

kalasangam
Annual Review
2019/20





**ACROSS THE ARTS
ACROSS CULTURES**

**AT THE HEART
OF BRADFORD**

Our Vision

Kala Sangam is an intercultural arts hub which aims to reflect the diversity of contemporary Britain through the work we present, the artists we support and the communities we engage.

Specialising in South Asian arts and culture, most of our work takes place in our Arts Centre in the heart of Bradford (between Bradford Cathedral and The Broadway Shopping Centre) with our outreach activities extending regionally and nationally.

In Sanskrit, 'Kala' means arts and 'Sangam' means a meeting point.

Kala Sangam aims to bring people and communities together to create and experience high-quality diverse art, to increase understanding and awareness of different cultures, and to provide talent development pathways for young people and emerging artists into a career in the arts.



Summary

“ I am delighted to present Kala Sangam's Annual Review for 2019/20. In these unusual and unsteady times, it is heartening to look back on such a successful year.

I am extremely proud of what we achieved during this, my first year as Chair of the Board. We hosted more performances than ever before, for an audience growing both in size and diversity. Our Pay What You Decide ticketing model allows everyone, regardless of income, to access and enjoy our dance, music, theatre, poetry and film events. Our relationships with many businesses and organisations across the region have gone from strength to strength, and we remain the meeting and conference venue of choice for many.

As ever, we would like to thank our core funders Arts Council England and Bradford Council for their continued support of our work. We were also extremely grateful for the support of The Emerald Foundation, The

Saïd Foundation's Amal programme, and Exa Networks. We would also like to thank the audiences, artists, room bookers and café users who filled the building this year – your support is vital to us.

Like many arts organisations, 2020/21 will be a challenging year for Kala Sangam. However, we are looking forward with optimism; we believe that post-pandemic, our mission and vision will be more relevant than ever. I can't wait to see our building buzzing with artists and audiences again very soon. ”



Jasbir Athwal DL
Chair of the Board





Our Artistic Programme

In 2019/20 Kala Sangam presented 48 performances (plus 3 planned performances cancelled due to the Coronavirus outbreak) and 6 exhibitions – up from 36 performances and 6 exhibitions in 2018/19

Kala Sangam has three public facing programming strands: **This Is Bradford** (bringing work to the city that is relevant to its communities); **South Asia Now** (supporting the development of South Asian artforms and British artists of South Asian heritage) and **British Diversity** (ensuring we present work that reflects contemporary Britain). Every performance in 2019/20 aligned with at least one of these strands.

Since 2016/17 Kala Sangam has grown the number of performances we present year on year – in 2019/20 we presented 3 times as many performances as in 2016/17.

A diverse programme for a diverse city

In 2019/20 Kala Sangam has continued to build on the success of recent years and presented a diverse programme of events. Stand out performances included: *HELM*, a landmark dance piece by professional autistic and learning disabled artists; *Tech Styles 6*, the return of the two-day celebration of Breakdance and Hip-Hop culture; *Shaadi Masala*, a non-English language theatre piece by local women which explored their experiences of arranged marriage; Eliot Smith Dance's *Awaken*, staged in partnership with Bradford Cathedral and combining contemporary dance with organ music in the stunning cathedral nave; and a four-night run of *Imaam Imraan*, by National Youth Theatre, as part of Bradford Literature Festival. Our Poetry Open Mic nights continued to draw national attention for the diverse range of poets they regularly feature.

Engaging Exhibitions

Throughout the year we hosted 6 exhibitions that reflected the range of work delivered at Kala Sangam. Exhibitions included: *Humanising*, featuring portraits by members of Bradford's refugee and migrant communities; Martin Hearne's exhibition, *Mannequin*, which portrayed real and imagined streets in Bradford; Mahmud Manning's stunning geometric art; and *Body Talk*, a collaboration between photographer Shy Burhan and poet Sharena Lee Satti promoting body positivity and featuring portraits of 50 local women.

Our commitment to South Asian performing arts remains strong, with 24 of 48 performances featuring South Asian performers and/or a South Asian artform.

Kala Sangam continued to programme some of the very best work showcasing art forms from South Asia. Highlights included: the World Premiere of *YAATRA*, Jaivant Patel Dance's exploration of LGBTQ+ identity through Classical Indian dance; Seeta Patel's groundbreaking production of *The Rite of Spring*, that combined Bharatanatyam and contemporary dance; and a sold-out Bollywood Spectacular to celebrate the festive season, by Zoobin Surty Company. Five out of six exhibitions we hosted in 2019/20 featured work by South Asian artists.

“ As a venue, Kala Sangam is always open and inviting to audiences and it feels a safe space. The diverse range of audience members - backgrounds, ages - was a nice mix, it was not just a typical dance audience, and lovely to see the space full. ”

Audience Member - HELM

“ The atmosphere of the centre is extremely welcoming and it's so great to see families young and old here enjoying art work! ”

Audience Member - 6 Feet, 3 Shoes



Support for Artists

In 2019/20 we provided 197 days of studio time to artists as in-kind support (an increase on 2018/19)

Back in 2018/19, we significantly increased the level of support we offered to artists – in 2019/20, we not only maintained but exceeded this. Our support remains gender neutral, with artists from a wide range of faiths, cultures, sexualities and backgrounds supported to develop new work and present performances.

We supported 16 artists and organisations in developing successful applications to Arts Council England - a 45% increase on 2018/19, which released over £200K in funding. Seven of these were South Asian or working in South Asian artforms.

Work created at Kala Sangam continued to be recognised as being of the highest quality. Projects we supported included: *Dancing With Words*, an Arts Council funded project that brought together poets and dancers of different styles to share and create a new way of working together; *I'm Muslim Don't Panic*, a hip-hop theatre piece by Bobak Walker exploring his Iranian heritage;

Joygernaut, a one man show by Andy Craven-Griffiths combining spoken word and theatre to explore male mental health; *The Windrush Story*, a one woman show for schools by Alive & Kicking Theatre exploring a woman's personal journey through Windrush; and *AJAYU Transitorio*, a dance and music piece by Yuvel Soria examining Bolivian culture.

Bradford Producing Hub

Outside of our regular delivery, Kala Sangam was a key consortium member in the city's successful bid to Arts Council England for £1.5m to create Bradford Producing Hub.

This three-year pilot will test radical new approaches to producing live arts, supporting creative talent, developing a local arts workforce, and partnering with communities across Bradford to reimagine the city as a thriving hub for performance.

“ We really felt at home and in a safe place where we were able to be creative ”

Yuvel Soria, Artist - Sept 2019





Audiences

More than 3000 audience members saw performances at Kala Sangam in 2019/20, with a further 1500 people seeing a performance as part of the reopening of St George's Hall. An estimated 23,000 visitors engaged with our exhibitions.

We maintained an average audience capacity of 63% (48% in 2017/18).

In line with our programming strands, launched in 2017, we continue to programme a wide range of work that is relevant to, and representative of Bradford. In response, our audiences continue to be more reflective of the wide range of the city's communities. 35% of attenders are non-white, including 23% who identify as Asian or Asian British. 60% of our audience come from the Bradford district, maintaining the increase in levels achieved in 2018/19.

37% of our audience come from areas with low levels of arts engagement, with the largest group (19.6%) coming from the Kaleidoscope Creativity segment, which is ranked 9th out of the 10 segments that make up the Audience Spectrum tool provided by the Audience Agency for measuring engagement levels with the arts.

Our social media profiles continued to grow, with 3936 twitter followers (up 482 from 2018/9), 3023 facebook likes (up 430 from 2018/9) and over 1000 Instagram followers.

On average we shared 38 tweets a month, making 25,700 impressions. Our regular e-newsletter reaches more than 1000 people.

Pay What You Decide

2019/20 was the first full year since adopting a new Pay What You Decide ticketing model, with all but four of our performances Pay What You Decide. Our gross ticket yield continued to exceed previous like-for-like ticket income, with an average ticket yield of around £5. Feedback from audiences continued to be extremely positive, with 99% of people rating us as good or very good value for money.

Audience satisfaction remained high, with 98% of attendees rating their experience positively.

“ Pay What You Decide is an amazing way to make arts accessible to everyone ”

Audience Member – 2019

“ Kala Sangam embodies the spirit of Bradford in its celebration and creation of work that crosses divides and speaks with an authentic voice ”

Audience Member – 6 Feet 3 Shoes

Education & Outreach

In 2019/20 Kala Sangam employed a full-time Education & Outreach Officer for the first time, and developed a new Education & Outreach strategy in line with our current business model.

Schools Linking Network

In 2019/20 we significantly increased our engagement with schools, working across the district with 26 schools - an increase of 83% on 2018/19. 16 schools took part in Linking Days - a day of creative activities delivered in partnership with Bradford Cathedral for the Schools Linking Network. In total we engaged over 1100 children and young people in a range of activities.

83% of teachers involved rated the quality of the workshops as very good or good.

“ Fantastic day of history and arts, a real treat for the children to meet up, have fun, learn and make new friends ”

Parent helper - Schools Linking project 2019

Creative Workshops

We offered a diverse range of activity directly to schools, including: Dance & Drama after school clubs at Dixons Manningham Primary School; breakdance and drama workshop for Year 3 at Bradford Academy, designed to kick off their *Sounds of the City* project; and Bhangra & Dhol workshops for Eastwood Community School.

We helped 6 schools work towards their Artsmark and supported 2 professional artists to deliver free workshops in schools - including dancer Kamala Devam, who worked with Belle Vue Girls Academy to create a curtain raiser to be performed at a Kamala Devam Company Show.

“ The children had an epic day. I think it was the best trip they've had this year. They really enjoyed it and learnt a lot too ”

Teacher - St Paul's CE Primary

Classes

In 2019/20 Kala Sangam introduced more classes to our weekly schedule: Breakin with Tranquil Productions - a high energy class for children and young people who like hip hop culture; Northern School of Contemporary Dance's Bradford Academy Hub; and Bollywood Dance with Zoobin Surty Company - a class for adults to keep fit whilst learning spectacular routines.

We continued to deliver a wide range of other classes, including: our Bharatanatyam Academy; Punjabi Music & Dance in partnership with Punjabi Roots Academy; Phoenix Dance Theatre's NO BOUNDS contemporary dance classes for boys; Movement! dance classes for people with a learning disability or autism, run in partnership with Dance for Life; Dance United Yorkshire's Gradient Company and Bradford groups; Freedom Studio's Youth Theatre; and the Bradford Friendship Choir.

95% of participants said they were likely to recommend a class they attend to others.



Outreach

In partnership with Balbir Singh Dance Company we continued to deliver free weekly dance sessions, at Community Works in Bakerend, to a group of children and young people many of whom had little or no previous engagement with the arts.

Through this project, the group have had several performances opportunities at Community Works and at Kala Sangam, as well as the opportunity to see and experience several of Kala Sangam's own shows.

“ This session is really helping me to strengthen my muscles and improve balance and coordination. It also helps with my well-being and helps my anger with my ADHD. It also helps me to focus. If this session didn't run I would really miss it ”

Participant - Movement!



Staff Highlights

Mohammed Iftikar **Facilities Manager**

I loved *Imaam Imran* so much I watched it four nights in a row. It was hilarious and very clever.



Fay Beesley **Education and Outreach Officer**

My favourite performance I saw this year has got to be *HELM*, which featured autistic and learning disabled dancers. There were a number of reasons I enjoyed this particular performance, but mainly it was just full of passionate and enthusiastic dancers, which highlighted that dance is for everyone.



Mo Khan **Facilities Assistant**

Pashto Thriller (by Freedom Studios as part of their BD Stories event) was great. It had comedy, sadness and realism - a bit of every part of life.



Steve O'Connell **Head of Commercial**

Comms Camp North was a brilliant day, with 150 public sector PR, marketing, web, social media and communications people coming together for a conference and series of workshops.

They used all of our spaces - with full technical support. They had full catering throughout the day - including 'Grab Bags' for lunch - a first for us. After lunch around 50 people went on a guided walk around Little Germany - another first.



Our People 2019/20

Our Patrons:

David Lascelles Earl of Harwood
Lord Patel of Bradford OBE

Honourary Lifetime President:

Dr Geetha Upadhyaya OBE

Our Board:

Jasbir Athwal DL	Chair	(appointed April 2019)
Caroline Harrison	Treasurer	
Jenny Jowle	Trustee	(appointed July 2019)
Paul Nash	Company Secretary	
Marie O'Reilly	Vice Chair	
Ravinder Singh	Trustee	(resigned April 2019)
Rashmi Sudhir	Trustee	(appointed April 2019)
James Wilson	Trustee	(appointed Jan 2020)

Our Staff:

Jez Arrow	Head of Finance	
Fay Beesley	Education & Outreach Officer	
Sidra Bi	Bookkeeper	
Bradley Cook-Pattison	Facilities Assistant	
Alex Corwin	Programme & Marketing Manager	(from Jan 2020)
David Crawford	Facilities Assistant	
Alex Croft	Creative Director	
Sam Cryer	Facilities Assistant	
David Dearlove	Facilities Assistant & Caretaker	
Javier Frye	Facilities Assistant	
Philip Henegan	Facilities Assistant	
Amir Hussain	InCommunities Facilities Assistant	
Mohammed Iftikar	Facilities Manager	
Mo Khan	Facilities Assistant	
Steve O'Connell	Head of Commercial	
Liz Radice	InCommunities Receptionist	
Suleman Rahman	Facilities Assistant	
Mat Schofield	Caretaker	
Cat Scott	Marketing & Admin Assistant	(until Sept 2019)
Dave Searle	Freelance Theatre Technician	
Thomasina Spencer	Receptionist	(from Sept 2019)
Marcia Travers	Cleaner	

Our Venue

Over 30,000 people visited Kala Sangam in 2019/20, with 375 different groups booking rooms for meetings, conferences, training and events.

Arts-related room bookings made up 27% of our hires, with a further 11% coming from schools and other education groups working with children and young people. 22% of our bookings came from 3rd sector or charitable organisations with more than 17,000 of our visitors connected to the arts, education or charitable sectors.

Arts and cultural related hirers included: Commoners Choir, Mind the Gap, Screen Yorkshire, National Youth Theatre (who presented their play *Imaan Imran*), as part of Bradford Literature Festival, the BBC, and the Penny Appeal (who returned with their annual Muslim Pantomime).

We remain the meeting and conference venue of choice for businesses and public sector organisations from across the region.

19% of bookings came from Local Authorities or the Health Sector, including Bradford, Leeds and Wakefield Councils, the NHS and West Yorkshire Combined Authority. Commercial and private sector usage also continued to grow, now accounting for 15% of our bookings. We hosted businesses including: NatWest Directors Group, Krispy Kreme UK and Naylor Wintersgill. Many of our bookings are from repeat customers such as Moss Bros.

Growing our hub for the arts in Bradford

Kala Sangam is now well established as a home of creative practitioners in the city. Fellow Arts Council England National Portfolio organisations Dance United Yorkshire and Freedom Studios are based in the building, along with a number of visual and performance based individual artists.

With high ratings on both Trip Advisor and Google Maps, the Rooftop Café is building its reputation as a must visit spot for breakfast or lunch.

We are committed to ensuring that everyone receives a warm welcome at Kala Sangam.





“ On the event yesterday, what can I say? We’ve been running these for eight years and we’ve never had a venue as good with staff as friendly. Everyone we came into contact with was really helpful and accommodating. KS people helped and then added 10% which was unexpected and valued. Really, really good work that’s very much appreciated ”

- Room booker, 2019

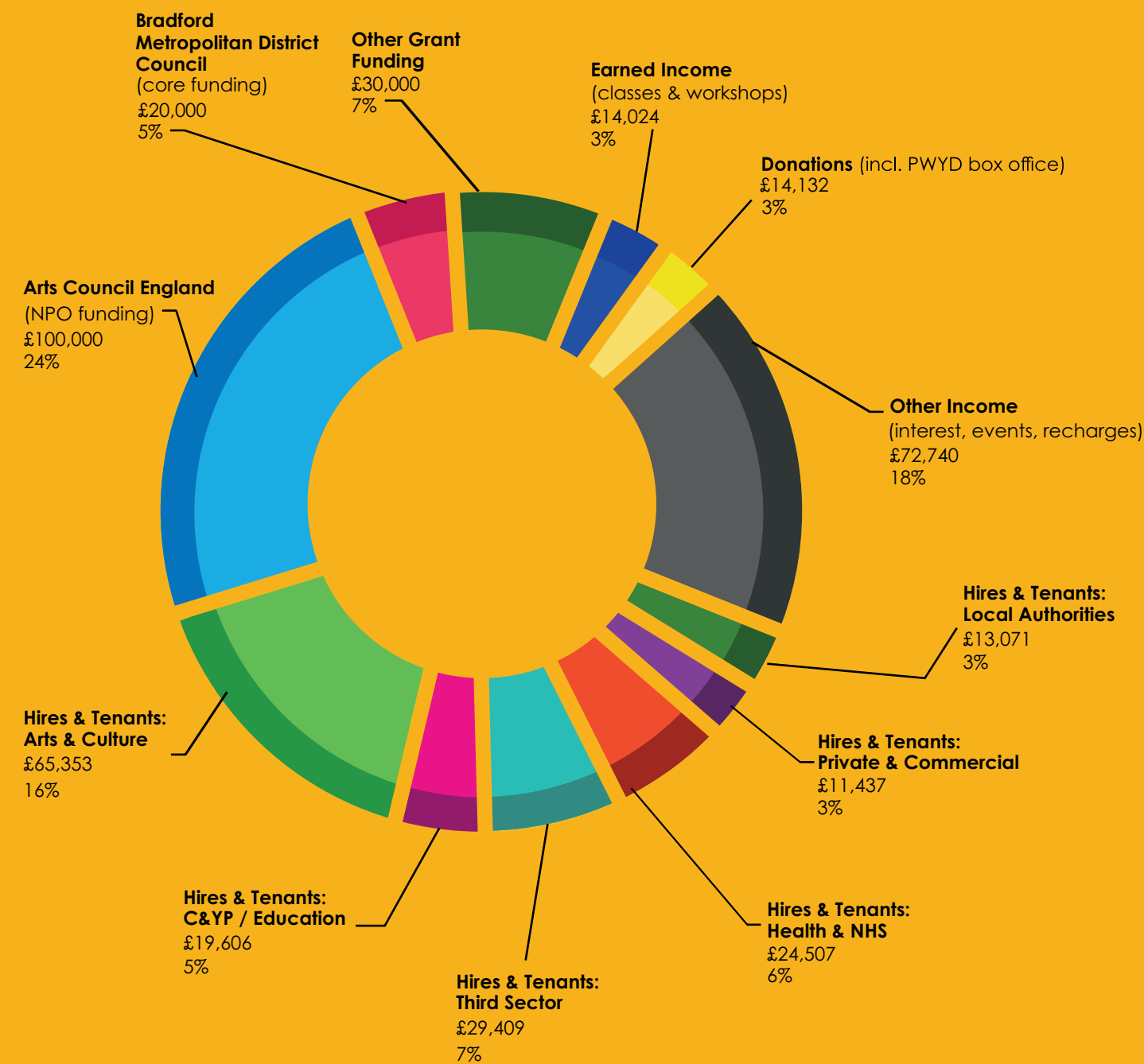
“ We always get a very warm welcome and fantastic technical support, nothing seemed too much trouble ”

- Room booker, 2019



Total Income

£414,278



Core Funders



Supported using public funding by
**ARTS COUNCIL
ENGLAND**

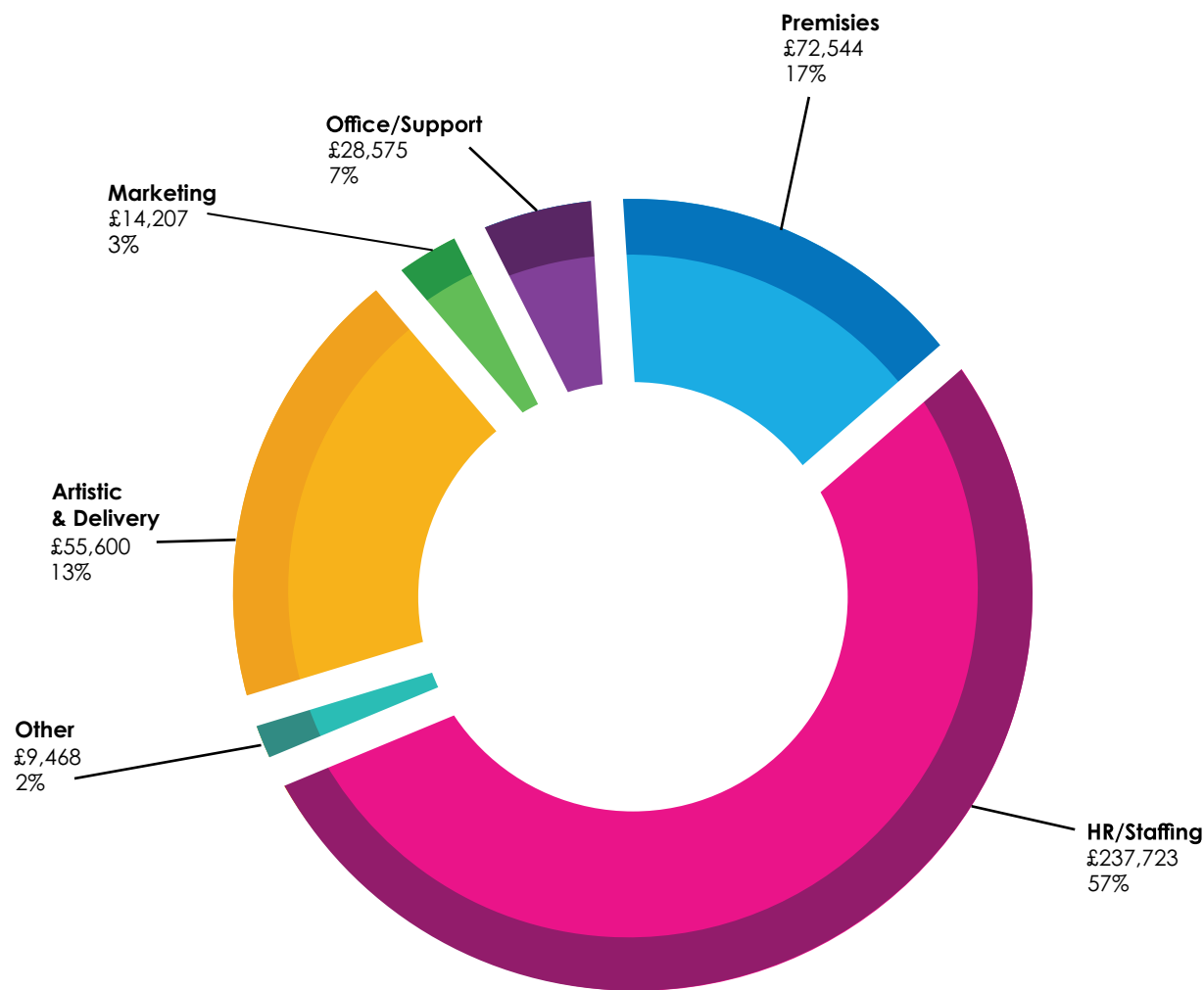


City of
BRADFORD
METROPOLITAN DISTRICT COUNCIL

Total Expenditure

£418,117

Excludes Capital Depreciation of £91,980



Financial Overview

Supporters



Member



Kala Sangam
1 Forster Square
Bradford
BD1 4TY

Kala Sangam is just a 5 minute walk from both Bradford Interchange and Bradford Forster Square train station.
Find us between Bradford Cathedral and The Broadway Shopping Centre.

The building is fully accessible with a lift to all floors.

We are registered with 'We're Good To Go'
- a COVID-19 industry standard for visitor attractions and venues.

kalasangam

For more information:

visit our website: www.kalasangam.org

call us: **01274 303340**

email: info@kalasangam.org

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