

# Impact Report

## 2023 – 2024



# Bringing lived experience to life

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Made By Mortals was born in 2017 with this founding question: What is possible from a piece of art that has community participation at its heart? Since then, all of Made By Mortals' work has been co-produced through community participation. Over the last year, we have collaborated with professional artists, health and social care practitioners, commissioners, researchers, voluntary sector organisations, and diverse groups of people with a broad range of lived experience knowledge. Together we have created a wide range of audio stories, podcasts, films, theatre, music and interactive workshops.

This report details the work we have created together, the themes we have explored, the workshops we have delivered, the audiences we have reached, and most importantly, the impact this has had. The report also provides us with some more answers to our founding question, because as it turns out, quite a lot is possible from a piece of art that has community participation at its heart – with plenty more to come!



## Why community participation?

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Made By Mortals believes creative community participation is key to helping people realise a good life and overcome potential barriers that stand in their way. Participation that is meaningful, fun, provides optimism, hope and connection, and broadens people's understanding of each other and the human condition. Participation that leads to a fairer more equitable share of power and control. Participation that provides pathways for individuals to learn new skills, improve their health and wellbeing, develop and embed new relationships, and improve the world and communities in which they live. Participation that values the contribution of all players and plays to people's strengths and expertise, while ensuring everyone benefits from the process. This report is a window into this belief in action over the past year.

We hope you enjoy it!  
The Made By Mortals team

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# THE BIG PICTURE



**136**

WORKSHOPS & EVENTS



**1**

LIVE SHOW



**1,592**

PEOPLE WORKED WITH



**28**

PODCASTS & AUDIO STORIES  
CREATED



**3,265**

ENGAGEMENTS



**10**

VIDEOS CREATED



**546**

COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS



**15**

FREELANCE PARTNERSHIPS



**19**

MUSIC/SONGS CREATED



**22**

TALKS & PRESENTATIONS



**774**

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE  
PRACTITIONERS WORKED WITH

**1,373**

IN-PERSON  
AUDIENCE

**610,447**

DIGITAL  
AUDIENCE

# BRINGING LIVED EXPERIENCE TO LIFE WITH OUR COMMUNITY

We collaborate with a wonderful mix of community participants to create our work. We also run two weekly community groups, which are the heartbeat of our organisation.

## THE JOHNNY BARLOW THEATRE COMPANY

Community adults group

**20** members with a total of **359** attends.

## HEARTS AND MINDS

Over 60s group

**24** members with a total of **534** attends.

Our Made By Mortals community is also strengthened by including other groups of participants with shared lived experience, brought together by our partner organisations or recruited by us on a project-by-project basis.

This year, this included groups of people from the following underrepresented demographics: women with experience of domestic and honour-based abuse, community groups from South Asian backgrounds, community groups in Tameside, asylum seekers, people with lived experience of cancer, parents with lived experience of addiction and recovery, the autistic community, 'community champions' who support their communities to be involved in research, young people in colleges across Greater Manchester, and people with lived experience of eczema.



"I like coming here because there's an empowering atmosphere and I like aspiring to make new things together." - **Habib, The Johnny Barlow Theatre Company**

"I'm learning and I'm loving it! We're part of something bigger. What we do here spreads into other people's lives." - **Linda, Hearts and Minds**

# BRINGING LIVED EXPERIENCE TO LIFE FOR RESEARCHERS

At Made By Mortals, we understand the challenges researchers face. Delivering robust yet engaging studies with high impact is difficult. So, Made By Mortals help researchers to make their research and public involvement more inclusive, accessible and beneficial for the communities they are trying to reach, through an arts-based approach.

This can be by supporting the data collection process, but also through the dissemination and mobilisation of the research findings. This ensures people with lived experience are at the forefront of research development on important issues, influencing messaging and leading on learning for research teams, ultimately helping their work cut through to health and care practice, strategy and policy, and the public.

## Research partners over the last year:

Lancaster University

Applied Research Collaboration – North West Coast

Applied Research Collaboration – Greater Manchester

Early Break

Infinity Initiatives CIC

GM Cancer

Lancashire and South Cumbria NHS Foundation Trust

Building Bridges Burnley

Bollyfit CIC

Diversity Matters North West

Jigsaw Homes: The Bridges Partnership

Creative Manchester

The University of Manchester

Manchester Metropolitan University

Ideas Fund

British Science Association

Wellcome Trust

Awakening Minds

University of Nottingham

National Institute of Health and Social Care Research (NIHR)

Blueprint Studios

Women's CHAI Project – Care, Help & Inspire





## PAIR: Participatory Arts in Health & Social Care Research.

Supporting all stakeholders to participate in research from a place of equity, creativity, and strength.

Central to our work with researchers this year was our PAIR project.

PAIR uses innovative arts approaches within public and patient involvement in research. This year we have expanded our creative methodology and research offer by successfully completing a 12-month National Institute of Health Research (NIHR) funded partnership project.

Together with our key research partners and led by Dr Paul Clarkson, this led to the recent submission of an application to NIHR for a 5-year programme to test our approach and embed it for the long term. If you'd like to find out more, we've created a short video explaining PAIR and the work we've undertaken so far. Check out the video in the link below.



**WATCH ON YOUTUBE**

**NIHR** | National Institute for Health and Care Research

Building  
Bridges  
in  
Burnley

**MADE BY  
MORTALS**

Lancaster  
University 

**NHS**  
Pennine Care  
NHS Foundation Trust

**SOS** | Social  
Care  
Society  
MANCHESTER

# BRINGING LIVED EXPERIENCE TO LIFE THROUGH TRAINING & EVENTS



We know health and social care leaders sometimes struggle to capture their audience during training sessions and events. Endless slides and a lack of creativity can lead to the dreaded 'death by PowerPoint' and disengaged colleagues.

That's why we offer a fresh and interactive alternative for health and social care training, embracing immersive audio stories, films, music and theatre pieces, to deliver engaging and inspiring interactive workshops.



23

WORKSHOPS DELIVERED FOR TRAINING EVENTS

## Our training and event partners:

Oldham Safeguarding Adults Board  
Nottingham and Derbyshire Active  
Greater Manchester Live Well Movement  
Fete of Britain at Aviva Studios – Factory International  
Universally Manchester Festival – UoM's 200th anniversary  
Future Skills College  
Tameside College  
Xaverian College  
The University of Manchester  
ARC Northwest Coast  
The Pankhurst Trust  
Women's Aid  
MacIntyre  
GMCA Foundational Economy Fund



# PRESENTATIONS & TALKS

At Made By Mortals, we believe in the importance of being open about our approach and resources. We share the knowledge and learning from the projects we're involved in and what we have created, so the wider sectors we work in can benefit.



**590**

IN-PERSON  
AUDIENCE REACHED



**22**

EVENTS  
SPOKEN AT



**77**

DIGITAL  
PARTICIPANTS



# AUDIO STORIES, FILMS, MUSIC & THEATRE

This year we have created a wide range of audio stories, film, music and community theatre to support health and care research and training which we have showcased over the following pages.

## For Data's Sake

For Data's Sake was an interactive event at the University of Manchester, exploring the potential of the VISable index, a new tool in development to support social care. Attendees at the event included social care workers, students and healthcare professionals.

We used immersive storytelling, live monologues and a flashmob dance from our over 60s group, Hearts and Minds, to highlight the real-life challenges faced by older people. A discussion followed, where participants shared insights on VISable's potential.

### CO-CREATED WITH:



6 ARTISTS



10 HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PRACTITIONERS



10 COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS

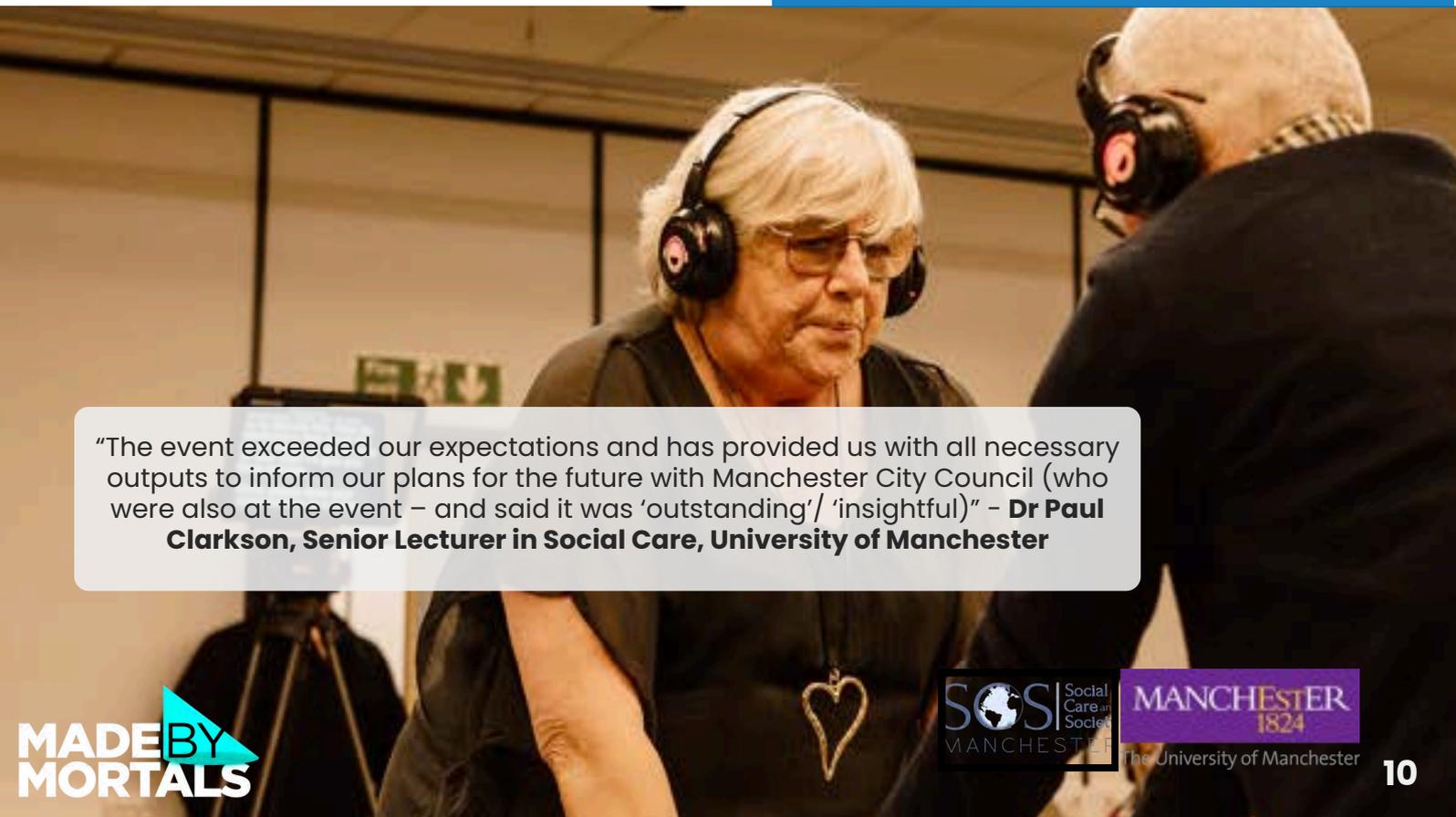
### EVENTS & REACH:



4 IN-PERSON EVENTS



144 IN-PERSON AUDIENCE



"The event exceeded our expectations and has provided us with all necessary outputs to inform our plans for the future with Manchester City Council (who were also at the event – and said it was 'outstanding' / 'insightful')" – **Dr Paul Clarkson, Senior Lecturer in Social Care, University of Manchester**

# STUCK

This year we developed STUCK, a new workshop commissioned by the Live Well Movement in Greater Manchester.

STUCK was born from in-depth conversations with local clinicians, social prescribers and community groups across Tameside, addressing the widespread feeling of being 'stuck' within communities and services - a challenge amplified by Tameside's high loneliness rates. Designed as an immersive, theatrical audio experience, STUCK guides participants in creating a character and exploring how community-driven solutions can help them become 'unstuck'.

## What's next?

A promotional trailer and PDF resource demonstrating how the STUCK workshop can support organisations in delivering the NHS's strategy of moving from sickness to prevention, and from hospital to community care.

## CO-CREATED WITH:



5

ARTISTS



12

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PRACTITIONERS



8

COMMUNITY GROUP LEADERS



20

COMMUNITY PARTICIPANTS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE

## WORKSHOPS & REACH:



7

WORKSHOPS



385

IN-PERSON AUDIENCE

"Such a unique and inspiring way of turning a group of strangers into engaged collaborators." - **STUCK workshop participant**



# Jasper Pickles Climbs Everest

Jasper Pickles Climbs Everest was created to help listeners understand the world as experienced by an autistic person, or someone with learning disabilities, in a medical setting. Through sound, the story aims to recreate Jasper's perspective so listeners can gain insight into the unique challenges he faces. Developed with a lovely group from MacIntyre, a leading national charity in shaping inclusive and welcoming neighbourhoods, the project combines their authentic perspectives and imaginations to highlight the barriers in clinical environments and the ways these experiences could be made easier.

During the project we worked with **10** community participants with lived experience, **6** artists, and **13** other stakeholders.

## What Next?

Working with the Patient Safety Translation Centre at The University of Manchester, we will develop an interactive resource exploring the barriers Jasper faces within a primary care setting and potential solutions..

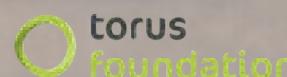


"After listening to the audio story I was struck by how much it resonated, which made sense because it's co-produced and voiced by autistic people and those with a learning disability. It highlights why co-production is important and impactful." – **Sarah O'Brien, on X, after listening to Jasper Pickles Climbs Everest**

# Little Lungs

Little Lungs is an immersive audio story that highlights the impact of indoor air quality on a child with a respiratory condition, told uniquely from the perspective of the child's lungs.

Developed in collaboration with families, housing tenants, researchers and charities, the story covers a year in the life of Max's family, addressing pollutants like household products, damp and mould. By sharing real lived experiences, Little Lungs aims to empower families to understand indoor air quality and encourages housing associations to support healthier home environments.



## CO-CREATED WITH:



7

STAKEHOLDERS



9

ARTISTS



12

PARTICIPANTS WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE



181

DIGITAL REACH

## REACH:



# Eggshells

Eggshells is a short film about domestic abuse in older adults, co-produced by a team of professional artists, partners in health and social care and a group of women who have courageously shared their lived experience for the benefit of other people. This year we released some additional audio to support the original film. The additional audio features the team behind Eggshells discussing the project's impact - both personally and on viewers. They discuss why they chose to participate in the project, how it's influenced their lives, the key messages and learnings they hope professionals take away, and why involving people with lived experience is so essential in projects like this.

"It were brilliant, just walking out that door. I'd done it. A big weight had been lifted, and I thought, I hope it helps somebody. It helped me - massively, really." - **Community participant, Additional Audio Insights**

"I relate to this too much sadly. Clever film, thanks for raising awareness." - **Comment on YouTube about Eggshells**



891,000

VIEWS OF EGGSHELLS ON YOUTUBE



136

ADDITIONAL AUDIO YOUTUBE LISTENS



# A Mile In Their Shoes

A workshop exploring the work of community champions in research.

Public and Patient Involvement (PPI) is vital for impactful research, ensuring that diverse voices and lived experiences shape the design and outcomes. Finding the right participants, however, can be challenging. That's where community champions step in - trusted individuals who bridge the gap between researchers and the communities they aim to connect with.

Co-created with **7** community champions, **6** artists and **5** researchers, A Mile in Their Shoes is an immersive workshop for researchers, designed to deepen their understanding of this essential role and enhance PPI in research. We have taken this workshop on tour to different universities and researchers across Greater Manchester.



5

WORKSHOPS



111

REQUESTS FOR PDF RESOURCE

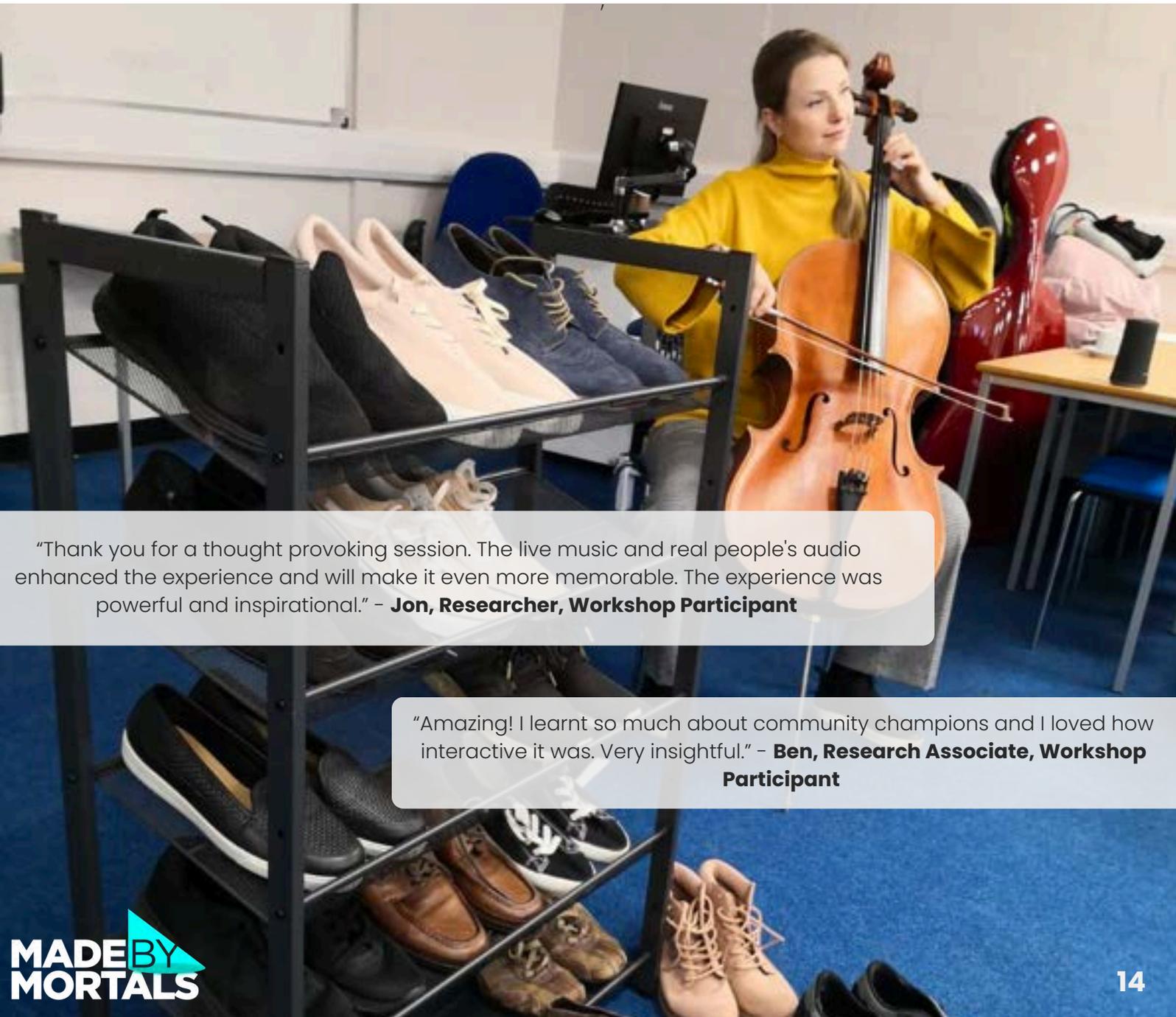


47

IN-PERSON AUDIENCE

NIHR Applied Research Collaboration Greater Manchester

NIHR Greater Manchester Patient Safety Research Collaboration



"Thank you for a thought provoking session. The live music and real people's audio enhanced the experience and will make it even more memorable. The experience was powerful and inspirational." - **Jon, Researcher, Workshop Participant**

"Amazing! I learnt so much about community champions and I loved how interactive it was. Very insightful." - **Ben, Research Associate, Workshop Participant**

# Adam's Story: An interactive film

Adam's Story is an Interactive film based on our successful live show in 2023. The interactive film captures the magic of the live show version and contains audio extracts made by young people with lived experience of mental health illness, together with filmed facilitation and multi-role play character monologues.

This year, we've utilised the film to facilitate workshops in schools and colleges across Greater Manchester. Through storytelling and discussions, students and teachers reflected on ways to support mental health in families and the importance of culturally diverse voices.



768

YOUTUBE VIEWS



5

WORKSHOPS



185

COLLEGE STUDENTS



26

TEACHERS

NIHR | Applied Research Collaboration  
Greater Manchester

"Great experience, loved the interactive content and how it sparked multiple discussions - fantastic job!" - **Laura, teacher at the workshop in The Cave at MMU**

"This session really magnified how mental health can affect everyone around the person with mental health not just them, and how little support families get in the long term." -

**Teacher at the workshop in The Cave at MMU**

"Insightful and thoughtful approach to attitudes surrounding mental health and relationships with an active introspection of how to encourage a support network." - **Student at**

**Tameside College**

# Sadiqa: An empowering story of hope



**264** AUDIO STORY  
YOUTUBE VIEWS



**43** ADDITIONAL AUDIO  
YOUTUBE LISTENS



**22** 'HOW WE MADE THE  
MUSIC' VIEWS



**3** WORKSHOPS



**70** WORKSHOP  
PARTICIPANTS



**94** SIGN-UP TO TRAINING  
PACKAGE

Sadiqa is an immersive audio story that asks you to walk in the shoes of a character who has lived with domestic and honour-based abuse.

Sadiqa has left her marriage and attends a women's group, where she seeks to find her voice and learn how to become independent. We also created a training package to be delivered alongside the audio story which explores what the community can do to support women living with domestic and honour-based abuse. As part of the package we created a video about how we co-produced the music.

We worked with **6** women with lived experience, **8** health and social care practitioners/researchers, and **18** community participants.



OLDHAM SAFEGUARDING  
ADULTS BOARD



"This has been one of the most incredible training events I've ever attended. So immersive. I was there. I was Sadiqa. This has genuinely refreshed and rejuvenated my perspective, and ideas around my approach with the women I support. Thank you! How can I get involved?!" – **Sol, Renew Intervention coordinator, Women's Aid**

"I loved being part of Sadiqa's Story and I have learnt a lot about domestic abuse. I feel I will be able to help my community more confidently." – **Sana, community participant**

# Why Can't You Be Normal:

## A story of addiction and recovery

Why Can't You Be Normal is our audio story co-produced with parents in recovery. This emotional journey follows Hayley as she rebuilds her life and reunites with her children, highlighting the family-wide impact of addiction and recovery.

Our accompanying training package encourages and equips researchers with the skills and knowledge needed to integrate lived experience into their practice and truly reflect the realities of families like Hayley's.



### CO-CREATED WITH:



8

PEOPLE WITH LIVED EXPERIENCE



8

ARTISTS



4

HEALTH & SOCIAL CARE PRACTITIONERS



8

IN-PERSON ENGAGEMENTS



"It's made us feel like we've got a voice and that people are interested in what we're going through, that people will have a greater understanding of our situation, and loss of that stigma, the shame, and the guilt that we all feel, to normalise asking for help." - **Participant from Early Break (From additional audio)**

# Coming up...

## My Friend's Got Cancer



My Friend's Got Cancer is an audio story and resource exploring the impact of personalised care for people living with cancer.

In 2025, we will be co-producing more audio stories, films, theatre, music, and interactive workshops about other themes, including:

- Early responders: Young people in a mental health crisis.
- My voice matters in research: A resource improving researchers' ability to engage with young people with poor mental health from underrepresented communities.
- The benefits of citizen science: using an innovative eczema trial as an exemplar.
- Learning disability: Barriers and solutions to primary care.
- Learning disability: Barriers and solutions to consenting to research.
- The impact of temporary housing.
- SAFE: Social care for older adults.
- Social care in prisons.

# ARMCHAIR ADVENTURES

157,699



PODCAST  
LISTENS

Armchair Adventures is a children's podcast series made and performed in co-production with our community groups, our schools programme and our voluntary sector partners.

The podcast is a super-fun, join-in adventure series for kids aged 6-10, released twice a month. The series is set in a fictional travel agency and each adventure is a 'journey of the imagination' packed with learning and join-in fun.

Each episode is made using our co-creation techniques and explores the life experiences of one or more of our community group participants or voluntary sector partners. The programme promotes reciprocal relationships between children and our community, particularly our over 60s group. Through the programme, the generations make each other happier and healthier by sharing learning, improving each other's wellbeing, developing story telling skills, and encouraging play and creative expression.



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



23

PODCAST  
EPISODES



1000+

IN-PERSON  
FAMILY  
AUDIENCE



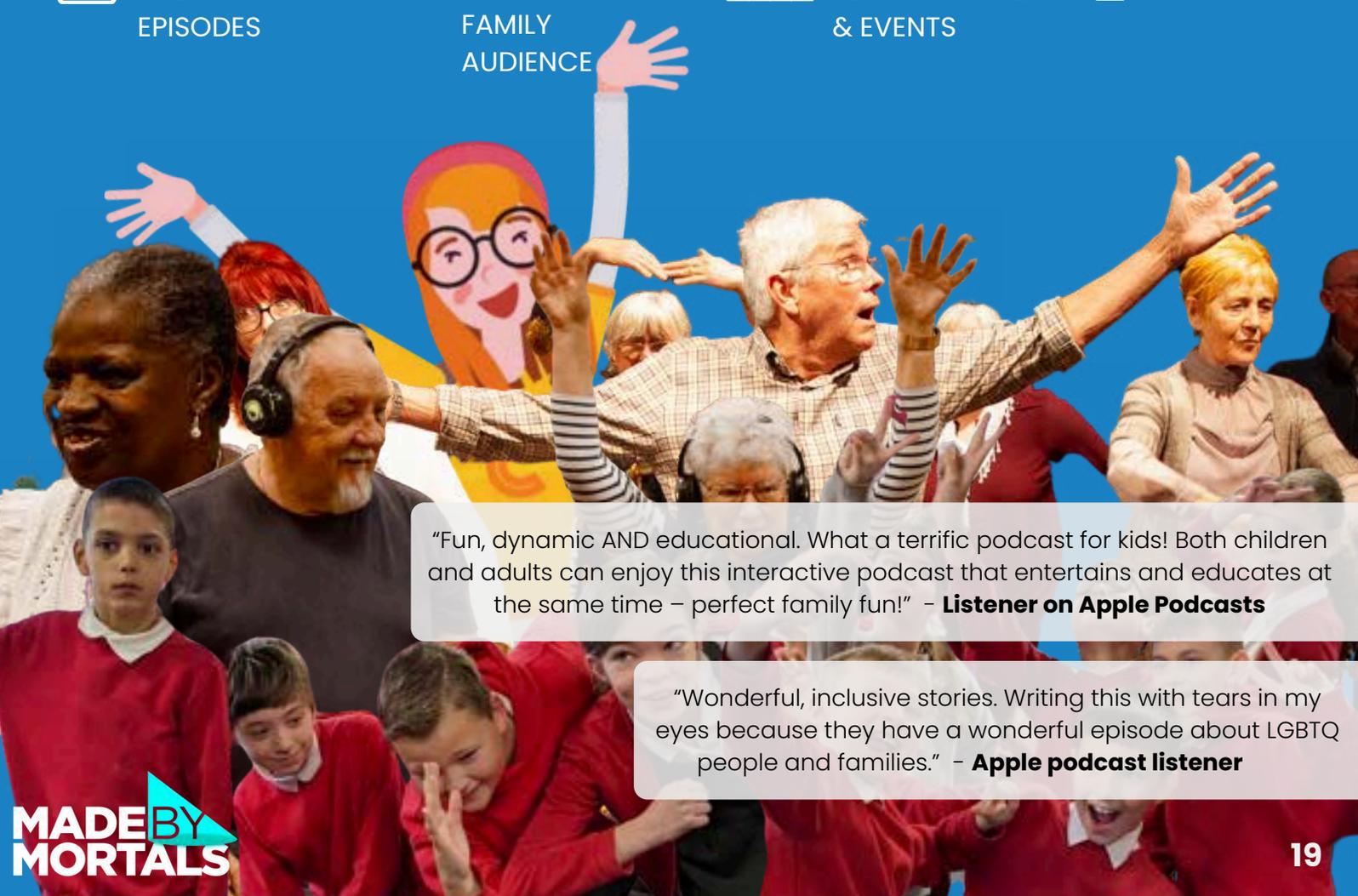
17

PERFORMANCES  
& EVENTS



86

WORKSHOPS



"Fun, dynamic AND educational. What a terrific podcast for kids! Both children and adults can enjoy this interactive podcast that entertains and educates at the same time – perfect family fun!" – **Listener on Apple Podcasts**

"Wonderful, inclusive stories. Writing this with tears in my eyes because they have a wonderful episode about LGBTQ people and families." – **Apple podcast listener**

# We've had support from ...

## Our community

62 people who are 60+, 260+ community adults with lived experience of mental ill health/and or learning disability, and 229 children, who all helped co-create each episode.



## Our special guests

- Amy Powney from sustainable fashion brand, Mother of Pearl
- Cllr Tafheen Sharif from Tameside Council
- Professor Rachel Isba from Lancaster University
- Stacey Copeland, professional footballer and boxer from Tameside
- Dipak Dristi (Light of Vision) group supporting the Elderly in Tameside

## Our professional partners

Energy Saving Trust  
Blueprint Studios  
Millbrook Primary School  
Arlies Primary School  
Oakfield Primary School  
MIC Media  
GOTO Creative

Tameside Council  
Lancaster University  
Historic England  
The Arts Council of England  
Tameside Armed Forces Service  
The National Lottery Community Fund and National Lottery Players

The ICS Research Engagement Network development programme  
Dipak Dristi  
Lancaster Medical School  
Lancashire and South Cumbria Integrated Care Board  
The Council for Disabled Children



"We loved the idea of where our clothes came from and what materials they were made of which linked in with our Science topic. We went out at playtime designing our own outfits in our notebooks and we thought carefully about which materials we might need following what we learnt from Uncle Chris about which materials were best." - **Emma Nolan's class, teacher at Arlies Primary School**

# Our primary schools programme

We partnered with three local schools to deliver Armchair Adventures this year. The schools supported hundreds of their pupils to co-create and perform in episodes alongside our community, and helped us develop our local audience by promoting the series to their parents and carers.

In return, we provided the school with fully funded creative workshops and performances on the themes and learning explored in the adventures. This programme of activity was also supported by a termly teachers steering group.



## Art Installation

This year we took our Armchair Adventures themed art installation (bringing adventures to life in the physical world through set design and interactive workshops) on tour to our partner schools.



We have also developed a spin-off format of Armchair Adventures called 'UNPACKED'. Each 'UNPACKED' episode delves deeper into one of the adventures through a series of games and questions recorded live by a small group of children and community group members, supported by our in-house team.



# RECOGNITION



We're immensely proud of what we do and the impact it has. We're delighted that our work has been recognised for a number of leading awards over recent years, which is testament to the hard work, dedication and passion of not only the Made by Mortals team, but also the many people in the community and the professional partners we are lucky to work with.

## 2024 AWARDS

**BRITISH PODCAST AWARDS**  
KIDS CATEGORY  
(SHORTLISTED)



**INDEPENDENT PODCAST AWARDS**  
BEST CHILDREN &  
YOUNG ADULTS  
PODCAST (FINALIST)



**PRIDE OF TAMESIDE AWARDS**  
CREATIVE BUSINESS  
OF THE YEAR  
(FINALIST)



**PROLIFIC NORTH CREATIVE AWARDS:**  
CREATIVE FOR  
GOOD (HIGHLY  
COMMENDED)



# FURTHER INFORMATION

Thank you for your interest in Made by Mortals. For more information on how we can support your project, please get in touch, we'd love to hear from you. The best way to reach us is by calling **0161 804 2078** or emailing **admin@madebymortals.org**. Alternatively, if you prefer, you can drop us a message via any of our channels below.



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BRINGING LIVED EXPERIENCE TO LIFE