



# GET CHANGED

*'Enabling adults with learning disabilities to have a voice and a choice'*

## **Get Changed Theatre Company Business Plan April 2021 – March 2023**

Get Changed Theatre Company – Enabling adults with learning disabilities to have a voice and a choice through the medium of performing arts.

## Business Plan Summary

- Get Changed is a dynamic and vibrant organisation offering adults with learning disabilities the opportunity to build life skills, confidence and self-esteem by developing and participating in performing arts.
- Our mission is to raise the profile of the disability community and change public attitudes towards those with disabilities by creating and performing high quality arts projects.
- Our vision is to increase awareness of the problems faced by people with learning disabilities and leave something striking and of lasting value within the community.
- We use performing arts techniques to develop life skills and confidence, promote social inclusion and empower people to realise their full potential. We have run our sessions face to face with participants but during Covid 2020-21 we developed the technological skills to run workshops and performances virtually. Our participants create, develop and perform inspirational theatre across a broad range of disability issues.
- Our business is to provide a service that enables the wellbeing and self-development of each individual who attends. Our clients are people aged 16+ of all abilities with a learning disability.
- At a time of service cut backs we offer regular quality activity to people with learning disabilities at a competitive market price.
- Get Changed is a not-for-profit charity run by a highly motivated and skilled board of voluntary trustees.
- We operate in the West Devon town of Okehampton but welcome new participants across the county of Devon.

***Get Changed is an inclusive local charity that strives to meet the creative and performance needs of people with a learning disability in and around Okehampton. We aim that our participants, regardless of their ability, are able to fully engage in our workshops, performances and opportunities. We want our audiences to be inspired, recognise the importance of our work to all our participants and take away a positive view of the group.***

## **Background History**

Get Changed, established in 1995, is a registered charity no 1161319 and is based in Okehampton and works with adults with learning disabilities and mental health problems. Get Changed began with just seven participants and a single small grant from the Esmee Fairbairn Foundation. In 2020 it has grown to over twenty participants and is funded by local and national funding agencies.

## **How we manage Get Changed**

Get Changed is managed by a board of trustees of 5 local people. In addition they share a Chief Officer and Administrator with Exeter based Magic Carpet (registered charity 1122778). The board of trustees, CEO and Administrator have responsibility for accounting, administration, policy making, public relations, funding applications and all operational matters. We are constantly seeking to expand our current board of trustees with people who have the skills and experience that will enhance and complement our current board.

Get Changed trustees have a wide range of working practice experience and skills with adults with a learning disability; bringing to the project a wealth of knowledge and expertise.

The trustees of Get Changed contract artistic direction from Inspiring Arts on a contract by contract basis. Key members of Inspiring Arts have worked with Get Changed for over ten years and have immense experience of disability arts and production work.

A Project Co-ordinator is employed on a part time basis to support the group at the weekly workshops and report to the board of trustees.

Participants feed into the board of trustees via the weekly workshops supported by Inspiring Arts

Get Changed operates on an equal opportunities basis and welcomes adults with learning disabilities aged 16 and upwards regardless of their ability or disability.

## **Get Changed Track Record and Achievements**

Get Changed has operated continuously since 1995 creating performances that have explored issues surrounding disability in an accessible and inspirational way. These performances have been developed by the participants themselves and productions devised by the company have been performed widely in schools, theatres, festivals, community venues and art centres challenging and entertaining audiences throughout Devon. We have collaborated with local organisations and charities, and national charities such as the National Trust to deliver performances and workshops.

## The Need for Get Changed

Get Changed provides a unique specialist service to people with a learning disability in West Devon. It gives an opportunity for our participants to learn specific theatre and drama skills from concepts and ideas through to rehearsals and performances. Our participants come to us from a variety of housing settings and we give opportunities for old and new friends to remain in touch.

## Aims

For our participants - our key aims are to enable.....

- Skills based learning opportunities.
- Improved mental health and well-being by breaking cycles of depression.
- Community integration and social networking.
- Opportunities to develop life skills and confidence and realise participants' full potential.
- Nurture an environment of support where participants can share concerns and experiences

For the organisation – our key aims are to....

- Raise the profile of the disability community and change public attitudes towards those with disabilities.
- Provide community volunteering opportunities and training.
- Develop partnerships with external organisations.
- Increase an awareness of the problems faced by people with learning disabilities.
- Empower participants to produce live performances which showcase their individual talent and leaves something striking and of lasting value within the community.
- Ensure and employ good practice throughout every level of the Get Changed operation.
- Ensure organisational financial stability and sustainability.

## Objectives

For our participants:

- To provide a continuous programme of skills-based role play and drama workshops which recognises individual achievement.
- To provide a safe environment with a social focus, group activities and a common goal to allow people to grow by exploring their inner creativity and imagination.
- To provide new opportunities for participants to meet and develop friendships both within and beyond the Get Changed community.

- To showcase each performer’s ability and talent to the wider community leaving an imprint of lasting value.

For the organisation:

- To produce events and productions for public audiences designed to challenge stereotypes, create awareness of disability and effect a positive change in attitude towards people with learning disabilities.
- To provide volunteering opportunities to promote active citizenship, develop skills and build networks potentially leading to employment opportunities for the volunteer.
- To create and pursue working partnerships designed to build links, expand networks, raise profiles, collaborate and achieve mutual promotion.
- To continually review management procedures and evaluate our work through feedback from audiences, participants, volunteers, trustees, parents and carers.

## Work Plan

<b>Task</b>	<b>Who</b>	<b>How &amp; When</b>
Programme of skills-based role play and drama workshops	Inspiring Arts practitioners in liaison with Get Changed trustees and project co-ordinator	Weekly workshops on a termly basis over 45 weeks annually. (Wednesdays 9.30-4)
To seek funding for and to plan at least one major performance each year in a theatre or Community space	Inspiring Arts practitioners in liaison with participants, Get Changed trustees and project co-ordinator	
Ensure we are easily able to change from physical to virtual workshops.	Inspiring Arts practitioners in liaison with Get Changed trustees and project co-ordinator	Replicate the weekly workshops via an online platform should this become necessary once more
Create and foster an environment and opportunities for social interaction	Inspiring Arts arts practitioner in conjunction with CEO, Project co-ordinator and Get Changed volunteers	Ensure some ‘down time’ available each week during workshops for people to socially interact. Explore every opportunity for participants to enter the community and integrate with others. Through weekly drama workshops facilitate an interactive and dynamic environment where participants share and contribute ideas amongst each other.

Produce performances and events in line with themed programmes to public audiences	Inspiring Arts practitioners  Event management - Volunteers/ Trustees and 'Friends' of Get Changed	In the community in conjunction with partner organisations and community events
To continue to develop partnership arrangements with Magic Carpet, D'Arts and Soundwaves.	Trustees, Administrator and CEO	For initial Big Lottery partnership bid to be submitted by late summer 2021
To develop a methodology to evaluate our weekly workshops and participant experience.	Trustees, Administrator, CEO, project co-ordinator and Inspiring Arts	To seek funding to be able to develop this further.
To research and develop themed programmes. When appropriate tailor our work programme to address any currently trending disability issues.	Trustees in conjunction with Inspiring Arts practitioners	To continue to further develop relationships with mainstream and disability organisations. To be conscious and aware of current campaigns and news. Ongoing use of the internet as a research tool.
To create and publicise volunteering opportunities within Get Changed	Trustees in conjunction with project coordinator and volunteer bureau.	To be aware and develop local and national partnerships that mutually benefit our work and participants. Use multimedia to reach new people. e.g. editorials, internet, local radio. Website. Ongoing
To foster participant / Board of Trustees interaction by exploring new ways of representation.	Board of Trustees, CEO and the project co-ordinator.	To work with members of staff, volunteers and Inspiring Arts to ensure the voice of our participants inform all decision making.
To build links and networks with partner organisations	All	Subscribe to local networks and organisations as appropriate. Continue to nurture and develop existing partnerships  Ongoing
To maintain and update policies and procedures and risk assessments as appropriate	Trustees and CEO in conjunction with project coordinator.  Inspiring Arts	12 monthly review of policies, procedures, and risk assessments.  Annually or a need to do basis

To create and maintain a multi-media environment for two-way communication and feedback and continually publicise our organisation	Trustees and CEO	Website / blog Facebook page Twitter Press Releases/Event posters and material  Ongoing
To realise sufficient funding to sustain the organisation	Trustees	Shortfall in participant fees to be raised from funding applications and fundraising activities  Year on year

### Budget and Cash Flow Forecast

	April 21 -March 22	April 22- March 23
<b>B/FWD</b>	<b>40886</b>	<b>45583</b>
<b>INCOME IN YEAR</b>	<b>60768</b>	<b>65701</b>
<b>TOTAL FUNDS</b>	<b>101654</b>	<b>111284</b>
<b>EXPENDITURE</b>	<b>56071</b>	<b>64897</b>
<b>CLOSING BALANCE</b>	<b>45583</b>	<b>46387</b>

The cash flow forecast represents the work plan to provide 45 weekly workshops each year and to include at least one major performance.

### Promotion and Publicity Plan

Get Changed operates on an equal opportunities basis and welcomes all participants with a learning disability regardless of their disability. We have an open referral policy meaning that our participants can be referred by any interested party. It is our policy to turn no one away and to give newcomers a full and fair chance to connect with Get Changed and become incorporated into the group.

We have accessible information available to inform people with a learning disability about our service and we aim to continue to promote our provision to all local care managers and health care professionals in the Mid and West Devon area. It is our intention to widen that remit. Get Changed has an extensive data base of contacts ranging from local councillors to carer organisations, occupational therapists, media and audience contacts to whom we regularly promote our activities.

We aim to present articles to the local press and share stories and images regularly on social media.

### Get Changed linking into the community:

Get Changed makes full use of a wide range of multimedia to promote its activities from local press and radio - used to promote performances and events and the organisation itself – to use of e-communication (we have a fully developed and dynamic website [www.getchanged.com](http://www.getchanged.com) where we blog news and information). We operate a Facebook page, and have a Twitter account for a continual social media dialogue.

Given the challenges 2020 has foisted upon us all we secured funding for and held a virtual performance in late 2020.

- We promote funders and support organisations in all advertising and show production material and on our web site acknowledging their partnership with Get Changed.
- We maintain links with similar Devon based organisations including: Funky Llama, D'ArtsFest, Exeter Respect, Magic Carpet, Soundwaves.
- Get Changed produces an annual report.
- We feature our activities and events widely via local press, community websites and through our data base. We promote our activities and events via county and national disability organisations.
- We work closely with the CVS participating in training opportunities and community group forums. Get Changed accesses CVS media platforms to advertise for volunteers both with local notice boards and national web-based *do-it*, *Volunteerdevon.net* and *i-volunteer* websites.

## **Safeguarding our participants**

Get Changed recognises that the best way to prevent the abuse of people is through good management practice and the continuous provision of support, guidance and supervision of staff and volunteers. (noting that many current and potential abusers do not possess criminal records.)

Get Changed operates a robust safeguarding vulnerable adult policy covering volunteer and staff recruitment and general procedures and operational protocol.

## **Data Protection**

In line with national guidelines in 2019 Get Changed created our GDPR policy which can be seen <https://getchanged.com/policy-statements/>

## **The Board of Trustees**

The board of trustees currently administers Get Changed and is responsible for overseeing the organisation as a whole. Roles and responsibilities are allocated to individuals according to their skills and experience. The Project Co-ordinator and the IA Creative Director report back each month on the



workshops and activities. We are exploring the re-introduction of participant representation to the board.

In liaison with Get Changed trustees, the CEO, Inspiring Arts practitioners, and the Project Co-ordinator meet between programmes and mid-way through a programme of work (approx. 6 times annually) to discuss progress and find solutions to any issues that may arise.

The weekly Project Co-ordinator has a continual two-way communication with the board of trustees and a structured supervision session every three months in accordance with the job description.

## **Monitoring and Evaluation**

### ***Organisational Evaluation***

Quantitative and qualitative evaluation is sought by the board of trustees throughout the Get Changed operation.

We aim to seek feedback from:

- Participants
- the artists who work with us
- Volunteers
- Carers and Family members
- Audience members

Feedback from public audiences includes geographical spread, disability status, how they heard about our work and specifically how their perceptions of people with learning disabilities have changed.

### **Quotes from 00Devon our performance at the Plough Arts Centre in 2019:**

*"I love the way people are allowed to play to their strengths and have fun - it's clear everyone is involved in the development of ideas"*

*"Get Changed gives everyone a chance to be included. Amazing. Please give more funding, Get Changed so deserve it".*

*'So much fun! Great to watch everyone having a part in something. So smart, funny and creative!'*

## **Targets and organisational improvement.**

At Get Changed Theatre Company we are totally focussed on being fully inclusive, enabling participants to find their place in the wider community through the learning medium of drama and performing arts.

We are fully committed to hard work and to change, as necessary, to meet the transforming market place and new commissioning adjustments. We are open and attuned to working with both existing and

new partners and like-minded organisations, to move forward and provide an excellent high-quality service for our participants.

By placing these values effectively at the core of everything we do at Get Changed we will improve both the physical and mental health of participants, increase their life choices and opportunities to access employment and community activities.

#### **Current targets for 2021 and beyond.**

- To increase our profile in the local media and online
- To take part in in local festivals and events.
- To increase the number of participants.
- To work with individual participants to measure progress more systematically.
- To support participants to interact with the board of trustees.
- To gain a national profile as well as a greater regional and countywide profile by means of the internet and by building sound partnerships with like-minded organisations.
- To promote Get Changed more widely to the Health, Social Care, Voluntary and Private Sectors throughout Devon.

#### **Conclusion**

At Get Changed we believe that how we work gives our participants positive opportunities to grow and develop. That a strong, positive self-image is the best possible preparation for success in life and the skills -based training our participants receive through our service will ultimately help them live complete, happy and well-rounded lives.