

OLDHAM
Coliseum
THEATRE

2019-20 Annual Report

Core Funders



LOTTERY FUNDED

Supported using public funding by
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Oldham
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Photo: *Black Men Walking* by Eclipse Theatre. Photograph by Ellie Kurtz.

On Monday 16 March 2020 Oldham Coliseum Theatre closed its doors to help slow the spread of COVID-19.

Data in this report reflects the cancellation or rescheduling of events between 16 March and the end of the financial year.

This closure is only the second time the Coliseum has shut its doors in its 135-year history.

Creating and experiencing art and culture has a phenomenal impact on both physical and mental wellbeing. Whilst our stage is dark and our workshop spaces empty, our work is always needed. The Coliseum continues to serve the communities of Oldham and Greater Manchester, reaching out and engaging with participants of all ages and producing and sharing great art and opportunities to be creative both online and via socially distanced distribution of physical resources.



In 2019-20...

64,000 people saw a show at, or presented by, Oldham Coliseum Theatre

From our three-month run of pantomime to rehearsed readings of brand new short plays, we presented shows of all scales on our Main Stage and in our Studio, and with our partners at [live@thelibrary](https://www.thelibrary.org.uk).



On Oldham's Stage

We staged 273 performances over 65 shows and events

- 236 performances (over 50 shows) in our Main House
- 19 performances (over 14 shows) in our Studio

Plus

We held 17 performances of *The Understudy: A Virtual Reality Theatre Experience* by Digital Artist Grant Archer in our Backstage area following a tour of the stage as part of Cultivate Festival.

Plant Fetish by Chanje Kunda took place at Oldham Library and Lifelong Learning Centre.



On Oldham's Stage

34,000 people came to see our pantomime *Jack and the Beanstalk*

We introduced a new Dame. Pantomime favourite Richard J Fletcher triumphantly stepped into the glamorous wardrobe of Oldham Athletic superfan Dame Dotty Trott after 11 years playing the Coliseum's high flying, heel-kicking Pantomime Comic.

Oldham actor Sam Glen, known for BBC's *Let it Shine* with Gary Barlow, stepped into Richard's comedy shoes as Jack alongside last year's Cinderella, Shorelle Hepkin, as our heroine Jill, and we introduced a whole new kind of Pantomime Cow with the iconic Hazy played by Mitesh Soni.



"Oldham Coliseum Theatre has the magic formula to get kids immersed in the adventure and leaving on a high."

- Quays Life



"The best pantomime cow I have ever seen, in any pantomime, anywhere"

- Northern Soul

"A rip roaring pantomime that has something for everyone. If you only see one pantomime this year, then make it this one!"

- Oldham Reporter



Our co-production of *The Hired Man* was nominated for three Offies (Off West End Awards):

- Female Performance in a Musical (Lauryn Redding)
- Male Performance in a Supporting Role in a Musical (Samuel Martin)
- Best Musical Director (Ben Goddard & Tom Self)



"This is theatre to relish and cherish"
- North West End



"One of the most well-crafted British Musicals of all time"
- Upstaged Manchester



We held 15 Access performances

- 7 British Sign Language Interpreted performances
- 6 Audio Described performances
- 2 Relaxed and Dementia Friendly performances

We were named as one of the most accessible theatres in the UK for the second year running, this time by Age UK (in 2018-19 TickX listed the Coliseum as one of the UK's most accessible theatres). Despite our building's advanced age our people-focussed ethos on accessibility means that, whilst recognising the restrictions of the bricks and mortar, our entire team does everything possible to make the theatre as accessible as it can be for our audiences, participants and visitors – from empowering people with information, to accessible performances and specialist training for our staff, to our programme of Dementia Friendly workshops.

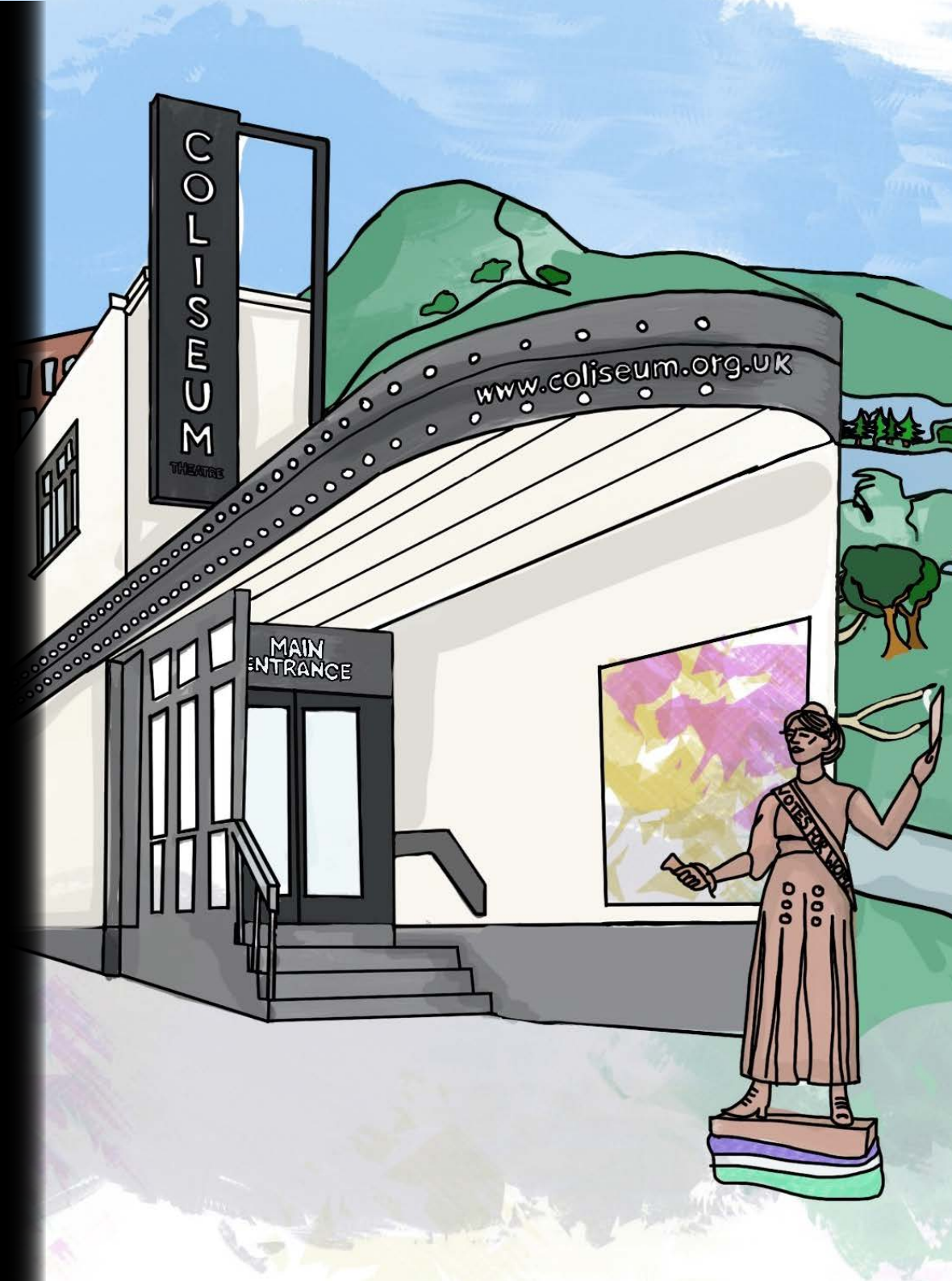


From Oldham to the World

On World Theatre Day (Friday 28 March 2020), just two weeks after we closed our doors to help slow the spread of COVID-19, we launched the Coliseum's **Mini-Podcast Series**.

The Mini-Podcast Series shares original works by people of all ages and backgrounds from the communities we serve, recorded remotely by professional actors. The inaugural episode **100 Word Plays (about Oldham)**, which was released on World Theatre Day, features 17 plays of no more than 100 words based on the theme of Oldham. Writers included well-known faces **Julie Hesmondhalgh** and **Christine Mackie**, writers of previous Coliseum hits **Ian Kershaw** (*Bread & Roses*, *The Mist in the Mirror* and *Star Cross'd*) and **Lindsey Williams** (*Meat Pie Sausage Roll* and *Dreamers*) and local emerging talent.

100 Word Plays (about Oldham) has been enjoyed by over 400 people online.



From Oldham to the World

We collaborated with four other theatres enabling us to produce work on a larger scale and tour it nationally.

Handbagged was co-produced with Wiltshire Creative and York Theatre Royal. It played in Oldham, Salisbury and York.



“Very entertaining, mischievously funny and resolutely theatrical”
– **The Stage** on *Handbagged* at Salisbury Playhouse

The Hired Man was in association with co-producers Queen’s Theatre Hornchurch and Hull Truck Theatre. It played in Oldham, Hornchurch and Hull.

“This is a classy, poignant and expertly staged work of entertainment that all fans of theatre, musical or otherwise, would be wise not to miss”
– **On Yorkshire Magazine** on *The Hired Man* at Hull Truck Theatre



Our second annual Cultivate Festival ran from Monday 10 – Friday 14 June 2019, welcoming 200 people into the theatre for a week of workshops, talks, experiences and opportunities for theatre upskilling.

Artistic Director Chris Lawson commented: *“Cultivate is a celebration of all elements of theatre including making and an unmissable opportunity for anyone interested in working in the industry. We’re proud to contribute toward meeting the demand for accessible and affordable training opportunities in our region.”*

The festival included workshops from:

- Frantic Assembly
- Horse + Bamboo
- Fight Director Kaitlin Howard
- Box Of Tricks

Plus our first ever backstage virtual reality experience, creative matchmaking with Girl Gang Manchester, new writing night *Write Here*, *Write Now* and our extremely popular Open Auditions.



Case Study: A look back at Cultivate 2019

The packed week kicked off with a creative Puppetry Workshop from Horse + Bamboo on Monday morning where participants were introduced to the key principles of puppetry through the use of simple materials and everyday household objects and then created and manipulated their own paper puppets.

In the afternoon one of the most studied and praised theatre companies working today, Frantic Assembly, led a Physical Theatre Workshop on our Main Stage, an active exploration of the Frantic method of devising, based in empowering people to be better at making theatre from a physical starting point.

Tuesday was a day of Virtual Reality with **The Understudy**, a VR Theatre Experience by digital artist Grant Archer taking place throughout the day. **The Understudy** brought one audience member at a time into the role of a new theatre employee, beginning with an introduction to the stage by a Stage Manager, who provided them with a headset for their Health and Safety induction. All was not how it seemed however, as once the induction had started the audience was thrust into the virtual reality of life backstage in the

run up to a performance, with actors and creatives all around them preparing to put on a show.

On Wednesday Kaitlin Howard, one of only three women on the Equity Register of Fight Directors, led An Introduction to Unarmed Stage Combat for theatrical and film purposes exploring techniques and safety aspects needed to stage unarmed violent moments convincingly. Participants were put through their paces learning punches, tackles and falls culminating in a short fight sequence.

Later that afternoon Scribbles, the Coliseum's writing group, presented a scene from each of their full length plays in our Studio. A packed Studio audience warmly offered their feedback.

Thursday saw the Coliseum Cultivate 2019 Open Auditions, where a panel of experts: Chris Lawson, Artistic Director of the Coliseum; Sarah Punshon, former Artistic Director of The Dukes, Lancaster; Casting Director Claire Bleasdale and Joanne Moss from ITV Coronation Street Casting met with 60 actors over the course of the day.

We also welcomed Box Of Tricks Theatre for two workshops: An Actor's Introduction to New Plays

and Producing New Work on the Small Scale. An Actor's Introduction to New Plays was a practical workshop focussed on tools, techniques and exercises to unlock scripts and find a route into creating a role, whilst Producing New Work on the Small Scale looked at putting together a team, finding funding and securing venues.

The final day of Cultivate 2019 welcomed Girl Gang Manchester for a theatre-upskilling spin on their popular speed-mating events, Creative Matchmaking. Taking inspiration from dating shows, bad business meetings, teenage sleepovers, Art Attack and agony aunts Creative Matchmaking rebelled against traditional networking events to get people in a room together, meeting new people and having fun.

That evening our Associate Company Rogue Bones hosted their second **Write Here, Write Now** event, a new writing night with a difference. The writers were provided with a provocation and only eight days to write a short script and the varied and creative final pieces were served up with tea and biscuits for an audience ready and willing to give feedback on how each performance made them feel.

13 independent theatre companies performed new work in our Studio.

Highlights included sell-out performances of: ***Black Teeth and a Brilliant Smile*** by Freedom Studios, ***Ladies that Bus*** by Joyce Branagh, ***Letter to Boddah*** by Watershed Productions, ***The Listening Room*** by Crowded Room and ***Three Mothers*** by Useful Productions.

Plus our Associate Company Fine Comb Theatre presented a week of their new piece ***Not Yours, Mine***, which explored parental rights and responsibilities within the British judicial system.

Not Yours, Mine was inspired through working with a variety of communities across the North West, from Women's Centres to Male Prisons. Fine Comb Writer and Director Rachel McMurray was surprised to learn about some of the processes and complexities involved in the family court system. She was keen to create a platform for the topic.



Supporting Theatre Makers

We provided 224 hours of free research and development space for artists, marking a 40% increase on the previous year.



Supporting Theatre Makers

We employed 35 actors and musicians and 45 creative freelancers for our productions.



Supporting Theatre Makers

750 people came to our second Main House Takeover, in which we hand over the Coliseum's Main Stage to independent theatre companies whose work is usually seen in smaller venues, offering them a bigger platform and wider reach, and support them through the process.

"An amazing idea, and more theatres should follow their example."

– **The Play's The Thing**

53Two and Manchester Actor's Platform (MAP) presented three nights of Chris Hoyle's **Tinned Up**, starring Karen Henthorn as Shirley. **Tinned Up** was inspired by real-life Salford streets affected by demolitions, where people were forced to leave their homes to make way for regeneration. 53Two's production was heartwarming, funny, moving, powerful and deeply relevant.



"The true cost of regeneration explored. Both hilarious and humane"

– **North West End**

Women in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Maths) linked two independent productions from 2019's Greater Manchester Fringe Festival in a double bill on Friday 27 September. **Men Chase Women Choose** by People Zoo Productions, one of the Coliseum's supported shows at 2019's Edinburgh Fringe Festival, was joined by the theatre's Pick of the GM Fringe Award winner, **Clouds** by Time & Again Theatre Company.



Supporting Theatre Makers

We expanded our Associate and Supported Artists and Companies, welcoming six new artists and companies across multiple artforms and specialities.

Associate and Supported Artists and Companies are embedded in the Coliseum company and have access to individually tailored experiences to support their development and strengthen their networks.

All Associate and Supported Artists and Companies work closely with the Coliseum to develop new audiences and provide critical feedback for other Coliseum productions. They are a part of a peer-to-peer support network and act as mentors for aspiring creatives working with the theatre.



Supporting Theatre Makers

Associates:

RedBobble Arts – live performance, community engagement and education projects

“We are so excited to be working more closely with Oldham Coliseum... We’re looking forward to some much needed mentorship that will hopefully help us build our profile and support us to explore new ways of storytelling, both in the theatre and out in the community.”

Grant Archer – digital artist

“I’m excited to work with the Coliseum in the development and creation of further digital installation work. The Coliseum works with an exciting range of artists for potential collaborations and is constantly expanding its community links. It is highly motivating to know that they believe in experimentation and the exploration of new forms of telling stories.”

Hafsah Aneela Bashir – poet, playwright and performer

“I’m excited to explore and develop new ideas around British Muslim stories and to really push the potentials of the work I am making in terms of innovation and originality. This opportunity will give me valuable time, space and resources to contribute to my professional development as an artist and I am particularly looking forward to connecting with the networks and communities that the Coliseum engages with”

Fine Comb Theatre, Associate Company 2018-19, have stayed on as an Associate Company for a second year, now also acting as mentors.

“We’re really excited to be supported by the Coliseum for another year. Last year was monumental for us as a company, with our first Arts Council funded production, and we can’t wait to see where our second year takes us.”



Supporting Theatre Makers

Supported Artists:

Caitlin Gleeson – theatre maker, facilitator and writer

“I’m really excited to be a supported artist at the Coliseum and am looking forward to further developing new performance projects with a theatre I know and love. I want to make work for audiences in Oldham and create new opportunities for people to engage with the Coliseum and its work.”

Nana-Kofi Kufuor – writer

“I’m so excited to become a Supported Artist at this famous and historic theatre. This opportunity will open doors for me to go to places I struggled to get into before and ultimately enables me to create more work about a wider variety of people, which has always been my goal.”

Sorcha McCaffrey – actor, writer and theatre-maker

“It’s so heartening for a theatre to support you and invite you to become part of the building and the community. I’m proper excited to be supported by Oldham Coliseum and have the chance to develop as an artist and make work that is bold, playful and collaborative.”

Associates are practitioners with whom the Coliseum creates work in collaboration with, whilst Supported Artists are individual theatre makers and writers that the Coliseum supports to bring their own work to fruition.



A Teaching Theatre

12 young people took part in Teaching Theatre Pathways, with ten going on to Further Education and four into theatre work

We also worked with 18 young people who achieved their Bronze Arts Award and supported 60 young people to achieve Arts Award Explore, in partnership with Tameside Cultural Services.



Teaching Theatre Pathways was shortlisted for the UK Theatre Award for Excellence in Arts Education.

Teaching Theatre Pathways is the Coliseum's flagship training programme for young people who are not currently in full time education, employment or training (NEET).

Through practical work experience in the unique working environment of a professional producing theatre the programme equips young people with new skills, qualifications (Arts Award) and pastoral support to re-enter education or pursue a career in theatre directly. Teaching Theatre Pathways is an intensive behind-the-scenes introduction to the life of a professional producing theatre. A mixture of demonstrations, hands-on activity, one-to-one shadowing with theatre professionals and group tasks provide an introduction to the myriad of practical techniques and disciplines found within the Coliseum company.

All Teaching Theatre Pathways Participants are invited to work towards a Bronze or Silver Arts Award which benefits Further Education applications. Participants also receive pastoral support to identify appropriate and realistic progression routes and develop their CVs, interview techniques and communications skills.

"This whole experience here at Oldham Coliseum taught me many new skills and a new mid-set and will definitely benefit me in the future as I would be able to take on what I learnt here to university and when applying to jobs in the future." – **Farhana, former participant**



A Teaching Theatre

We worked with over 2,384 pupils from 41 schools as part of our Secondary Partnership Scheme, Children's Shakespeare Festivals, Primary Links, and Primary Curriculum Enrichment Programmes.

We delivered 15 Continued Professional Development Sessions for teachers.



A Teaching Theatre

33 young people took part in our youth programme: The Young Rep, TheatreLAB and The Steering Group (TSG)

The Young Rep devised and toured family friendly work to five venues and libraries, as well as presenting a Young Person's Performance Showcase to industry professionals at the Coliseum.

TheatreLAB produced and performed two shows at the Coliseum.



A Teaching Theatre

We delivered 30 play reading and writing sessions for adults, whose work was showcased as part of Cultivate Festival.

We delivered 23 arts related workshops and talks with 50+ social group Full Circle. During lockdown we dedicated time to making regular phone calls to Full Circle participants to help prevent loneliness.

We held 12 Dementia Friendly workshops.



Case Study: *Hands and Hearts*

On 13 August 2019 we held a special performance sharing work made in creative Dementia Friendly sessions enacted as a puppet show on our Main Stage.

With support from The Big Community Lottery Fund, we've worked with Horse + Bamboo Theatre Company to deliver creative sessions with people living with dementia and their friends and carers, both at the Coliseum and in care home settings. Using puppetry our participants made and shared stories, and brought them to life through playful hands-on approaches.

The event, *Hands and Hearts*, invited the participants and their friends and carers to see their work on stage, followed by creative activities in our Education Suite.

The puppet performance, ***Suitcase Full of Letters***, was performed by Horse + Bamboo Theatre Company. It depicted a man in his later years living with dementia and social isolation and included physical puppetry, shadow puppetry, projection and a recorded reading created by the participants reflecting on their experiences.



We delivered 194 sessions in community and youth settings across Greater Manchester, using creative practice to help tackle social isolation and support older people.



Case Study: Ageing Equally

On 10 October 2019 we held a performance and exhibition of work created by women aged 50+ who attend Glodwick Luncheon Club at Oldham Pakistani Community Centre.

Place, Textiles and Generation: From Pakistan to Oldham looked at what makes a good place to grow old through the medium of textiles, as part of our research project with The University of Manchester and Ambition for Ageing, **Ageing Equally**.

Many of the women came to Oldham for its textile industry decades ago. Through a range of creative methods, trips to arts venues including Whitworth Art Gallery in

Manchester and working with artists such as Robina Akhter Ullah and Najma Khalid, the group explored themes of ageing, home and place.

The performance on the Coliseum's Main Stage was spoken in Urdu with captions in English on either side of the stage. It told the groups' stories of first coming to Oldham and creating a home in a new community, and addressed how they would like to engage more in their community.



Case Study: Culture Hubs

The Coliseum has been working with Housing 21, a leading not-for-profit provider of retirement housing and extra care for older people, since 2018. Initially through consultation with residents, the Coliseum planned and designed creative programmes of work to be delivered in each Housing 21 court. **Culture Hubs** was a celebration and culmination of the artwork, writing and poetry produced by Housing 21 residents across Oldham.

With artwork created by residents projected onto the back of the stage, the performance included a short piece

about working in the mills of Oldham, a A-Z poem of Oldham's memories and a short play set in a local pub over three generations supported by writer Carole Solazzo.

Tejinder Birk, Partnerships Manager at Housing 21 commented: *"The production was brilliant and the residents enjoyed it especially where their work, songs and words were shared. They definitely felt honoured to have their involvement in the workshop sessions put to a wonderful stage performance."*



Case Study: Local Lives

In partnership with Regenda Homes, as part of Thriving Hollinwood PBI initiative, the **Local Lives** project was set up to identify people living within the Hollinwood area who may be feeling socially isolated or lonely. Working with local partners in the Hollinwood area to identify and refer people into the project, the Coliseum ran creative sessions exploring the local area with people from a range of different settings, ages and backgrounds to develop insights into how people view and envisage the themes of community and togetherness.

The **Local Lives** performance was created from the conversations that took place; the memories, stories and thoughts generated within each workshop. Every word of the short play was spoken or had been developed by people living in Hollinwood. The story highlighted the importance of everyday conversations, social interactions with different people from our community and a good cup of tea.

The event was also accompanied by an exhibition in the theatre's Education Suite which hosted stands from Age UK, Action Together and Oldham Library, providing information on groups and opportunities to get involved in across the borough.

Beckie Kirkland, Regeneration Officer at Regenda Homes commented: *"The Local Lives project was a great way to creatively engage community members who felt like they were socially isolated or lonely. We aimed to engage many different people and we did - anyone can feel lonely: young, elderly or families - so opening this project up to a variety of people was important to us. We will continue to work with the groups and people involved as part of the Thriving Hollinwood Initiative to ensure carry on for the project and lead people into other activities happening in their local neighbourhood."*



100 Word Plays

We issued an open invitation for people to submit new plays about Oldham. There was one main rule, the plays had to be 100 words or less including stage direction. Throughout September 2019 we displayed the 100 Word Plays across the Coliseum in crafty and creative forms and places for our audiences to find when visiting us for shows, workshops or social activities.

In March 2020 17 of the 100 Word Plays were recorded remotely by a cast of Greater Manchester actors and released as Episode 1 of the Coliseum's Mini-Podcast Series.

This Oldham Coliseum Theatre project was inspired by and would like to acknowledge Royal Court London's 100 Word Plays which ran during the Young Writer's Festival in 2012.



In Oldham's Communities

We continued our long term relationship with our Major Partner Jigsaw Homes.

The Coliseum and Jigsaw Homes are both committed to serving the communities of Oldham and the surrounding areas, offering opportunities for people to be inspired and reach their potential. The two organisations work in partnership to run regular projects with tenants which help to build confidence, employability and health and wellbeing. Working together, the theatre and Jigsaw Group have helped over 100 young people return to work or education, created a theatre company for people with additional needs and reached hundreds of school children using theatre as a propeller for learning.



Photo: Residents of Jigsaw Homes enjoying a creative workshop at the Coliseum. Photograph by Oldham Coliseum Theatre.

Case Study: International Women's Day 2020

Women from across Greater Manchester celebrated International Women's Day at the Coliseum, in partnership with Jigsaw Homes, on Friday 6 March 2020.

2020 was the fifth International Women's Day event arranged in partnership with the theatre and Jigsaw Homes, giving residents from Oldham and Tameside backstage access to the borough's historic theatre for a day packed with activities and discussion.

This year's International Women's Day event focused on the theme of self-belief. Activities included a Stage Combat workshop from Kaitlin Howard, an Academy of Performance Combat Senior Instructor and one of only three women on the Equity Register of Fight Directors, and a Make a Message workshop led by the Coliseum's Head of Learning and Engagement, Carly Henderson.

Asmina Choudhry from Jigsaw Homes commented: *"It's been a fantastic event for International Women's Day. Women from*

Oldham, Tameside and Stalybridge have enjoyed coming together and doing all kinds of activities. The main theme of the day was self-belief and the ladies have gotten really stuck in."

Alongside this, the global theme for International Women's Day 2020 was #EachForEqual, helping to forge a gender equal world by celebrating women's achievements and increasing visibility whilst challenging stereotypes, raising awareness against bias and calling out inequality.

Tanuja Patel from Jigsaw Homes added: *"We thank Oldham Coliseum for organising these kinds of events. It's opened doors to many ladies in the Asian community, who have learnt to believe in themselves and stand together for women's rights."*



We continued relationships with 16 businesses in Oldham and across Greater Manchester with bespoke sponsorship agreements.

We hosted six VIP events for our supporting businesses, which were attended by key influencers from the Greater Manchester business and philanthropic community.

We hosted Mayor of Greater Manchester Andy Burnham on the set of hit musical ***The Hired Man*** for the launch of young people's travel project, **Our Pass**.



Our Impact in Oldham

33,750 people from Oldham saw a show at the Coliseum

8,000 people from Rochdale and Ashton saw a show at the Coliseum

11,500 from across the rest of Greater Manchester saw a show at the Coliseum

A further 3,000 people from the rest of the North West saw a show at the Coliseum

69% of our audiences also visited other cultural, leisure and retail destinations in the town centre when they came to Oldham to see a show at the Coliseum.



Our Impact in Oldham

88% of our audiences say that the Coliseum is welcoming for the whole community

63% of our audiences say the Coliseum enhances the sense of community in Oldham

65% of our audiences say the Coliseum encourages participation in community life and events

95% of our audiences say the Coliseum is good for Oldham's image

(Data from The Audience Agency)



Our Impact in Oldham

We continued to appeal to people who wouldn't usually visit the theatre.

84% of our audiences were classed as being somewhat or less engaged with arts and culture

54% somewhat engaged. 30% less engaged.

(Data from The Audience Agency)



Our Impact in Oldham

We employed over 130 people including: full time, part time, freelance and contractual staff, actors and creatives and we have increased diverse representation both on and off our stage

Our continuing work to ensure the Coliseum reflects and supports people from all communities includes: blind casting in all auditions, new artistic support programmes for BAME and LGBTQIA+ artists, regular creative social groups for South Asian women and a research project with Ambition for Ageing and University of Manchester exploring arts engagement with marginalised communities. Our biggest show of the year, the pantomime, starred almost 50% BAME performers and our programme of received work featured two shows created by and starring BAME artists on our Main Stage.

To ensure continued progress we have set SMART targets for produced work, received work, auditions and open auditions.



Our Impact in Oldham

We continued to reduce our energy emissions (CO₂e), marking a reduction of 34% in the past five years.

The Coliseum has a voluntary environmental committee made up of staff who work to ensure the theatre continues to reduce its impact on the environment.



Our Impact in Oldham

- We launched our Mini-Podcast Series, sharing original works by people of all ages and backgrounds from the communities we serve, with each episode responding to a new theme.
- We increased our video output by 50%
- The number of people visiting our website increased by 12%
- Our monthly e-newsletter readership increased by 17%
- Our Social Media followers increased by 11%



An Oldham Charity

£20k in donations were made to the Coliseum by our audiences, helping us to continue our work as a cultural and educational charity for Oldham.

We received support from seven Trusts and Foundations for education and community based projects as part of our Learning and Engagement programme.

Thank you.



An Oldham Charity

Our voluntary board of 12 Trustees gave 380 hours of their time to the governance of the Coliseum.

43 Customer Experience Volunteers donated 3,705 hours of their time, providing vital support in the Front of House areas of the theatre.

We couldn't do it without them.



An Oldham Charity


As we go to print the Coliseum is still unable to reopen due to the coronavirus crisis.


Since 1885, the Coliseum has brought joy, entertainment and enrichment to Oldham through our work on stage and in the community. In its 135-year history the theatre has only closed once before. Following 46 years as a popular theatre and music hall, in 1931 the theatre was converted into a cinema, closing nine months later. In 1939 the Coliseum was reopened by passionate theatre lovers the Oldham Repertory Theatre Club.


We need your help to protect the Coliseum's great history and ensure that, once this crisis is over, the Coliseum can continue to serve Oldham and its communities for generations to come.

Oldham Coliseum Theatre is a Registered Charity, no 508829

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