



This year Chain Reaction has been kindly funded by:

Aldgate and Allhallows Foundation

Augustine Courtauld Trust

Essex Youth Trust

Edith M Ellis Charitable Trust

Fowler Smith & Jones Charitable Trust

Garfield Weston Foundation

Natwest Skills and Opportunities Fund

The People's Health Trust

SEGRO

Sir William Boreman's Foundation

The Vintners' Company

The William Wates Memorial Trust



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Registered Charity: 1112701 • Company Limited By Guarantee: 5516471

ANNUAL REPORT 2017 / 2018

ARTISTIC DIRECTOR'S REPORT

It's been another wonderful year here at **CR** with many new and exciting developments to sing about! I love this time of year as it allows me to reflect on all our fabulous achievements.

In the face of the extreme cuts to youth services it's even more important that charities like ours are working hard to deliver services and projects for young people. A rise in youth crime across the capital is extremely concerning but no surprise considering the severity of these cuts. Poverty and reductions to benefits are affecting many of our participants; mental health, housing and substance misuse issues are increasing and young people in our target areas need more support than ever before. In response to this we've started offering one to one mentoring and are now looking for funding to set up a specific mentoring programme, so that we can offer the targeted support and guidance that these young people desperately require.

This year our **Make Your Mark** employability programme has grown thanks to funding from the **Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund**, enabling us to work with 42 severely 'at risk' young people. More schools want to refer their pupils to this programme as they're witnessing a tangible difference to their outlook on education after the project. It's a place for young people that are disengaging from their studies to truly reflect on their choices and the reasons why things aren't working out for them at school and provides practical ways for them to move forward productively. We're committed to expanding this programme and will continue to fundraise for this project in the coming months.

In November we undertook a fantastic tour of **Totally Together**. Unfortunately bullying is still a huge issue in many schools and as the social and economic divide widens there doesn't appear to be much let up on this. Theatre is an ideal way to address bullying; it provides an open and supportive vehicle to explore this sensitive issue and because it engages the emotions of all



involved – the performers and the audience – it has the ability to help children to understand issues from other people's point of view. We're extremely proud that as of this year **Totally Together** has been performed to almost 50,000 young people.

I'd like to thank our board for their fabulous energy and support – they really are a collective of extraordinary individuals. Our team in and out of the office for the enthusiasm and effort they continually put in to our projects. A huge and special thank you to Jenny Pugh our Administrator and Project Manager for her passion and commitment to all that happens here at **CR** and for making every day bright and fun. Finally my unwavering appreciation to Fliss Green for her utter commitment to making a change to young people's lives, her remarkable diligence, and her all-round integrity to the **CR** cause.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Sarah Smit'.

Sarah Smit
Artistic Director



CHAIN REACTION...

- Work with professional actors, writers and directors to create original educational theatre for young people and adults.
- Design and deliver engaging creative workshops on key health and social issues for all ages.
- Develop bespoke programmes for corporate audiences to ignite organisational change.
- Devise educational arts projects which inform and inspire young people to become positive, successful members of society and empower them to achieve their full potential in life.

Now in our 23rd year Chain Reaction have engaged over 400,000 people with our innovative theatre and media based projects. Our work enables people to...

- Develop life skills, motivation and aspirations.
- Build confidence and self esteem.
- Gain knowledge on health and social issues.
- Access high-quality arts and cultural opportunities.

Although we offer a wide range of services for people of all ages and from all backgrounds, working with young people is still at the core of

our organisation. We pride ourselves on the impact we're able to have on young people facing social, emotional or educational disadvantage. Through theatre and media projects we educate, inspire and increase the confidence of 5-19 year olds, tackling issues such as aspirations, teenage pregnancy, knife crime, gangs, conflict resolution, racism, bullying, drugs, smoking, obesity and mental and sexual health.

The life skills that our projects teach actively improve young people's communication and social skills and encourage teamwork; these fundamental skills aren't taught in school yet they're essential to succeed in life.

This year our projects have mostly taken place in schools, local theatres, community venues and special education units. We've delivered:

- Engaging interactive issue-based workshop projects, including running weekly user-led youth theatres and youth action groups.
- Original and professional educational theatre performances, fully supported by further resources (workshops/hot-seating sessions/ Teachers Resource Pack).
- Creative employability programmes for young people disengaging from school or already NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training).

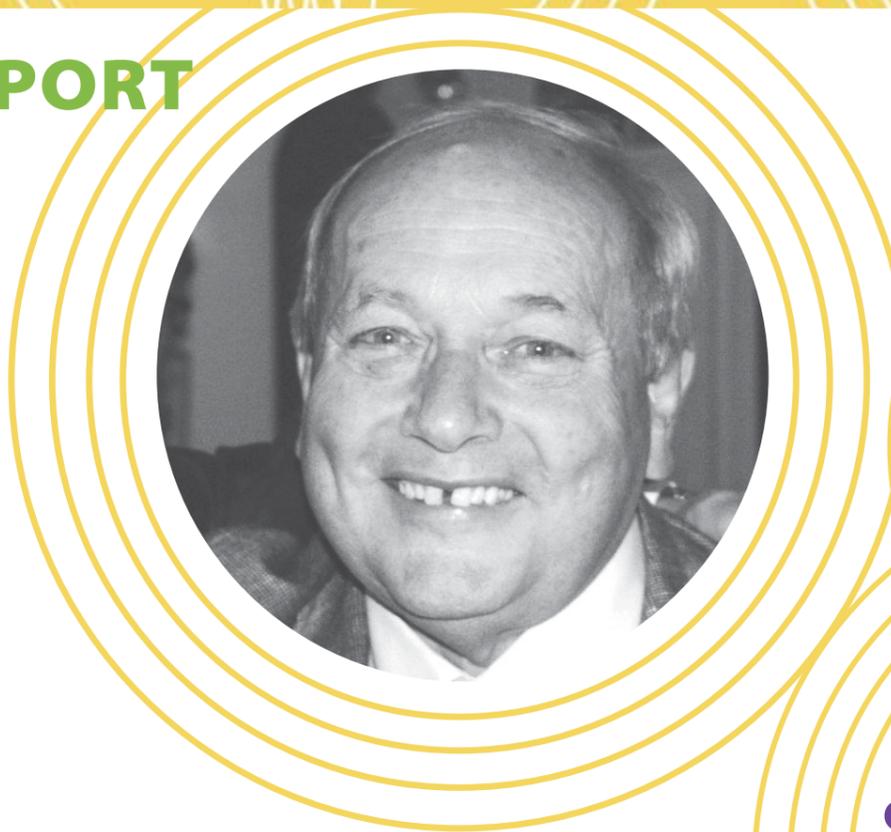
CHAIR'S REPORT

I am going to start by saying a huge thanks to our wonderful staff who keep **Chain Reaction** fresh, dynamic and current. The team (led by Sarah and Fliss) show dedication and persistent energy and our enthusiastic pool of actors, facilitators and volunteers help to ensure we stay at the top of our game with regards to arts-based education. The positive feedback we receive from our participants shows just how effective our work is. We recognise that as times change so do the issues that young people face and we work hard to ensure we offer projects which help them to overcome these issues and live happy successful lives.

This year we're delighted to have worked with over 7,000 young people. We toured our brilliant **Totally Together** performance which challenges bullying and celebrates diversity to a staggering 6,000 young people.

We delivered our third consecutive year of **Action4Gascoigne**, our youth action project for 11-16 year olds. We have now engaged over 1,600 young people and local residents with our community workshops and events on the severely deprived Gascoigne Estate in Barking. The project has gone from strength to strength and this year our young participants devised an outstanding theatre performance tackling knife crime attended by the Mayor, local professionals and residents.

We engaged another 42 of the most at risk young people who are **NEET (Not in Employment Education or Training)** or who're disengaging from education with our **Make Your Mark** creative employability programme. This project is particularly important as it offers tangible employability training and long-term mentoring to our participants.



I am extremely proud of what has been achieved this year, of course none of this would be possible without support. This comes from our staff, happy and supportive clients, our very hard-working Board and the extreme generosity of our funders who continue to believe in what we do, to build a stronger and more positive generation of young people.

Mike Dyer MBE
Chair of Board of Trustees

OUR IMPACT 2017/18

7,219
PEOPLE
ENGAGED

503
YOUNG PEOPLE
TOOK PART
IN OUR
WORKSHOPS

99%
OF PARTICIPANTS
GAINED CONFIDENCE
THROUGH OUR
WORKSHOP
PROGRAMMES

97%
AVERAGE SUCCESS
RATE ACHIEVED
ACROSS ALL OUR
KEY PERFORMANCE
INDICATORS

10
COUNTIES &
BOROUGH
WORKED IN

32
PERFORMANCES
OF OUR
EDUCATIONAL
SHOWS
DELIVERED

97%
OF PARTICIPANTS
LEARNT SOMETHING
NEW THROUGH OUR
PROJECTS

37
SCHOOLS &
COMMUNITY
VENUES
VISITED

EDUCATIONAL THEATRE TOUR

Totally Together

TOTALLY TOGETHER

Challenging Bullying & Celebrating Diversity

DATES: November and December 2017

AREAS: London Boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Redbridge, Greenwich, Hackney, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Haringey and Essex

FUNDING: Self-funded by schools

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 6,420 young people

Launching for national Anti-Bullying Week in November 2017, we toured our infamous **Totally Together** show across London and Essex. The project was hugely popular; **Totally Together** was performed in a total of 31 Primary/Secondary schools reaching a staggering 6,420 young people.

This fantastic project encourages community cohesion, tackles bullying and challenges discrimination. It teaches young people that they can play an active part in their community demonstrating that their actions and behaviours can affect those around them.

Totally Together shows pupils our multicultural world through the eyes of some very misguided comedic characters that come to realise that bullying is bad for everyone and embracing difference is the way forward! This engaging performance helps young people build empathy towards other people from different

social and cultural backgrounds. In addition, the show promotes teamwork resulting in young people developing strong, positive relationships in their own lives.

All schools that booked **Totally Together** received a 10 minute hot-seating session directly after the show and were also provided with our Teachers Resource pack which contains lesson plans to deliver prior to and after our visit. The tour was a huge success, the results of the evaluation are overwhelmingly positive. Once again we have realised just how vital our annual anti-bullying work is for so many schools and young people.

"I think the show was really great because it shows you the effects of bullying and if there was any bullies in the audience it might of inspired them to stop bullying."

Pupil, aged 9, William Pattern School, London Borough of Hackney

"The children really enjoyed the performance. Very entertaining, good quality. They took the message on about talking out against bullying/discrimination. In the classroom discussion the children showed a greater awareness of the impact on the victims of bullying/discrimination... It is very relevant and current."

Assistant Headteacher, Gallions Mount School, London Borough of Greenwich

"[I liked] the enthusiasm in the show and that they're keen to teach us about bullying in a funny way... [I learnt] that no matter how bad the situation is, tell an adult."

Pupil, aged 11, Becontree Primary School, London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

Outcomes

- 99% enjoyed the show.
- 99% said that after watching the show they think it's important to accept others.
- 92% learnt something about the effects bullying has on others.
- 91% will be friendlier to new people after seeing the show.
- 100% of teachers said their pupils have learnt something new.



CHAIN REACTION YOUTH THEATRE

London Borough of Tower Hamlets

CHAIN REACTION YOUTH THEATRE

DATES: April 2017 - Ongoing

FUNDING: The Aldgate and Allhallows Foundation

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 26

CRYT
TOWER HAMLETS

"[I learnt] lots of things can improve your life and you should always try to do your best... I learnt to be more confident and communicate with others better."
Yasmeen, Participant, aged 13

"I think they have learnt how to collaborate as a team to put on a performance, to perform professionally, to show confidence, to be committed... what an enjoyable evening."
Teacher of participant

"I am so happy my child attends this fantastic opportunity. There is a sore lack of affordable theatre/drama groups in this community. Chain Reaction fills this need. It definitely helped my daughter with her speaking and presentation skills as well as so much more!"
Thank You!
Parent of attendee

Our highly targeted **Chain Reaction Youth Theatre** (CRYT) in the London Borough of Tower Hamlets has now been running for two years. In addition to teaching our participants a whole host of acting skills, the project raises confidence, self-esteem, aspirations and communication skills. Aimed at 11-18 year olds, the project takes place at our base in Bow and the group meet on a weekly basis to devise theatre performances which explore health and social issues that are prevalent in the local area.

Our young attendees come from a wide variety of backgrounds with a range of different abilities and Special Educational Needs. The group work persistently hard to support one another, demonstrating outstanding teamwork skills which ensures that they consistently achieve great outcomes. They have a fantastic commitment to the project through regular attendance and while many

Outcomes

- 100% enjoyed CRYT.
- 94% felt that CRYT made them think more about the community and how their actions can impact it.
- 100% feel they are more confident at speaking and presenting.
- 92% have learnt new skills.
- 96% feel that after attending CRYT they will push themselves further in education and training.

of them may not have performed before, the freedom of expression they experience at **CRYT** has made a huge impact on all of them.

The group finished this year with a fantastic end of year showcase performed in a studio space at the prestigious 3 Mills Film Studios. The performance addressed what it's like to live in Tower Hamlets and presented some of the many issues which the borough faces. It showed three different characters; one with mental health issues, one dealing with homelessness and housing issues and a single mum struggling with family life. The performance presented the idea that it doesn't matter where we live, with focus and determination and by coming together as a community, we can pull through and succeed. It was a hugely uplifting show and the audience of over 60 people were delighted to attend.

CREATIVE EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

Make Your Mark

MAKE YOUR MARK

DATES: October 2017 to July 2018

AREAS: London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

FUNDING: The Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 42



"They helped me change how my temper can be controlled... When I first came they showed me tactics to control my temper. I feel really happy I won't get kicked out of school because they saved my life... Thanks Make Your Mark"

Matthew, participant, aged 14

"[I enjoyed] being able to build up my confidence more and I also liked being encouraged to come out of my comfort zone and doing things that I wouldn't normally do and that has helped me to become a better person."

Chloe, participant, aged 18



In 2016, in response to the escalating **NEET (Not in Education Employment or Training)** and unemployment rates in the London Borough of Barking & Dagenham, we devised **Make Your Mark (MYM)**, a creative training programme for 13-19 year



olds who are disengaging from education or those who are already **NEET**. **MYM** tackles barriers to employment by teaching skills, raising self-esteem, confidence and aspirations.

Following a hugely successful pilot year, we were delighted to raise funding from the **Evening Standard Dispossessed Fund** for **MYM**, providing two intensive weeks of delivery and 4-6 months follow up mentoring for 42 of the most at risk young people in the borough.

Young people were referred to the project by schools, special education units, social services, youth organisations and the local careers team. The project began with an intensive week long scheme whereby our team of specialist practitioners provide a fully-structured, interactive drama and media based training programme. **MYM** teaches interpersonal, communication and presentation skills and includes group drama sessions, mock interviews, teamwork

CREATIVE EMPLOYABILITY PROGRAMME

Make Your Mark

Outcomes

- 100% enjoyed being part of *Make Your Mark*.
- 100% said they learnt new employment skills.
- 100% said their communication skills improved.
- 97% feel more confident.
- 100% said *Make Your Mark* taught them about the things they need to do to get a job.



"[I learned] how to be proud of myself and who I am. And I have so much more confidence in myself... I've also learnt what to do and what not to do in an interview and had experience doing one."

Syeda, participant, aged 13

"It has given me so much confidence and self-esteem over the year of coming to Make Your Mark. It has helped me with lots of social skills as well."

Harry, participant, aged 14



challenges, practical employability skills (CVs/letters/form-filling), inspirational talks, and sessions exploring individual pathways.

Young people spent the intensive week preparing and working with our team to design a poster campaign aimed at inspiring other young people in the borough to 'make their mark' in life. The first three days were spent gaining young people's trust and developing

their skills and CVs. On the Thursday they interviewed for a job role within the **MYM** creative media company. On the final day of the programme, 'shoot day' participants come to work as part of a creative media company filling roles such as: photographers assistant, runner, caterer, model, designer and copywriter.

We continued to work with the participants in the months following their initial delivery to help them put their future plans in to action; our team mentor the participants one to one or in groups, depending on their needs.

MYM has been a great success and our interactive training and mentoring has made a huge impact on all those involved. The posters which they've produced are being disseminated across the borough to ensure we reach as many other people as possible with this important message.

WORKSHOPS IN THE COMMUNITY

Action4Gascoigne

ACTION4GASCOIGNE

DATES: April 2017 to March 2018

AREAS: London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

FUNDING: People's Health Trust

TOTAL PARTICIPANTS: 60

ACTION 4 GASCOIGNE

We're now in our third year of delivering our fantastic project **Action4Gascoigne (A4G)** and what a year it's been! **A4G** is a free weekly and school holiday based youth action project for 11-16 year olds who live on or around the severely deprived Gascoigne Estate in Barking.

A4G provides regular positive activities for young people which improve their confidence, communication skills and self-esteem as well as encouraging their social conscience. Each term they work as a team to establish the biggest issues their community is currently facing and then they plan and run large scale community events to tackle them and bring the community together.

A4G has gone from strength to strength over its 3-year life span and has become truly ingrained in the local community as a positive and uplifting activity for both the young people and residents.

This year the group have run four fantastic community events, the first of which was a community wide consultation. The young people wanted to get the community together to discuss community safety in response to a fatal knife attack on the estate. They then used the information



"[I enjoyed] young people bringing the community together- all beliefs/all ages/all colours."
Event attendee

"[I enjoyed] the drama and friendships of others. [I learned] how to be more confident and how to listen to others... [Events are important] to help this community to be a better place and have no more crime... I really enjoyed it and it's amazing. I love it and the people who have helped me and my new friends."
Millie, participant, aged 14

"[I enjoyed] how it wasn't just about us it was helping the community... [I learned] how to care for other people."
Tyrese, participant, aged 14

"From the very beginning you had me engrossed. Real life. Real problems - VERY powerful - extremely emotional... I wish everyone on the Estate could see it"
Event attendee

and ideas they'd collected at the consultation to plan their next event which was an intensive holiday programme for young people where they devised a theatre performance called **Gascoigne United** which showcased real life stories from the estate and ways to stay safe. At Christmas they turned their focus to those less fortunate and ran the **Gascoigne**

Festive Fayre to raise money for the local foodbank, complete with Santa's grotto and mince pies.

Following the success of **A4G** to date, we're delighted to have raised some continuation funding from **Awards 4 All** while we seek further long term funding.

Outcomes

- 100% are proud of what they achieved
- 100% feel more confident
- 100% felt supported and listened to
- 100% learnt new skills
- 100% feel *Action4Gascoigne* has brought people together that would not otherwise meet or be together



EDUCATIONAL DRAMA WORKSHOPS

Youth Forum Workshops / Workshops in Schools

ACCOUNTS

Income & Expenditure April 2017 To March 2018

THE BARKING & DAGENHAM (BAD) YOUTH FORUM

The **Barking and Dagenham Youth Forum** was set up in 2001 by young people who wanted to have a say about issues affecting their lives and their community. Today, the forum, comprising of 13 to 19 year olds elected by peers in schools and youth groups, continues to have a say and influence on policy makers in the council. Each year the forum presents their yearly achievements to members of the local council at the Town Hall. The youth workers who support the youth forum commissioned Chain Reaction to deliver a presentation skills workshop, to help their members with their communication and presentation skills ahead of the big day. We spent an evening with the group teaching them new skills and techniques to improve their eye contact, body language and projection.



"I was looking for clear and informative training that would help young people to present confidently and improve their skills. The young people learnt all of this and had fun along the way."

Sally Allen-Clarke,
Senior Youth Worker,
London Borough of Barking & Dagenham

WORKSHOPS IN SCHOOLS

Since April 2017 we have engaged 336 young people with our bespoke, issue-based drama workshops. We've been commissioned by two different local schools to devise interactive drama workshops to engage their students' on a number of issues. We delivered two full day workshops tackling aspirations and individuality and the use of the 'N' word with a school who was struggling with students regular use of the profanity. We used discussion, role play, interactive games and drama to educate the pupils. The workshops were a great success and all schools are keen for us to deliver more work of this nature in the future.



"The teachers were enthusiastic and engaged with us a lot and I thoroughly enjoyed it... [I learnt] being yourself is the most important thing... Everyone's unique so embrace it instead of excluding them."

Ammar, pupil aged 14,
East London Science School,
London Borough of Newham

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Total Funds 2017/18	Total Funds 2016/17
Incoming Resources	£	£	£	£
Income from Charitable Activities	29,409	94,015	123,424	154,545
Income from other Activities	31,040		31,040	27,234
Investment Income (bank interest)	14		14	9
Total Incoming Resources			154,478	181,788
Resources Expended	£	£	£	£
Expenditure on Charitable Activities	52,372	95,585	147,957	163,673
Total Resources Expended	52,372	95,585	147,957	163,673
Net Incoming / (Expenditure)	8,091	-1,570	6,521	18,115
Total Funds Brought Forward	33,267	11,294	44,561	26,446
Total Funds Carried Forward	41,358	9,724	51,082	44,561

STATEMENT OF THE TRUSTEES

These accounts are a summary of information extracted from the full financial statements for the year ending 31st March 2018. The full accounts, which have been subjected to an independent examination for the charity, were all unqualified. Copies of the Annual Report for the trustees and the full financial statements can be obtained from Chain Reaction Theatre Company on request. The annual accounts were approved on the 25th September 2018 and have been filed with Companies House and the Charity Commission.

Mike Dyer MBE, Chair of the Board of Trustees

The summarised financial accounts are consistent with the full financial statements and report of the trustees of Chain Reaction Theatre Company.

Beresford Chartered Accountants



THANKS

Chain Reaction would like to say
a special thank you to...

3 MILLS STUDIOS

ANGELS COSTUMES

BARKING FOOD BANK

DARREN RODWELL – CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER,
LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING & DAGENHAM

GASCOIGNE CHILDREN'S CENTRE

GASCOIGNE YOUTH AND COMMUNITY CENTRE

LONDON COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING & DAGENHAM

INTEGRATED YOUTH SUPPORT SERVICES

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING & DAGENHAM PUBLIC HEALTH

LONDON BOROUGH OF BARKING & DAGENHAM

COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM

TERENCE HIGGINS TRUST

THE RIVER LEA TIDAL MILL TRUST

PEOPLE



STAFF

SARAH SMIT
Artistic Director

FLISS GREEN
*Senior Strategy &
Project Manager*

JENNY PUGH
*Administrator &
Project Manager*

SARA PRUCE
Designer

THE COMPANY

Alicia McKenzie	Nigel Bernard
Caroline Menton	Olivia Davis
Danielle Williams	Rebecca Hyde
Jessica Flood	Rodney Gwenzi
Katie Bracher	Rhiannon Story
Lauren Verrier	Simone Watson
Mickey Shaw	

OUR VOLUNTEERS

Asha Reece	Libby Lawton
Chloe Mccord	Lisa Stewart
Eve Meskell	Phil Jones
Graham Smit	Samantha Graham
Harry Jamieson	Rhea Gillingham
Kate Lassman	Laura-Amy Pitts
Matthew Buckingham	

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

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Simon Kenwright
Vice Chair

Nikki Hinksman
Treasurer

Lucy Marks
Secretary

Anjali Rundle
Board Member

Danny Maxwell
Board Member

Lisa Stewart
Board Member

Simone Watson
Board Member

Harry Jamieson
Young Persons Representative