



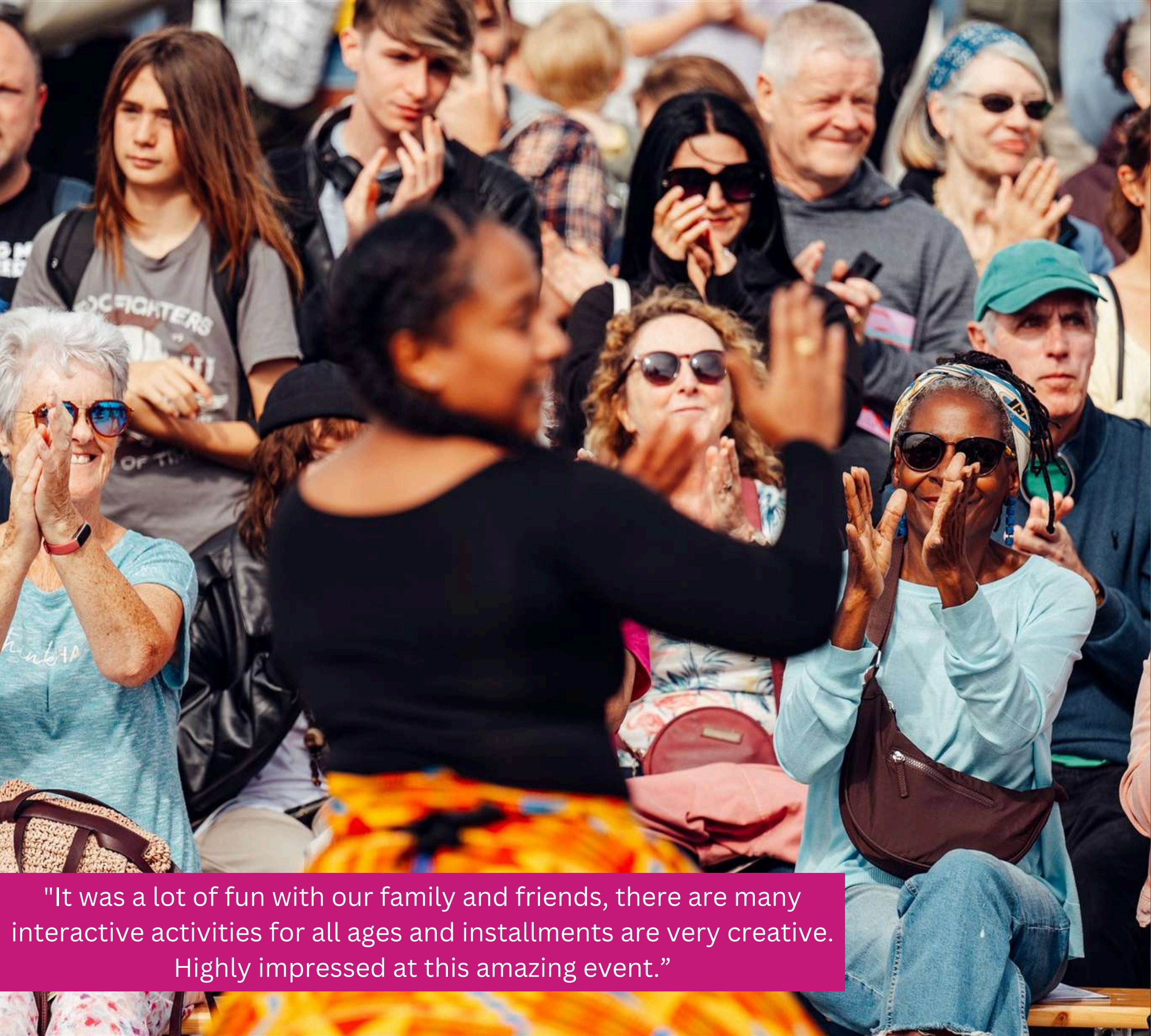
Bournemouth Arts by the Sea Festival

**2023
IMPACT REPORT**



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





Who are we?

Arts by the Sea is an annual outdoor arts festival funded by BCP Council and Arts Council England.

We work to broaden access to art and culture while maintaining a commitment to excellence in the quality of art & the artists we support.

2023 was our 13th year and we share some of our highlights with you here in this impact report.

"It was a lot of fun with our family and friends, there are many interactive activities for all ages and installments are very creative. Highly impressed at this amazing event."

Our Aims & Values

- To combine high-profile, inspirational, spectacular showcase events with local participation, increasing engagement in culture and enhancing a sense of community by combining culture, people and place.
- To deliver a diverse artistic programme which engages audiences in a carnivalesque celebration of culture in Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole's unique locations.
- To host a Talent Development programme, focused on upskilling artists, boosting our economy and supporting the local creative sector.
- To implement an Engagement & Participation scheme, providing opportunities for all.
- To demonstrate our commitment to diversity and environmental sustainability.



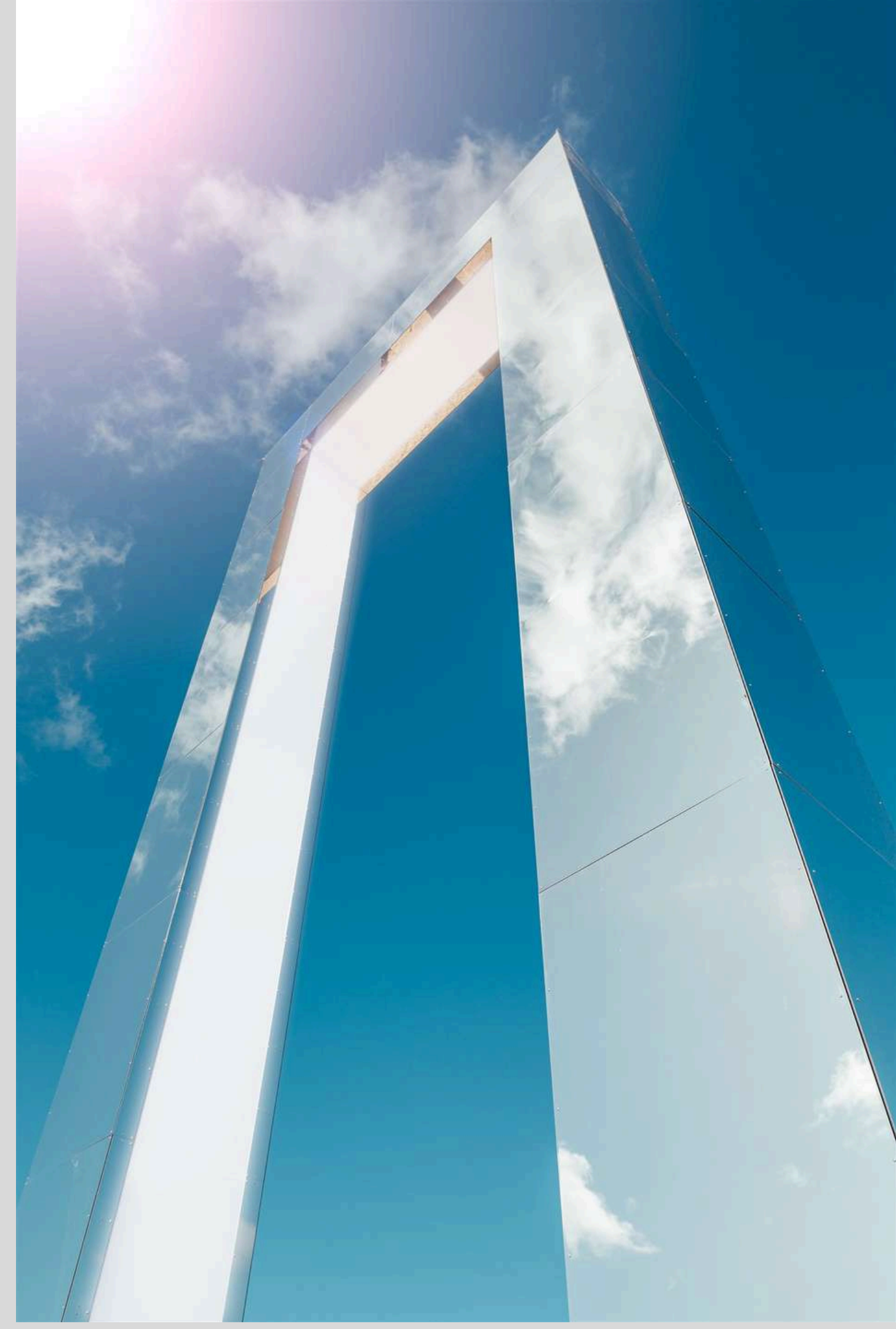
"A wonderful weekend with crowds of all ages, creating a warm positive feeling of community in Bournemouth."

National Profile

In 2024, we won **Gold in the Dorset Tourism Awards** for Tourism Event/Festival of the Year and **Gold in the South West Tourism Excellence Awards**; we were also a finalist in BCP's DMB Tourism Awards, all for our 2022 festival.

We share best practice with a network of peers and industry colleagues (including Without Walls, the Mela Partnership and Julie's Bicycle).

We have received national media & press attention, including coverage from Sky Arts and the BBC.



2023 Theme

"Modern life is so busy that we are often unable to take time for ourselves. This year, Arts by the Sea invites you to take a **MOMENT** and be present.

In a lifetime of experiences, it's the **MOMENTS** that stand out, shining the brightest and most vivid. Collect them, share them or keep them as a sacred personal gift. Whichever you choose, we hope you explore, experience and enjoy a new and positive **MOMENT** with us."

- Andrea Francis, Festival Director





"Teabreak made us both laugh and weep. Guy in the Luggage Rack was so moving and insightful. Big Gay Disco Bike, hilarious."

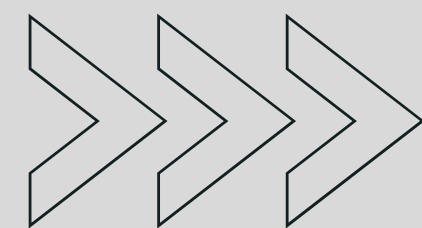
2023 Artistic Programme

38
organisations
worked with



20 of these
were from the
local area

188
performers
to produce
over



92 free
performances

INCLUDING 8 new
commissions,
7 premiers,
4 new pieces of
online content.

A photograph of a woman with long, wavy hair singing into a microphone on a stage. She is wearing a dark, low-cut top and dark pants. In the background, a man is playing an electric guitar. The setting appears to be a brick-walled venue with stage equipment and speakers.

Talent Development

Providing opportunities for artist development and skills building for young people is core to what we do:

- Extended partnership with **Bournemouth & Poole College** providing a two-day student take-over of 60 Million Postcards involving 30+ students.
- Continued Associate Artist and Artist in Residence schemes to support and give platforms to developing artists Annie Frost Nicholson & The Working Boys Club.

“I love the arts festival - it’s great to have so many creative people and things happening here and it encourages the area to think outside of the box to attract visitors and bring a sense of pride to Bournemouth.”

Engagement and Participation

The festival works with schools and community groups to offer opportunities to discover the arts, participate in creative activity and to become part of the festival performances themselves.

“Brilliant fun for the children. Nice to have lots of different activities available.”



Associate Artist Scheme

- 4 community workshops, engaging with 96 people, delivered with West Howe Community Enterprises, Poole Communities Trust, The Chatterboxes & Iford Academy.
- 4 pieces of digital communication released on The Working Boys Club and Serving Sounds.
- Performed at West Howe Community Day and over the main festival weekend.

"Our students absolutely loved the session with the Working Boys Club, I think most of our students at one point or another came in and had a little try with the guys! One student in particular since that day has gone on to take part in music sessions at school and he's amazing on the drums!" - Iford Academy



“I love the energy that everybody developed all during the production until the last participation! I realised again how magical and real music, dance/art can be in uniting the community in amazing good vibes and energy. Definitely my students and I would love to be involve with you again.”

Break Down Walls

150+ participants took part in a flash-mob style moment in movement, in collaboration with Pavilion Dance South West. We held 4 workshops, invited participation online, and collaborated with 7 local community groups, cultural groups, and organisations for this sensational performance.

Arts Award

2,304 children participated in creative workshops in schools, activities at 19 BCP Libraries & at the festival, based around the theme of play. Bournemouth Library held a month-long exhibition of their work. Arts Award Discover was offered to children fully funded with 23 awards booklets completed.

Diversity & Accessibility

We aim to create an inclusive artistic programme, which champions our diverse communities, and to deliver a festival that is accessible to everyone whatever the challenges.

- We design a varied programme that is inclusive to different access needs.
- We listen to feedback and engage with local groups to continually improve our festival.
- Our participants come from a range of local organisations, ensuring our performances reflect and attract our local population.



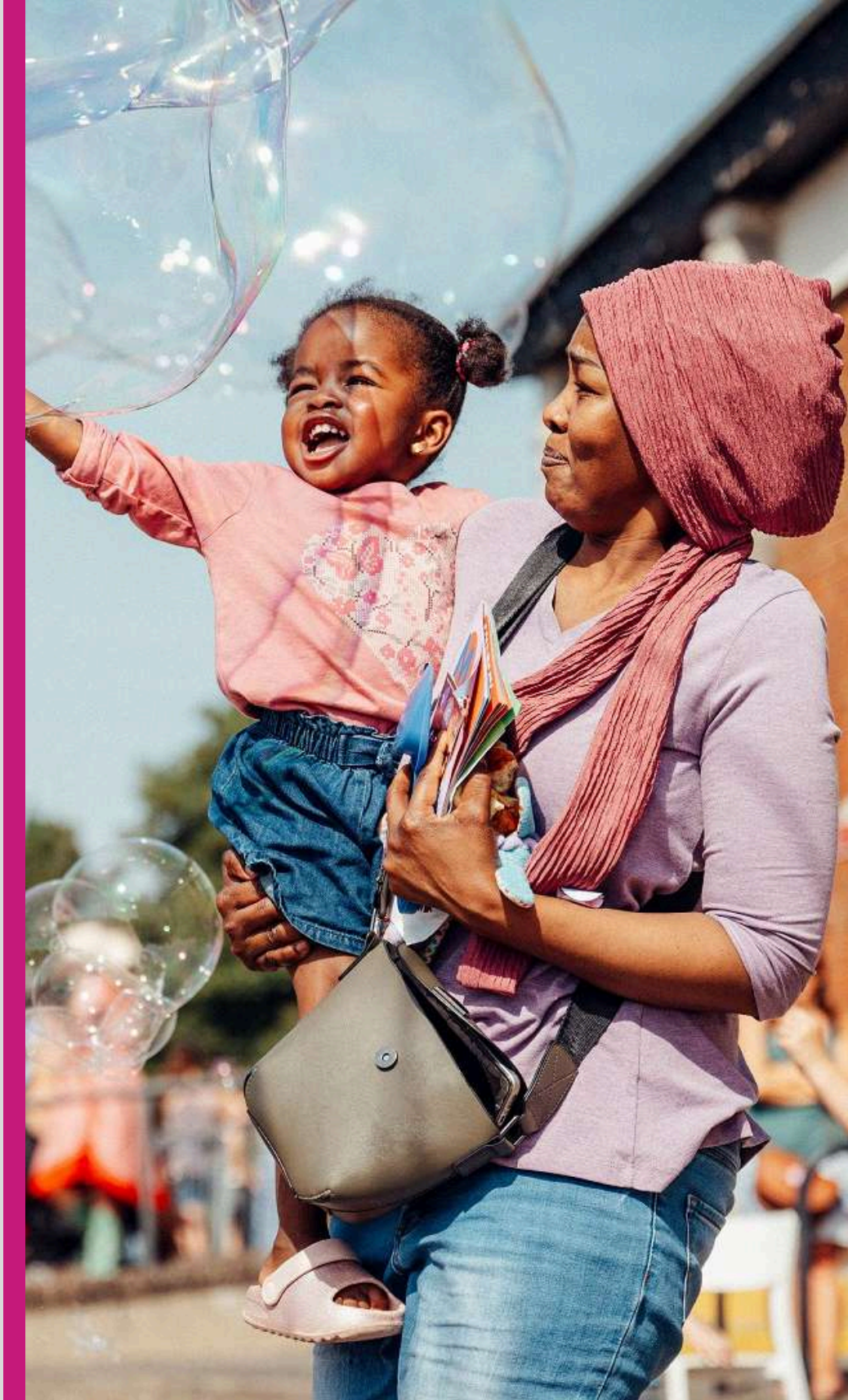
“We all had a great time! It was so lovely to be part of it all, thank you for thinking of us - we're looking forward to next year already.” - The Chatterboxes

Community Outreach in West Howe & Bourne

Our Community Days bring quality cultural activity and a touch of Arts by the Sea out into the community for people who are unlikely to attend the festival itself.

- We returned to West Howe for a fifth year and began a new venture in Bourne by delivering a Community Day for both communities!
- We organised 12 activities/performances for each event, ranging from comedy theatre to skate workshops.
- 8 of the 9 artists & creative practitioners at the events were local to BCP.

The events attracted over 320 attendees, of which over 70% were from West Howe/Bourne postcodes. 98% of survey responses said they enjoyed the day and 100% said would attend next year if able.



“It was affordable, lots for kids to do, and community based - I could meet people and not stay at home.”



“Great to be involved in something so positive for the BCP area and you get experience the festival yourself too with a great team.”

Community Impact

Volunteering

We offered 4 different volunteer opportunities which included practical training and professional guidance.

36 volunteers contributed **402.5 hours**. 100% of our volunteers said they they enjoyed the experience and would recommend volunteering with Arts by the Sea.

Speakers' Corner

New to the Festival this year was community-led Speakers' Corner, providing a space for local poets and spoken word artists to perform.

“The fact that this year you've opened the festival to a Speakers' Corner – spoken word/poetry stage managed by local artists and performers – is a huge evidence that you listen to the community, that you consider local artists and you want to make the festival always bigger, better and more inclusive.”

Our Audience



56% had visited Arts by the Sea before, 44% were new audience.

The ethnicity of our audience is more diverse than BCP's population as per the 2021 census by approximately 4%.

85% of our audience were from Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, 4% from the rest of Dorset, and 11% from the rest of the country or overseas.



86% of our audience visited the festival with other people, around 67% attending with children under 16.



7% of our audience have a disability. 12% of our audience identify as neurodivergent.



Audience Feedback

93%
rated the quality
of events as very
good or good

**63% of attendees
attend or participate in
arts and culture
experiences less than 6
times a year.**

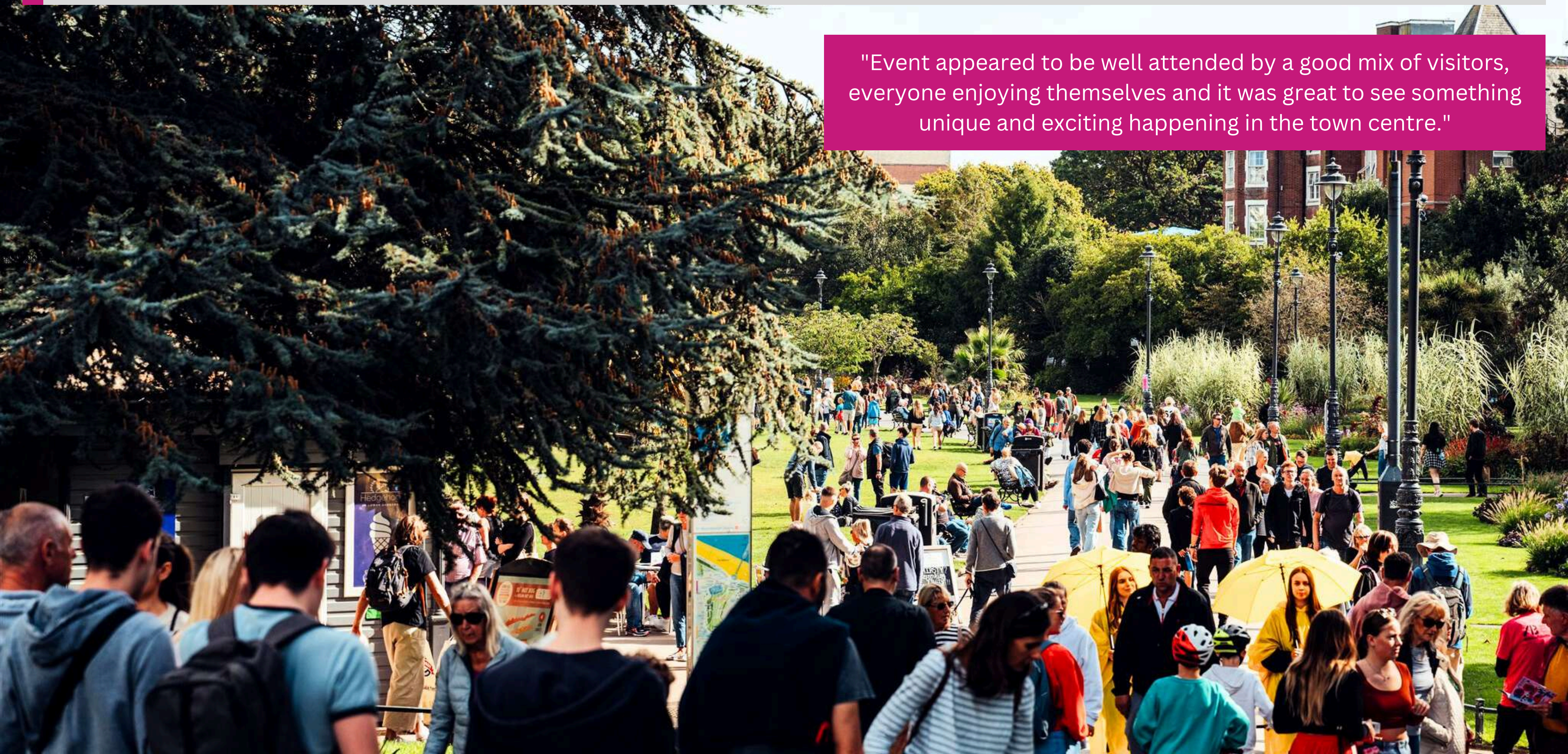
"After our journey down especially to see this fantastic production, I was overwhelmed by the very professional way that everything was organised. It was a fantastic experience with a lot of happy faces from an extremely busy weekend. Not only were the people happy and talking to strangers, you could feel the love. This was also spread by all the teams working to put on such a special weekend. Thank you, Arts by the Sea."

"Great variety of performances and installations. I particularly enjoyed Portal, Teabreak and Black Victorians. Some very moving pieces and some more fun and uplifting pieces - a great balance. Found there was always something to do without missing anything. Portal was incredible. So many people visiting it and having different experiences with it."



120,000+ footfall in the town centre over the festival weekend

"Event appeared to be well attended by a good mix of visitors, everyone enjoying themselves and it was great to see something unique and exciting happening in the town centre."



Environmental Impact

Each year we work with artists, traders and suppliers to reduce our environmental impact, and we promote our three key environmental projects: **Reuse, Reflect, Sustainable Travel.**

We hosted a festival Green Hub of environmental partners and activities to raise awareness about sustainability. This included the new participatory performance 'Rain Trail', part of a wider research project, which we co-funded.

The Festival's artistic programme contained performances that addressed themes of climate change or climate action, human rights & ethics, nature or ecology, and sustainability.



"The festival context has provided the opportunity to connect with the public and gather real-time feedback on their experiences of the project. These interactions have enabled me to progress my research through gaining valuable insights on the project that have helped me to better understand the impact of Rain Trail on a diverse audience."
- Alice Stevens, Rain Trail



"I think it's a wonderful and unique cultural experience for our community to share. The town centre was thronged with people of all ages visiting the festival. I feel very proud that Bournemouth supports this festival every year. It includes such an amazing range of dance, music and culture."

Economic Impact

Spending

- 51% of people spent or intended to spend in a restaurant, café, pub or bar.
- 18% went shopping.
- 13% did another creative or cultural activity.

Overnight visitors:

11% of the audience stayed overnight in Bournemouth.

Direct gross visitor spend of £2.6M

Marketing

15,429 Facebook page likes & 16K followers

7,463 Twitter followers

7,654 Instagram followers



This year's festival saw an increase of press coverage due to Portal and surrounding controversy.

Website Engagement

- 37,808 unique visitors on the website in Oct 2023.
- 150,828 page views on the website during festival weekend.
- 7 performances recorded for the Arts by the Sea On Demand.

Press

Estimated audience reach of 680M, with 285 pieces of coverage, resulting in an AVE (advertising value equivalent) of £2,620,000.

Partnerships

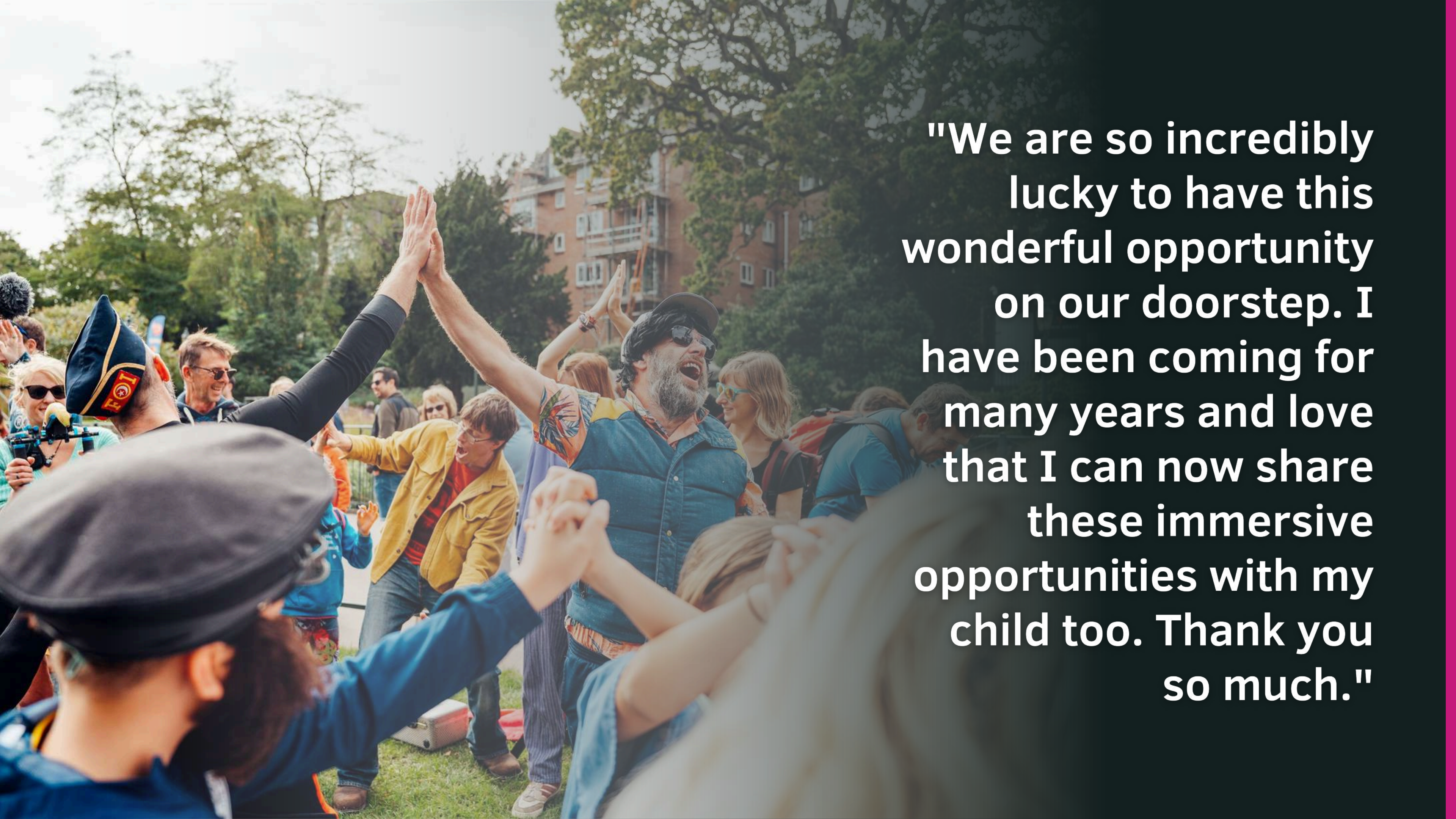
Arts by the Sea benefits from a huge range of creative and practical partnerships and is developing relationships with key diversity-led organisations.

Thanks to BCP Council, ACE, Without Walls, Rockwater, Digital Self, Toob Broadband, Stowe Family Law, Foyle Foundation, Hilton Bournemouth, Pavilion Dance South West, Activate Performing Arts, b-side Festival, Arts Award, Bournemouth & Poole College, West Howe Community Enterprises, Poole Communities Trust, BCP Libraries, 60 Million Postcards, Bobby & Co, Mela Partnership, The Russell-Cotes, Beryl, the Break Down Walls community leaders & participants, participating schools, Green Hub partners, our Artists, our Volunteers, our Steering Group and Board, the Festival Team (and more!).

Interested in becoming a festival partner? [Find out more.](#)

100% of artists said their overall experience was good or very good





"We are so incredibly lucky to have this wonderful opportunity on our doorstep. I have been coming for many years and love that I can now share these immersive opportunities with my child too. Thank you so much."



SEE YOU IN 2024