ACTIVITIES
PROVIDED REFRESHMENTS AT A COST
ADD CHOCOLATE CAKE**

[SLG]

**WE DIDN'T KNOW WE HAVE TO BOOK THE PERFORMANCE. MORE
SIGNAGE TO ART BLOCK
NO, REALLY ENJOYED IT
WOULD HAVE BEEN GOOD TO GO ON THE ROOF
A BIT MORE EQUIPMENT
WOULD HAVE BEEN GOOD TO HAVE GO-KARTING**

COULD WE HAVE DONE ANYTHING BETTER?

**NO TODAY I HAD FUN
IT WAS FINE**

[BAC]

**NO - JUST MORE REGULAR EVENTS LIKE THIS
IT WAS SO GOOD I HAVE NO COMPLAINTS, IT WAS FANTASTIC
I THINK THE SLIDES SHOULD HAVE BEEN DECORATED.**

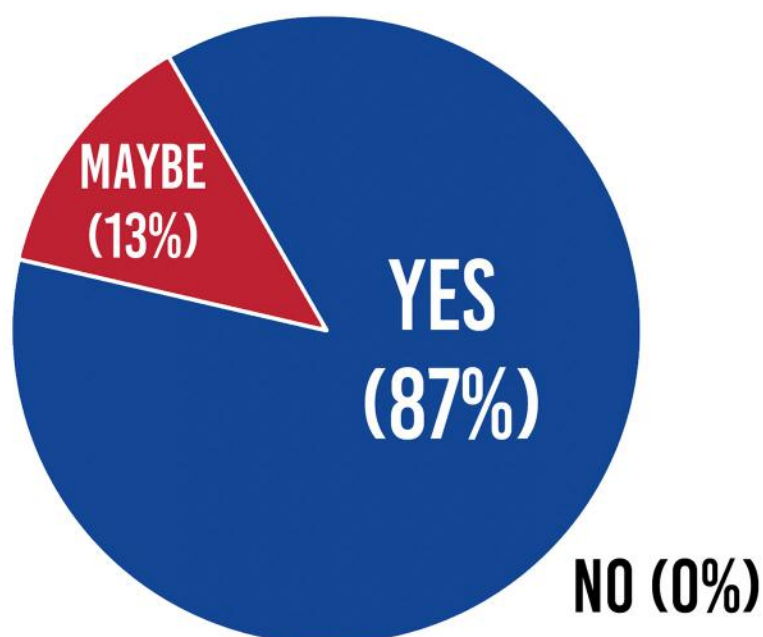


4. OUTCOME 1: WELLBEING

Outcome: To improve the wellbeing and life chances of disabled and non-disabled people

Indicator: Participants are supported to communicate in ways that are attentive to their communication preferences and needs. Participants report feeling a strong sense of agency.

46 children and young people were asked the question: '**Did you feel supported to take part fully in the Making Routes Festival?**' The results are shown below.



Below are four responses from supported volunteers from the Making Routes Festival Team who were asked the question:

‘Was the festival planning group inclusive enough and were you supported to be part of that group?’

‘YEAH I WAS SUPPORTED TO BE PART OF IT AND THE WHOLE PLANNING PROCESS HAS BEEN DECENT’

‘YEAH I FEEL THAT I WAS SUPPORTED ENOUGH’

‘I FEEL EVERYONE WAS INCLUDED AND I EVEN SUPPORTED SOME PEOPLE IF THEY FELT A BIT UNDER-CONFIDENT. I SOMETIMES GAVE THEM A PAT ON THE BACK AND ENCOURAGED THEM TO SPEAK’

‘WELL I HAVE BEEN SUPPORTED - WE ALL SUPPORTED EACH OTHER. MOST OF IT HAS BEEN TOP-NOTCH’



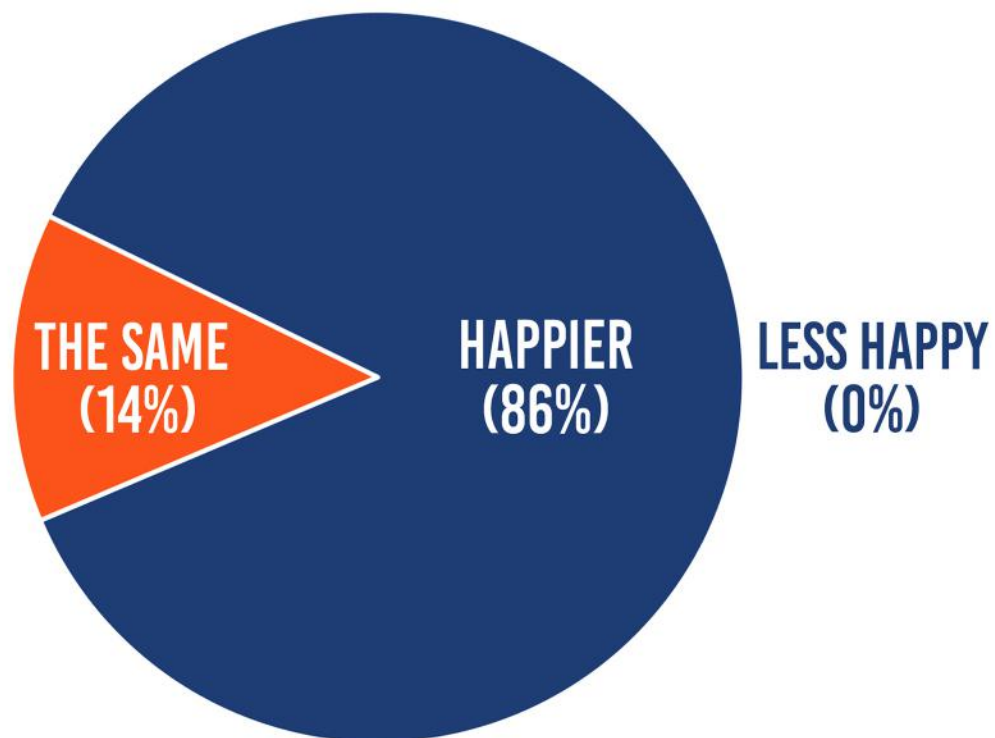
In October 2016, an Open Space discussion was held with disabled and non-disabled artists, playworkers and members of the Making Routes core team, asking the question: 'what are the ingredients to an amazing festival?'. Discussions and reflections were illustrated live by artist Amber Anderson, shown below.



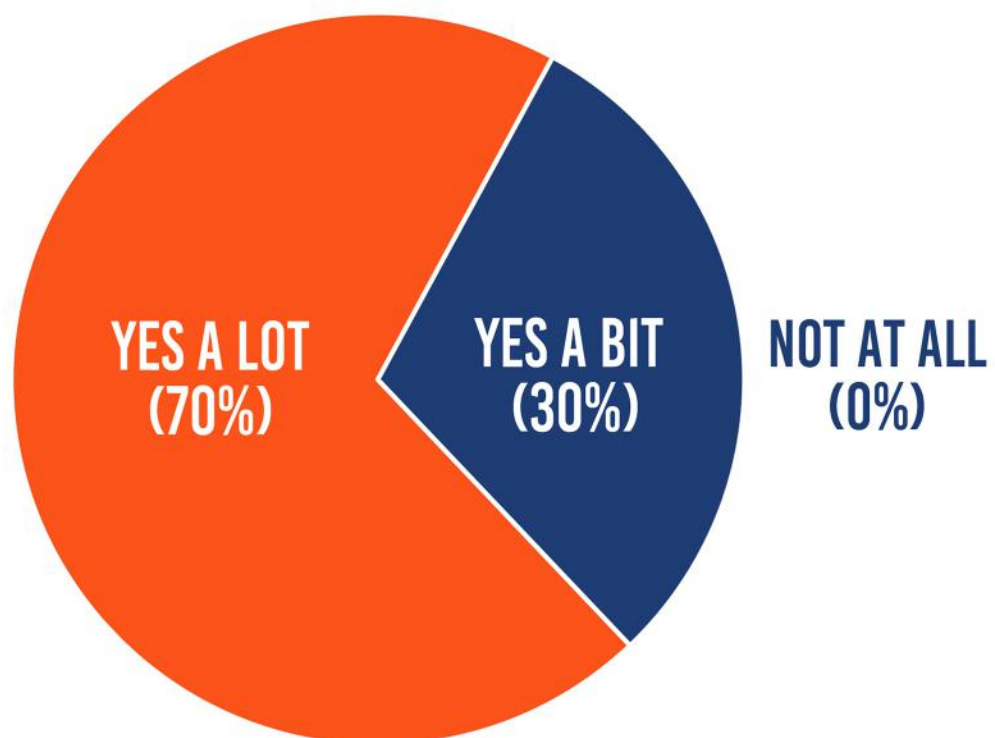
This discussion was shared with the Festival Team and used as a reference point during the planning and programming of the festival. The use of images and text to represent information supported different sensory preferences and communication needs. When looking at the image, a supporter volunteer from the Making Routes Festival Team commented:

'I think words are sometimes difficult to understand, for me and for other people I know. When I look at this drawing I can understand all of the different information and pictures and ideas and I think WOW, I want to be involved in this festival!'

Using the end of participation surveys twenty-two young people aged fourteen or under were asked the question: '**How much happier did this project make you feel?**' The results are shown below.



Ten people aged fifteen or over were asked the question: '**Have your thoughts and feelings about your life/future changed positively as a result of being involved in this project?**' The results are shown below.



Outcome 1: Wellbeing . . .

We learnt through Making Routes that the wellbeing of children and young people can increase through participation in both big (volunteering on a trained programme over several months) and small (attending a hour-long workshop) activities. Making Routes aimed to curate big and small-scale moments of participation at the festival in order to maximize the opportunity to increase the wellbeing of participants and collaborators.

MAKING ROUTES SET OUT TO 'MAKE A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE THROUGH PARTICIPATORY PROJECTS TO OVER 1300 DISABLED AND NON-DISABLED CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE AGED BETWEEN 6 AND 25.





5.OUTCOME 2: DISABILITY

Outcome: To bring about positive change in the perception, engagement and recruitment of disabled people

Indicator: Evidence of design and use of accessible resources. Evidence of support structures being put in place.

‘AS A DISABLED PERSON I’M USED TO MY BODY AND MIND FEELING LIKE A PROBLEM IN PUBLIC SPACES, TO STANDING OUT AND CAUSING EXTRA FAFF AND ANXIETY AROUND ME. I ATTENDED EVERY MAKING ROUTES EVENT WITH A CONFIDENCE AND SENSE OF SAFETY THAT I VERY RARELY FEEL. WHAT YOU CREATED OVER THE LAST THREE DAYS AND THE MONTHS OF WORK BEHIND THIS WAS SOMETHING PRECIOUS AND POWERFUL’

(Jess Thom, artist)

Accessibility audit

An accessibility audit was created for the festival in order to chart the different forms of visitor access available before and during the events, this information was included in the invitations to the festival.

Before the events:

- Social stories
- Pre-event venue accessibility audits
- Event planned, programme and delivered by disabled and non-disabled people

At the events:

- BSL interpreters
- Accessible toilets
- Wheelchair accessible venues
- Changing spaces
- Designated quiet/chill out spaces
- Travel buddies available from local stations
- Picture-text signage
- Multi-sensory activities
- Flexible timings for events programme

Collaboration with Beacon Hill Arts

Beacon Hill Arts (BHA) is a multi-award winning training and production organisation for filmmakers who have learning difficulties, autism and additional needs. Making Routes collaborated with BHA to develop a film documenting, sharing and celebrating the inclusive activities and events from across the Making Routes Festival. Additional funding from Spirit of 2012's Incubation Fund enabled Making Routes to commission BHA - a disabled-led, non-London based production company, an approach in keeping with the goal of bringing about positive change in the perception, engagement and recruitment of disabled people.





Outcome 2: Disability . . .

Indicator: Organisations and practitioners are better equipped to prepare and run inclusive programmes

'OASIS HAD SUCH A WEALTH OF KNOWLEDGE AND A REALLY CAREFUL AND ASTUTE AWARENESS OF HOW TO EMBED ACCESS IN EVERYTHING THAT YOU DO. I THINK WE REALLY LENT ON THEM AT TIMES AND I VALUED HOW FORTHRIGHT THEY WERE ABOUT CHALLENGING US TO PROVIDE A HIGHER LEVEL OF SUPPORT THAN WE'VE EVER ACHIEVED IN THE PAST. THIS IS DEFINITELY SOMETHING I'D LIKE TO CONTINUE TO FIGHT FOR ACROSS EVERYTHING THAT WE DO'

(Sarah Coffils, Head of Education - SLG)

'I WAS SO HONOURED TO HELP WITH THE LITTLE KIDS WHO WERE LEARNING DISABLED AND NON-DISABLED CHILDREN AS WELL . . . ALL OF US DISABLED AND NON-DISABLED ARTISTS WORKING TOGETHER MAKE A COALITION TO MAKE THINGS GREATER'

(Making Routes artist)

'BEING ENGAGED WITH THE VARIETY OF ARTISTS THAT WE'VE BEEN ENGAGED WITH HAS BEEN THE SPECIAL THING, BECAUSE WE WORK WITH LOTS OF ARTISTS THROUGH LOTS OF PROJECTS, BUT PARTICULARLY BEING EMPOWERED BY DISABLED ARTISTS AND EXPERIENCING THEIR CREATIVITY ON A LONG TERM BASIS HAS BEEN DIFFERENT FROM THE NORMAL'

(David Ogwe, Project Coordinator - Oasis)



6. OUTCOME 3: SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

Outcome: To work effectively in partnership to enhance social connectedness and encourage creative collaboration

Indicator: Making Routes opens connections and understanding between local arts/play organisations and local disabled and non-disabled people. People feel welcome in cultural organisations.

‘THIS WAS AN AMAZING DAY, I HAVE NEVER VISITED OASIS BEFORE AND I ONLY LIVE 5 MINUTES AWAY. I HAVEN’T HEARD OF THE OTHER TWO FESTIVAL SITES BUT I AM HOPING TO VISIT THEM OVER THE WEEKEND WITH MY FAMILY. FOR ALL OF THIS ACTIVITY TO BE FREE IN LONDON IS VERY RARE AND EXCITING’

(Parent of a disabled child, Oasis)

‘IT WAS AMAZING JUST TO SEE THE COMMUNITY OUT, THE PARENTS, THE CARERS. IT WASN’T JUST FOR THE KIDS, THIS WAS ABOUT ADULTS COMING TOGETHER, COMMUNITIES COMING TOGETHER, AND THEY LOVED IT. I’VE BEEN HERE FOR YEARS AND I’VE NEVER MET THE PARENTS OR THEIR CARERS AND THEY INTRODUCED THEMSELVES AND I’M LIKE - OH! IT WAS GREAT’

(Inclusive playworker, Oasis)

'IT'S EPIC. IT'S MY FIRST TIME HERE . . . I LOVE IT'

(Child, 8 - BAC)

40% of the children and young people who attended the opening ceremony of the festival at Oasis were new to the organisation.

'THERE WERE SO MANY NEW CHILDREN AND FAMILIES AT OASIS TODAY. IT WAS GREAT TO SEE SOME OF OUR REGULAR YOUNG PEOPLE SHOWING NEW CHILDREN AROUND. I ALSO SAW LOT OF NEW DISABLED PEOPLE ON SITE SO HOPEFULLY THE FESTIVAL WILL LEAD TO SOME MORE INCLUSION PROJECT YOUNG PEOPLE ATTENDING'

(Playworker, Oasis)





Indicator: To build strong, creative partnerships between organisations

'The wonderful thing about the whole of the festival and the whole of the Making Routes experience is that it has been about engaging people, removing barriers and removing stigmas or preconceived ideas. So for us at Oasis it has been a wonderful experience because we've made some wonderful new friends and we've been exposed to some really wonderful artists that we wouldn't have otherwise had that opportunity to work with, and through the whole Making Routes experience I think we've developed relationships that will continue beyond the Making Routes experience'

(David Ogwe, Project Coordinator - Oasis)

'It's been interesting to see the different ways of working that different art forms bring with them – we tend to have different traditions and approaches which has sometimes been challenging, but also really interesting. The partnership between Oasis, SLG and BAC has felt so positive and genuine'

(Victoria Briggs, Senior producer - BAC)

'Different working styles are always fun to negotiate our way through. I thought Oasis did a great job of coordinating the project as I know it's not easy to be the lead! I think we were really aware from the beginning of the project how different we all were and that this was an opportunity to test each other and learn from different processes and points of view . . . How difficult it is to make a decision when so many different people are involved! More people doesn't necessarily mean less work'

(Sarah Coffils, Head of Education – SLG)





7. CONCLUSION

There is an overwhelming sense from the data and reflections outlined above provided by the Making Routes core team, artist cohort, Festival Team and disabled and non-disabled attendees, that the Making Routes Festival showed clear evidence of meeting the three primary evaluative goals:

- 1.** To improve the wellbeing and life chances of disabled and non-disabled people
- 2.** To bring about positive change in the perception, engagement and recruitment of disabled people
- 3.** To work effectively in partnership to enhance social connectedness and encourage creative collaboration

Disabled people, and in particular disabled young people, continue to face multiple barriers not only to the art and cultural sector, but also to social care provision, meaningful volunteer opportunities, employment and their right to a socially equitable existence in society. Creativity, art and the considered curation of shared experiences between disabled and non-disabled people is an essential part of challenging the negative perceptions of disability – as well as other societal inequalities relating to gender, race, age, social background and sexual orientation - that continue to exist in contemporary culture. The Making Routes Festival showed what can happen when diverse groups of disabled and non-disabled children and adults from different locations are given the opportunity to exist equally and creatively together in public space.

The impact and importance of the festival is evident in four tweets posted after the event:

INNOVATIVE, COLOURFUL, UPLIFTING and FUN! The atmosphere was MAGICAL – CHILDREN, ADULTS, DISABLED, ALIKE, MAKING FRIENDS AND MEMORIES! XXX

This sort of project NEEDS TO HAPPEN AGAIN, INDEFINITELY, OTHER PEOPLE NEED TO EXPERIENCE THE ENCOURAGING & WELCOMING ETHOS THAT GREETES YOU!

Couldn't agree more, what is @makingroutes was more than one route but a web of amazing, inclusive opportunities capturing imaginations?

@makingroutes. 3 amazing, creative, open, honest days! Children, adults, disabled & non-disabled ppl, play, art, performance. It's how things can be!





**MAKING ROUTES FESTIVAL
EVALUATION REPORT**

**WRITTEN BY WILL RENEL
JANUARY 2018**

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REPORT AND OTHER
DOCUMENTS RELATING TO
MAKING ROUTES**

