The Branchline partnership has come together to create a business model to enable learning disabled people to participate and lead in the arts in South Devon and Torbay. By using their combined strengths and expertise to enable the artistic growth of learning for disabled young people, the goal is to provide a safe environment to test and explore creative ideas and develop progression routes to connect learning disabled young people with person-centred experience and opportunity.

The key purpose is to create a business model which develops relationships with social care and health providers, schools, trusts and foundations to increase confidence in investing in arts activities for learning disabled young people.

**Founding partners 2017**

**Lifeworks**: Lead partner/social care provider South Devon and Torbay

**Play Torbay**: Social care provider Torbay

**Soundart Radio**: Arts organisation South Devon

**Dartington Hall Trust**: Cultural venue/social enterprise hub

**Real Ideas Organisation**: Social enterprise mentor SW

**Dance in Devon**: Arts organisation, Devon

**DAISI**: Arts organisation, Devon

**SPLASH**: Social care provider, Devon

**Supporters, funders and investment**

The range of investment achieved 2017 – 2018 included:

- Business sponsorship: JCT, Dartrock Indoor climbing and Fusion Leisure
- Private sponsorships: local school fundraising event
- Commissions: South Devon and Torbay Clinical Commissioning Group, Sanctuary Housing, Sendiass Torbay
- Trusts and Foundations: National Lottery, Children’s Health Fund, Clare Milne, Children in Need, International Agatha Christie Fund as non-arts match funding
- Donations: including foodstuffs from Anode, Foodshare, Cantina, Windmill Centre; accommodation from Windmill Centre, Torre Abbey, Torquay Academy.
A new route into creative health and wellbeing for learning disabled children and young people across South Devon and Torbay.

The concept of wellbeing comprises two main elements: feeling good and functioning well. The New Economics Foundation identified five ways to identify a set of evidence-based actions to improve personal wellbeing. These are to: connect, be active, take notice, keep learning and give.

Feelings of happiness, contentment, enjoyment, curiosity and engagement are characteristic of someone who has a positive experience of their life. Equally important for wellbeing is the way we can function in the world. Experiencing positive relationships, having some control over one’s life and having a sense of purpose are all important attributes of wellbeing.

The key aim of the evaluation of the Branchline project was to find out how successful the activities and opportunities on offer were in helping young people to feel good and function well.
Development of the Branchline Business Model

The Branchline Partnership is developing well. Initially there were challenges to finding a shared understanding of the overall business model development, possibly because partners with more practical experience put greater emphasis on active delivery.

BRANCHLINE THEORY OF CHANGE

With the support of RIO the development has focused on:
• Articulating the Theory of Change that underpins Branchline products.
• Clearly describing the Branchline products, their features and benefits.
• Developing a consistent unit cost and looking carefully at pricing structures.
• Identifying potential Branchline customers.
• Building relationships with customers and identifying the problems the new ‘products’ could solve.

In the process of delivering pilots in South Devon and Torbay two levels of Branchline delivery have been acknowledged:

**Level 1**
This focuses on young people’s participation and creative experience which provides development and well-being outcomes which in turn help them to feel good and function well.

**Level 2**
Additionally, this includes participants developing leadership skills which impact on their personal growth within their communities and the world of work. This has created opportunities for specific project commissions including the Branchline Marketing Offer which generated advertising income for the Soundart radio station. This enabled participants to experience real and tangible values which in turn are known to lead to the development of hard outcomes such as employability. This ability to distinguish and understand the difference between participation and leadership represents a potential shift in conversations with commissioners and partners. Additionally, the Partnership has also begun to refine other key features which represent ‘added value’ and proposals which have the potential to be ‘scaled up’. All Branchline participants can be accredited with Arts Awards or the SEQ (Social Enterprise Qualifications) and already, because of the partnership approaches, there is the ability to share learners’ journeys so that participants can progress through the ‘Branchline Curriculum’ in a personalised way that leads to high quality outcomes for individuals. This year, 63 learning disabled young people successfully completed their Arts Award (exceeding the Partnership’s target by 26%).

As Jonathan Clitheroe, Head of Challenge Learning commented:
‘Branchline is no longer a bunch of interesting but disconnected projects for learning disabled young people but is growing into a robust, replicable and scalable provision’.

This was reinforced by the Ordinary Art Festival in February 2018 which was curated by 12 learning disabled young artists which attracted an audience of 466 young people and 5,900 viewers on line.

Another key achievement in the first year of collaborating included raising additional funding from non-arts sources exceeding the target by 27%
Next steps for the Branchline Partnership

All members of the group have signed up to a Memorandum of Understanding and are working towards a formal structure for the Partnership so that Branchline (rather than individual members) can be commissioned. Partners have begun to consider Branchline promotion but haven’t yet created a comprehensive product or a collective case for sponsorship.

They are jointly developing relationships with customers and commissioners and recognise the value of becoming a preferred supplier for transformative arts and cultural interventions for learning disabled young people.

**INCOME GENERATION – Solving problems for Commissioners**

- Robust Governance and Partnership
- Shared Learner Data allowing programme
- Transformative
- Arts Mark
- Robust
- Scalable
- Consistent
- Project Commissioners
- Health
- Communities
- Trusts and Foundations
- Private Sector
- Business
- Direct payments
- Social care commissioning
- Local Authority contracts
- Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs)
- Consistent Unit Cost

Headway has been made during the initial pilot delivery in establishing a market for personal payment from participants through individual social care allowances. Further work is needed to build relationships with commissioners to scale up income from these services and develop a pricing structure in relation to unit cost delivery.

The Branchline Partnership is developing relationships with the Department of Work and Pensions and how participants could be supported both into volunteering roles and employment as a result of Branchline participation. This is a new area of commissioning which has not previously been explored.

In its second year as a key part of its developing Business Model the Branchline Partnership has agreed to work collaboratively to submit an application for the Dream Fund 2018. There are four main elements to be addressed:

1. **Collaboration**
   - Projects must demonstrate:
     - Developing an idea and finding others to help deliver it
     - Working with other organisations from the outset, identifying the problems and solutions together

2. **Need**
   - Projects should make a significant and lasting difference in the world so should solve a big problem or meet a significant need including:
     - The problem to be solved
     - The reason it should be solved

3. **Innovation**
   - Projects must explain:
     - The way in which is created will solve or answer the identified need

4. **Communication**
   - Projects must include:
     - A brief outline of the most important features of the project, what it is going to do and why it will work.
     - This will be an important development cementing the progress made during the first year. At the time of writing, plans are in place to meet to develop an application which is innovative, creative and original, presenting a project that is a genuine ‘dream’ addressing the issues and concerns identified by Branchline during its first year of operation.
The idea behind Branchline was to develop a business model that will grow its membership year on year. For the first year the eight organisations involved formed into a steering group.

Currently the steering group meets bi-monthly and every reasonable step is taken to ensure the decisions are mutually agreed. Each partner is committed to raising funds either for the whole partnership or for smaller teams. The steering group will aim to raise all its income through non arts sources, although initially there was a small percentage of arts funding already in place.

In the first year it was agreed that:
- Local arts organisations (through Branchline would deliver 120 workshop days in the holidays and at weekends
- 40 learning disabled young people would achieve their Arts Awards
- 4 new arts projects led by learning disabled young people would be commissioned by Branchline.

The anticipated growth in arts participation was:
- 225 learning disabled young people connect with the arts through Branchline
- 12 social care support workers are encouraged to become ‘arts enablers’
- 12 learning disabled young people are supported as young arts leaders
- Branchline partners demonstrate best practice in fundraising and pioneering social enterprise
- Branchline partners collaborate on commissioning models and create new income generation routes.

Using the ‘sum of our parts’ model Branchline set out to develop a best value and best practice commissionable model to make the arts more accessible to learning disabled young people and enable increased participation as arts leaders across South Devon and Torbay.

Branchline Headlines
- £82,135.55 funding raised from non-arts sources (exceeding target by 27%)
- 548 learning disabled young people enabled to participate (exceeding target by 4.3%)
- 63 learning disabled young people complete their Arts Award (exceeding target by 26%)
- Branchline provide 1643 arts participation opportunities across the year
- The Ordinary Art Festival curated by 12 learning disabled young artists attracts an audience of 466 people and reaches 5.9K viewers on-line
- Branchline network extends across SW with the delivery of the Ordinary Art seminar
- Branchline partners/ young leaders attract investment to support growth 2018 going forward.
Branchline Activities Evaluation

Several young people involved with Play Torbay had already been trained with Mentoring Plus, an organisation in the south west. This evaluation process used a number of similar skills and with Play Torbay’s support young people helped to devise an evaluation form and the way of collating the results. The evaluators often worked in pairs and quietly talked to the young people at different venues across Torbay and South Devon and gathered... feedback from the young people taking part. Their task was to seek evidence as to whether participants had been enabled to achieve positive outcomes such as feeling happy, feeling confident which would help to enhance their well-being. Overwhelmingly the feedback was positive and this is repeatedly illustrated in the comments and the quotes we received from the participants and their parents and carers.

During the summer, a short film was made which is available to view with permission. In some ways, the activities were a challenge for participants but with repetition and a good level of consistency provided by the artists and the enablers a huge amount was achieved. The feedback from parents and carers was extremely positive

‘The staff have been very supportive and the younger Play Rangers have mentored the children extremely well throughout. There isn’t a pressure on the young people to take part but all are encouraged and this has made the classes extremely enjoyable and not a chore. It’s hard to describe, however, there is a laid-back, very chilled out vibe which I feel has benefitted the young people. The staff have responded to the young people’s needs and behaviours promptly and thoughtfully, recognising when to step it up a gear and when to introduce quieter activities. It has been an opportunity for this young person to develop his social skills, confidence and team working skills; the programme suited him well and only wish we had attended for longer’.

Manager Deputy, Children’s Residential Service, Newton Abbot
Branchline Activities Evaluation

Over Summer 2017, participants indicated that they had an increased sense of well-being to **connect**...
99% said they felt safe to come to sessions
99% said they liked to join in
100% said they wanted to do it again

Participants said that they liked to be **active**...
78% said they liked to run, play and be active
100% said they **noticed**... something interesting about the sessions. Examples include:
- The dancing
- It's not all the same
- Torre Abbey
- Making new friends
- Learning new tricks
- Working with speakers and microphones

71% had suggestions for things to play and be active including:
- Swimming
- A dancing show
- Cooking
- Painting, drawing and art
99% said they would like to join new activities **keep learning**...next time including
- Drama and acting
- Circus skills
Young people indicated they were happy to **give**...
78% said they would like to volunteer

99% liked to join in
100% wanted to do it again
78% liked to run, play and be active
72% suggestions for things to play
100% something interesting about the sessions
99% would like to keep learning
78% would like to volunteer
Objective 1
Participants have increased creative skills and knowledge
78% tried something new
99% learnt new skills
64% learnt something about other people/other cultures

Branchline Activities Evaluation

Briony said ‘I learnt of new things here, I want to do more.’
Tyler said ‘I learned how to dance, I enjoyed it.’
Ori said ‘I liked painting but it was a challenge’
Tom said ‘I really enjoy dancing’
Raven said ‘I like doing the ribbons’

Objective 2
Participants feel more confident
78% felt more confident to join in
78% liked a challenge
100% said they had a good time
86% tried something they hadn’t done before

Gabby said ‘I’ve done dancing I haven’t done before’
Tyler said ‘I have people to support me’
Phoebe said ‘I definitely had fun today’
Rhys said ‘I love my friends. I made lots of them here.’
Tom said ‘The circus skills were really funny, everyone laughed’.
Gabby said ‘We built up our mind and what we know – dancing and playing makes me confident.’

78% tried something new
99% learnt new skills
64% would like to join new activities
78% felt more confident to join in
78% liked a challenge
100% had a good time
86% tried something they hadn’t done before
Branchline Activities Evaluation

Objective 3
Participants engage in artistic and recreational activity
99% engaged in artistic activity
86% engaged in recreational activity
Examples included ‘imaginative things’ – 100%
99% said they did something they were proud of – examples included
- Playing the games
- Spanish Flamenco dancing
- Painting
- Ribbon dancing

Objective 4
Community organisations work more collaboratively
Partners all recognised that there had been understanding of how each other worked. There were commonalities and differences in needs and processes
Joint planning helped to facilitate aspirations
Recognition that cross-pollination could usefully be explored further.

Objective 5
New social care providers realise non-arts investment
Greater desire to work collaboratively in the future, e.g. planning around the Dream Fund
Recognition of the need to raise income on a more sustainable basis to continue the delivery of high quality arts activity
The Ordinary Arts Festival was an opportunity for learning disabled young people to curate a festival, drawing together the work of artists with labels from across the south. It was open to everyone not just those with a disability.

Twelve young peoples aged 15 – 25 were commissioned by the Clare Milne Trust to launch a new festival offer at Dartington Hall to both showcase the work and enable the progression of learning disabled young artists from Devon, Somerset and Cornwall. The vision is that this might grow into an annual event.

The event concept was built on the work of ten young film makers from Devon and Torbay who created an arts film for Channel 4 exploring their experiences of becoming young adults with non-visible learning disabilities. During the course of making the film they considered at length what it is to be ‘ordinary’ and what it is to be ‘extraordinary’ and so the concept of ‘Ordinary Art’ was founded.

The young people who shaped, created, built, and executed the extraordinary Ordinary Art Festival had a broad array of creative talents. They had all carried with them through much of their early lives a label, perhaps of profound disability, or perhaps of a milder and less visibly apparent nature. For some, these labels have unlocked support and been an enabling force; for others the labels felt like stigma and yet another obstacle holding them back. All these young people face the cliff edge of adulthood when support systems for all but the most profoundly affected will simply disappear at the age of nineteen.

Over the two days of the Ordinary Art Festival the Young Curators collated the work of over 100 contributors including 20 fine artists, 40 musicians, 3 DJ’s, 10 dancers, 2 graphic artists and 5 young broadcasters. An additional highlight of the Festival was the ‘premier’ performance of ‘Supercrips’ the film which had been the original inspiration for the Festival.
A special feedback reflection session was held with the twelve young curators. They discussed the event considering the different elements including the venue, the programme and the possibilities for the future. There was an acknowledgement of the achievement and the overwhelming feedback that the audience was impressed with the diversity of the offer. There was a strong commitment to repeat the offer next year standing by the principle ‘ACCESS ALL AREAS’.

The young curators acknowledged that having the Ordinary Art seminar, running in the morning boosted the event and added an important dimension. The seminar aimed to challenge us all – individuals and organisations alike – to think again about how progression routes for young people can be enhanced, rethought and realigned. In an era of tightened and diminished resources for social support it was an opportunity to explore the way in which we can all help to support these young adults to take the big step into the world of work and independent self-actuated lives.

The panel of speakers was a broad group with representatives from a spectrum of British public life, including policy makers (Department for Work and Pensions, and Arts Council England); advocacy and action organisations (Attitude is Everything, the Real Ideas Organisation and the National Centre for Inclusive Excellence); important cultural hubs (Dartington and the Theatre Royal Plymouth) to the young artists themselves. Each reflected, not just on how they can help overcome the barriers to progression but were challenged to think about how they, albeit unwittingly, put up barriers too.

The seminar was facilitated by Ally John and Di Murray both of whom have worked for many years to improve understanding about the importance of inclusion. In total 81 people came to the seminar including professionals from social care, education, health and the arts sectors, artists (young and older), parents, carers and young people.
Other seminar feedback included:
‘I had a wonderful time and learnt so much. It was great to speak to young film makers too’
Ellie Trugeon, Calling the Shots
‘I thought it was an excellent, inspiring day and I thoroughly enjoyed meeting everyone’.
Simon Jutton, Arts Council
‘One of the best seminars I’ve been to – inspirational!’
Sam Bolton, Sendiass, Torbay
‘It wasn’t ordinary it was extraordinary!’
Volunteer Steward

This was the first joint initiative involving all the partners. The aim was to showcase the partnership as a platform to engage with commissioners and reach new audiences. It very successfully:
- Celebrated the work of learning disabled artists working in the south west
- Connected social care providers, education and health professionals with artists
- Demonstrated potential progression routes to young disabled artists and festival attendees

It brought together an extraordinary range of arts organisations, artists, and support services to enable this event: Bidwell Brook School; Create Studios; the Theatre Royal, Plymouth, the National Deaf Children Society, Forkbeard Fantasy, the South-West Open Youth Orchestra, Coordinart, Torbay, Yourway Studios, Plymouth, the Turning Tides Project, Farflung Dance Theatre, Artearth, Simply Yoga, Sophie Carr; Calling the Shots, Tyneside Cinema, the Barn Cinema, Biggerhouse films, Gnash Comics and Graphic artists; Jock, Lee O’Connor, Dom Reardon, Lee Garbett, the Soundwaves Project, Firstborn Creatives and Parkour Experience

Acknowledgement to the Clare Milne Trust, Arts Council England, The Real Ideas Organisation Calling the Shots, SENDIASS Torbay, Trinity School and Dartington Hall for supporting the young curators and making this event possible.

The clear success of the Ordinary Art Festival and Seminar means that for the Partnership there is the possibility to come a tangible Branchline product in the future and this is currently under consideration. However, one of the concerns was the tangible vulnerability of significant percentage of the learning-disabled curators and the need for professional / supportive responses particularly around mental health issues. As a result, thought is now being given to the additional CPD training for staff and the introduction of ‘mindfulness’ as a component of future programmes.
The difference Branchline made

There is clear evidence from the Branchline partners and the young people taking part that the partnership has been very successful in its first year. Feedback from learning disabled young people is overwhelmingly positive and participants were able to engage in artistic and recreational activity they expressed that they felt confident and were able to increase their creative skills and knowledge.

Parents too were very supportive of the initiative with lots of very positive feedback: ‘I do not know what I would do without these sessions throughout the Summer for my two girls. They spend the time bickering at home and say they are bored every 5 minutes. I do not have the financial ability to take them places every day, especially with my partner off work. This was so economical, they get fed well, they were happy and the dance made them feel really fit. They have asked me to get them dance classes and they don’t mind doing it together - I cannot thank you enough’. Samantha Drake

‘I cannot believe I did not get a call from you to ask me to come pick up my boys; this is a regular occurrence at their schools. They had a marvellous time and I am so grateful for your patience and individual care for them. Dancing was as far as you could imagine from their choice of activity but they both had a great time and I had so very welcome time for myself; which never happens. I am really sad it is over for the Summer!’
Tanya Bent

Each of the arts organisations have produced report cards which outline their views on progress and achievements. There have been times, during the last year, when members of the Branchline steering group have found the process difficult and confusing. Engagement between arts organisations and social care providers requires careful approaches and although good progress has been made there is still a way to go. Arts organisations have appreciated the creative input of young people and local enablers which in turn has opened up new perspectives on how artistic development can happen in social care settings.

The development of Branchline in Year 2 will be critical. The expectations of the project are increased and will demand much greater commitment from partners. Reaching targets in the first year was not a problem but may prove more challenging this year.

Other considerations identified by colleagues include:

- Developing more sustainable approaches
- Developing the Branchline Partnership which still feels in its infancy
- Finding ways to work with parents and carers to support young people who are facing the ‘19 year old cliff edge’ as they move from children to adult services
- Supporting learning disabled young people with additional mental health issues
- Finding financial support for a second Ordinary Art Festival with a much greater emphasis on the Branchline approach and offer.

The overwhelming feedback confirmed a high level of satisfaction for both the sessional workshop delivery and the curating and mounting of the Ordinary Art Festival. This is significantly encouraging and plans are already underway for the second year.
Our part in the Branchline project

Lifeworks has served as lead organisation for the Branchline for the first year of the partnerships life. As social care provider’s expert in provision for learning disabled young people we have courted investment; supported the co-production of the Branchline partnership model, built Branchline product into our delivery programme, connected our service users to arts participation and leadership opportunities generated by the Branchline and most significantly combined our knowledge with the brilliant vision of our arts partners to create an authentic model capable of supporting learning disabled young people create their own route into the arts.

What we have been doing this year

- Lifeworks has connected over 200 individual learning disabled young people to the Branchline.
- In partnership provided over 1000 arts participation opportunities for learning disabled young people.
- Supported 38 learning disabled young people achieve their arts award (exceeding target by 52%).
- Collaborated with Soundart Radio on the development of a new marketing offer.
- Supported 12 young people lead the development of a brand new festival offer at Dartington;
- Connected over 5000 potential patrons with the Branchline product through innovative festival marketing.
- Brought together 81 professionals from across the SW to consider creative industry progression for learning disabled young people.
- Achieved NHS commission for young arts leaders.
- Achieved 3 years’ investment to support ‘Extraordinary Young People’ to lead 2018-2021.
The way in which participants have:

**increased creative skills and knowledge**

Arts Award Participation:
- Explore: 20
- Bronze: 11
- Silver: 7

The Branchline afforded young people the opportunity to progress as they learnt new skills and apply them practically as they began to lead:

“...organised and run by young people who have shown their dedication to achieve.”
Ordinary Art Festival audience member

felt more confident

“We are normal people but we all have one thing different about us.”

“Society sees us as misfits but as a group we all have special gifts”

Branchline enabled the young curators of the Ordinary Art Festival to be heard on local; regional and national platforms reaching 5.8K viewers with an appearance on Channel 4’s AM I NORMAL:

engaged in artistic and recreational activity

In the summer of 2017 Lifeworks worked with Branchline plus cultural partners: The Theatre Royal, Plymouth, Torre Abbey, Newton Abbot Town and GWR Museum and a range of community organisations to create an inclusive 4-week activity Holiday Programme (HP) designed to increase participation through combining arts and sports activities; cultural and arts experiences

Health and Well-being targets achieved:
- 54 HP participants engaged in physical activity at least twice a week
- 54 HP participants connected with nature at least once a week
- Using the SWEMWBS (wellbeing scale) 95% of HP participants felt optimistic, useful, relaxed, able to deal with their own problems, make up their own minds and close to other people
- 60.5% of participants felt a marked improvement in their wellbeing through participation.

“She has loved the variety and trying new things.”
Parent of Holiday Project participant

In the Spring of 2018 learning disabled young people mounted a 2-day art festival at Dartington Hall:

“We’ve worked together to bring up the plan and make it enjoyable.”

“We built it up from scratch, there was nothing like it before.” Young Curators

The Young Curators of the Ordinary Art Festival enabled a total of 466 people to participate; collated the work of over 100 ‘artists with labels’ to present at festival and inspired overwhelmingly positive feedback:

“For once my sister wasn’t the outsider, the festival was a comfortable space.”

“The programme was inspiring – both the range of activities and the programme itself. Make sure there is another one – GREAT WORK”
How community organisations work more collaboratively

Investment from the Challenge Fund enabled Lifeworks Community Projects to work in partnership with Soundart Radio Community Radio station to co-create new income generation strands in partnership e.g. The Branchline marketing offer which generated advertising income for the station and free activities with local leisure providers for learning disabled young broadcasters who in return created high quality promotional features for the investors.

Investment from the Challenge Fund inspired investment from our local physical activity and sports partnership - Active Devon who invested in our Summer Holiday Project 2017.

With this investment we brought Torquay United Community Coaches together with a Dance in Devon Capoeira dancer to deliver Physical Activity Workshops. This innovation achieved 100% participation. The young curators of the Ordinary Art Festival inspired the participation of 22 local, regional and national arts; social care; and voluntary sector organisations; from the local comic shop to the world’s first disabled-led national youth orchestra; from a local scrap store run by learning disabled adults to the National Deaf Children Society.

Branchline partner, Dance in Devon brought Farflung Dance Theatre to the Festival to work with the young curators to create a flashmob for a steam punk masked ball.

“There were challenges and being able to be adaptable and fluid was key. I am immensely proud of what we all achieved.”
Farflung Director

Farflung worked in collaboration with the young curators enabling their leadership; the Turning Tides Big Band to interpret their song with the young curators and the Festival production team to ensure audience safety.

“Flashmob was really exciting.”
Audience member

How new social care providers realise non-arts investment

Investment from the Challenge Fund enabled Lifeworks to secure non-arts Trust funding from sources keen to support disabled people e.g. The Clare Milne Trust who matched Challenge Fund Investment in the Ordinary Art Festival. The young curators went onto secure a further 5k of non-arts match to enable delivery.

Lifeworks Young Volunteers also secured a 5K commission from the NHS in the Summer of 2017 to make their re-shaping of children’s services across Plymouth, Torbay and Devon consultation more user-friendly for learning disabled young people and their families.

Lifeworks has an established market base of fee paying customers. The development of a tangible Branchline product (bespoke high quality arts participation) improved our marketable offer and attracted 15.5K of income to the Holiday Project across the year (35 days), an increase of 55% on 2016.

The Ordinary Art Festival generated £1334 in sales - small yes - but the interest the festival attracted is significant in terms of investment:

Lifeworks has just been awarded 3 years funding by Children in Need and the Sobell Trust for Extraordinary Young People. This project will enable learning disabled young people to lead project work of vocational interest to them including arts delivery.
Our part in Branchline
Dartington is the cultural venue partner for the Branchline project, providing space and facilities for activity, and infrastructure support for production and events, marketing and communications. We are also home to Lifeworks, Dance in Devon and SoundArt Radio, all delivery partners for this project.
Dartington has offered the Branchline projects space to run sessions, host meetings and offered expertise in the delivery of the Ordinary Art Festival and the seminar event on access to careers in the arts.

What we have delivered this year:
- Physical resource and expertise in the cultural industry
- A safe, supported environment for artists, curators and audiences to engage with cultural activity
- Opportunity for the partnership to test new ideas in a low-risk way

The Branchline partnership has enabled us to:
- Reach new and diverse audiences for the Ordinary Art Festival
- Develop a greater understanding of the needs of learning disabled young people
- Engage our arts and hospitality staff with learning disabled young people to enable a greater understanding and appreciation of need as well as opportunity

How new social care providers realise non-arts investment:
Dartington has provided some in-kind support to the partnership in support of the budget model

How community organisations work more collaboratively:
The Branchline partnership has successfully collaborated to deliver a number of arts activities and cultural engagement events for learning disabled young people. However, the partnership has struggled at times to communicate effectively and this has impacted on clarity around the purpose of Dartington’s engagement as a non-delivery organisation. There has been a great deal of focus on the delivery of activity sometimes to the detriment to the development of partnership working and a shared understanding of the outcomes for the project partners. Dartington’s Executive Director (Arts) has engaged with the partners to input into the business model development, on the understanding that a sustainable model is a desired outcome for the Challenge Fund investment. Dartington will continue to host partnership meetings, a pop-up Ordinary Art event as part of Community Day 2018 (30 May), and provide support and expertise in the delivery of collaborative events either at our venue or to share learning with other cultural organisations.
Our part in Branchline

- Understanding the needs of the social care providers and their young people in terms of the arts experiences that are suitable within their settings and holiday offers
- Responding to this understanding by approaching, selecting, engaging, supporting artists who we think best fit the role
- Developing the brief for these artist-led sessions through ongoing relationship with the artists and with the social care providers - learning and sharing regarding how best to shape content for and with these young people
- Engaging and supporting artist Kate Green to work as mentor, longer-term, with the young Cultural Curators for Ordinary Art Festival
- Participating in the development of the Branchline partnership - contributing to plans, identification of needs, carrying out actions, exploring financial model and its sustainability
- Supporting, promoting and contributing to new opportunities that arise through Branchline - such as Ordinary Art, Deaf Friendly Training
- Promoting / networking Branchline in to other useful projects and networks such as Daisi’s Youth Music Soundwaves, Devon Cultural Education Partnership, Daisi’s ArtEffect (mental health) partners

What we have been doing this year

- Developing activities with young people
- Attending Branchline partner meetings - developing the partnership, its mechanisms and ambitions
- Participating in developing and attending the Ordinary Art Festival
- Creating match funding for Branchline from fundraising, and from working across other relevant projects in our portfolio
- Promoting Branchline and its partnership through our channels including social media

How organisations work more collaboratively

We have been developing our understanding of how each other work (the arts organisations and the social care providers) in year 1, and the commonalities and differences in needs and processes. We are looking forward to the partnership development work that we will be doing through the Dream Fund process, as in some ways we feel that Branchline would have benefitted from more partnership development work at the beginning of year 1, which could have reduced some of the challenges that arose as we progressed through the year. On the other hand we have experienced, through practice, the strength and potential of our collaboration, such as the Ordinary Art Festival, where significant and impactful things can be accomplished together which could not have been accomplished, or even attempted, alone. We hope that our partnership development work in year 2 will help us work through how, as organisations, we can develop more sustainable models of doing these things.

How social care providers realise non-arts investment

We have participated in this in terms of feeding in to the original bid to Bridge SW Challenge Fund, and contributing to the partnership development and arts activity in year 1. We have also raised funds from non-arts sources ourselves (Awards for All), although we have done that before so it has not created new learning for us in terms of Branchline. As partners our input and shared learning has been reflected in bids made to other funders by the social care providers. We are hoping that in year 2 the whole partnership will begin to develop these proposals more collaboratively - for example in the work we are planning around the Dream Fund. This will be what we are looking for in terms of learning and development. We have participated in the process of developing the Ordinary Art festival and its seminar, which created strong learning about ways to engage decision makers who have the potential to influence / support through non-arts investment.
Our part in the Branchline project

SPLASH has worked with a sensory artist, a musician and a performance artist during the Branchline project. We have also been supported to create an installation for the Ordinary Art festival at Dartington Hall. Several of the children have really grown in confidence when working with the visiting artists. For example one child who is completely blind has really shown enjoyment with sensory art activities. Another child, who has autism and rarely speaks, apart from being echolalic, has found her fantastic singing voice and rhythm whilst working with Rachel Thame. Several of our more ambulant children have really grown in confidence and performance skills whilst working with Vinnie the performance artist. The project has been accessible for all of our children and young people. 20 children and young people have been able to take part in the activities. We have had 8 sessions.
### What we have been doing this year

- Developing activities with young people, so they learn new skills in broadcasting, DJing, and sound recording
- Helping young people to feel more confident by using their voices and developing communication skills. Having a voice in their community through broadcasting and arts activities; particular success with Rhi who found more confidence in her voice through taking part in live radio shows
- Engaging in artistic and recreational activity by offering young people the opportunity to work in an open, responsive and flexible way where they can take creative risk and try out ideas.
- Introducing young people to things they wouldn’t have thought to try otherwise, such as Medieval music and field recording

### Our part in Branchline

- Participating as a key Branchline partner - developing ideas around income generation, and sustainability
- Holding creative workshops - radio broadcasting, performance, crafts, DJing, drama and music
- Broadcasting young people’s work
- Helping young people to use radio broadcasting to document and evaluate Branchline activity, including Ordinary Art festival
- Using radio as a tool for income generation, by helping young people to create advertising features for venues
- Promoting Ordinary Art festival to our audience and network
- Linking to other projects and partners, such as our work with Dartington Deer Park and Healthwatch Devon

### How community organisations work more collaboratively

It has been great to work more closely with the Branchline partners and understand more about how they work. We feel we could do more together outside of Branchline and can offer our broadcast resources and expertise to other projects. Branchline is testing ways of working together that could lead to greater cross-pollination which would like to explore further. So far, our project delivery has been largely with Lifeworks, and we would be interested in working with Play Torbay and other partners more closely.
What we have been doing this year:
- delivering dance workshops with Play Torbay as part of; Summer Heat, October Quest and Ordinary Art Festival
- attending Branchline partner meetings - developing the partnership, its mechanisms and ambition
- developing thinking and potential between partners by investing in conversation, planning, imaginative possibility testing and new fundraising ideas.
- participating in developing and attending the Ordinary Art Festival
- contributing match funding to Branchline from fundraising and from working across other relevant projects in our portfolio
- promoting Branchline and its partnership through our channels including social media

How social care providers realise non-arts investment

We have contributed funds from our existing project for young disabled people All Aboard! (funded by Children in Need). This was not raised discretely for Branchline but we were able to think creatively about how we used this funding and how our activity could synergise with our Branchline commitments. We have applied to Awards for All for some Year 2 activity. While this is not new learning in terms of income generation, Branchline has encouraged Dance in Devon to think more pro-actively about how all sources of income build on existing activity.

Dance in Devon has featured as a partner in bids led by Lifeworks e.g. Clare Milne Trust and others. We would like to see more collaborative and innovative approaches to partnership income generation in Years 2. This is our core aim moving forward. We are confident that the creative delivery will excel, and new imaginative projects will be sparked through our experience and our artistic input but the real labour for us as an organisation, will be to engage a bit more deeply with how we raise income on a more sustainable basis that responds to the actual costs of delivering high quality dance and arts activity.
How organisations work more collaboratively

We have together taken some time to discuss our organisational approaches to project delivery and to understand how we approach our work. This has included understanding the contexts, scope, aims and potential of how we work. We have noticed where there are crossovers and real differences in what we do and where tight definitions do not work! We have started to understand how the social care providers work with their young people and how to plan together to make sure we facilitate their aspirations for leadership alongside desires to have fun, enjoy dance activity and engage creatively with their peers.

We are continuing to develop our work on how we move forward with business planning. We will do some of this work through the Dream Fund process. The nature of Year 1 meant that there was a need to deliver planned activity alongside developing our working business model and perhaps ideally more time would have been spent investing in developing our partnership model before launching into the activity. We are all keen to deliver the arts activity because we know that it is beneficial and what we do well, however one of our real ‘challenges’ is to find the new ways that we can work together and to ensure we invest in them.

There have been some very positive outcomes in terms of delivery; Summer Heat, Quest and Ordinary Art were exciting for our artists as well as the young people. Working with Play Torbay has been rewarding. Appreciating their creative input and collaborating with their leaders and young people has opened up new perspectives on how we work and on the potential for dance in social care settings.

We are very keen to continue to focus on sustainability as an essential aspect of the partnership working.
Our part in the Branchline project

- Participating in the development of the Branchline partnership – contributing to plans, developing ideas around income generation and sustainability.

- Initiating and supporting the development of the Branchline evaluation process. This has included developing a model where young people took a lead in finding out how successful the activities were in helping young people to feel good and function well.

- Working with artists to develop programmes which would be responsive to the needs of young people and their families.

- Contributing to the new partnership approach developing a successful financial model that supports the delivery of quality creative arts opportunities for learning disabled young people.

- Supporting, promoting and contributing to joint opportunities through the Branchline initiative such as Ordinary Art and Nourish and Flourish.

What we have been doing this year

- Devising ‘a Quest in a week!’ a collaborative production including bringing learning disabled young people to mainstream audiences. A promenade theatre quest performance for all the family bringing history to life. This included learning disabled young people, Play Torbay Quest Builders, Far Flung Theatre Dance Company and final year Drama and Performing Arts students from the University of Gloucestershire.

- Developing the Torbay Summer Heat project linking up a variety of funders including Jamie Oliver’s Children’s Health Fund, Anode, the Windmill Centre and with the Branchline project running a summer dance project with wonderful creative dance artists. Participants were given delicious lunches throughout these four weeks of the summer.

- Supporting the progression of knowledge and skills in the arts so 14 learning disabled young people successfully achieved their first Arts Awards.

- Creating match funding for Branchline by linking to other projects like combating holiday hunger and devising ‘Quest in a Week’ as part of the International Agatha Christie Festival.

- Working with Dead Pencils (a young person’s Digital Agency) to volunteer and support the Ordinary Art Festival.

- Promoting Branchline and its partnership through our social media networks.
How organisations work more collaboratively

We have met together regularly to work through the new organisational approaches the Branchline Partnership demanded. Initially it was sometimes difficult to understand the differences, but we have now begun to:

• Identify the Branchline ‘products’ and their benefits
• Understand the concept of ‘charging’ – previously Play Torbay services have been ‘free’ for young people to take part and the Branchline partnership has introduced the idea of charging an agreed unit cost which would be sustainable.
• Build relationships with new ‘customers’ which have included conversations with parents, carers, schools, residential homes and commissioners.

Play Torbay is looking forward to working with the Branchline Partnership in 2018/19 to build on the experiences and the trust which has been developed. We feel this will be manifested through the joint work we are planning, embracing involvement in the Dream Fund process and interesting new products planned with Daisi and Dance in Devon. These include workshops with different artists offering a wider range of art opportunities during the summer; and in October, another ‘Quest in a Week’ exploring the life of Agatha Christie as a nurse during the First World War and the beginnings of her fascination and interest in poisons!

How social care providers realise non-arts investment

Play Torbay has contributed funds from current project work to support this initiative including the Children’s Health Fund, Reaching Communities, Sanctuary Housing and Children in Need. Being involved in the Branchline project has supported us to think very creatively about where we might progress the work in the future. We have actively attended meetings and worked with colleagues in the NHS, CCG and Public Health to look at ways to raise further funds for this coming year. The Branchline Partnership is now in the process of developing a package for commissions and intend to build on the lessons learned in the first year to revisit financial modelling and identify investment needs.
Appendix

Feedback form used Summer 2017

Today I am at .........................................................
My age is ..........................................................

Please tick the bits you agree with
I’ve done something NEW today
It was FUN!
I learnt NEW SKILLS
I feel more confident

Today I tried
Please tick the things you tried today
Making ○ Playing ○
Drama ○ Running ○
Singing ○ Football ○
Painting ○ Creative Skills ○
Imaginative things ○ Games ○
Climbing ○ Building ○
Cooking ○ Gardening ○
Other, please say ..............................................

Stuff about me
Please tick the bits you agree with
I am active and run and play a lot
I like to help
I like to share
I join in well.
I feel safe when I come here
I am/ or would like to be, a Junior Play Ranger
I like a challenge
I like to make suggestions for things to play

My BEST bit today was draw a picture if you want

The thing I did today that I haven’t really done before

I’d like to volunteer to...

I like to share
I like to help
I like a challenge
I feel more confident

Please tick I am a
Boy ○
Girl ○
Prefer not to say ○

draw a picture if you want
What did you think of the overall day?

If I hadn’t come today I would have been...
- Playing with friends
- Bored
- Watching TV
- Gaming
- Playing on my own
- Visiting family
- Hanging around town/park

What other FUN STUFF could we try next time?

I’d like to be involved in new activities and projects where young people have a say in what happens
- YES
- NO

The activity I would like to do again is:
- draw it if you want

Please sign your name on the line below

...................................................

Thank you!