



Project Art Works: ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-23  
Interim Evaluation Report, September 2021 to August 2022



Susan Potter  
Arts Evaluation and Research

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The Three Guineas Trust



*"Arts Council England has been supporting Project Art Works and endorsing its work for many years now. We are constantly impressed with the amazing impact of their work and see this organisation as a key sector leader both within the arts but also, through their pioneering work in the field of neurodiversity. This endorsement of their quality is also now being strongly evidenced nationally and internationally by other peers and stakeholders, as demonstrated by their nominations for the Jarman Award, Turner Prize and participation in Documenta 15 as the only UK representative."*

Funding Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

*"This show helps you to understand people who are neurodivergent and their love of colour. They haven't been afraid to express themselves and the work is amazing! Absolutely, this work should be here! It makes us more aware of people who are neurodivergent and all of the challenges they have in their lives. You see that they can get up in the morning and make this wonderful work! It must be of benefit to the artists and it's definitely of benefit to us visitors."*

Audience Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

*"Last week Louise made a large painting on Fabriano using her hands that she thoroughly enjoyed. She also made a book of stories with her drawings from De La Warr Pavilion and recorded herself reading two of the stories. This week she continued with her big painting and also making the camera obscura. She was so pleased with it, decorated it, was playful with it and very happy to take it home. Next week we might make a TV so that Louise can be a Blue Peter presenter."*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

*"The training given by PAW raised our whole staff awareness and understanding of neurodiversity. It was invaluable and because it was open to everyone, management staff and volunteers as well, it gave a real confidence to us all. We felt more able to facilitate our spaces in a way we hadn't before. It made us far more aware through having those conversations, seeing how PAW works in the studios and their ethos more broadly. That made a huge impact upon everyone, including volunteers involved in our workshops who are now more hands on in supporting participants."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

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## 1 Introduction

Since 1997, Project Art Works (PAW) has forged a national reputation for the exceptional quality of its creative work with people with complex needs, their families, support workers, care providers, statutory agencies and cultural organisations across the UK. PAW is also recognised by Arts Council England as a leader in cultural diversity, via its collaborations with other leading arts organisations nationally to build awareness, empathy and support, extending community-based opportunities. Services provided by PAW include: 1:1 creative workshops, group participatory workshops; professional development; support for whole families; advice and advocacy; interventions to improve care outcomes. PAW's work is recognised as demonstrating innovation and excellence in person-centred approaches, leading to enhanced quality of life for individuals who require intensive support in order to lead full, creative and inclusive lives. PAW's Team have extensive expertise in specialised systems of support, including e.g. Personalisation, Total Communication, Positive Behaviour Support and the complex statutory systems for accessing this support. Specialist artists work intensively with participants on a 1:1 basis supporting them to engage with materials and creative processes and access a place of freedom and purpose not dictated by their disabilities. This expertise combines to form a hugely successful approach to making art in collaboration with children, young people and adults who have complex needs that is of outstanding quality.

The past two years have been exceptional in all senses, yet against the backdrop of the pandemic and its catastrophic impact on the lives of disabled people, Project Art Works (PAW) has galvanised its direction and purpose. This remains an especially dangerous time for people with complex support needs<sup>1</sup>, their caregivers and wider circles of support<sup>2</sup>. Areas of risk included breakdown of mental health<sup>3</sup>, erosion of rights<sup>4</sup>, acute isolation<sup>5</sup> and loss of care provision<sup>6</sup>. For people with a learning disability, the risk of death

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<sup>1</sup> People with complex support needs spans neurodivergence and may include individuals with autism, health conditions, learning disabilities and/or behaviour described as challenging

<sup>2</sup> A circle of support is a group of people who meet regularly to discuss how to help someone with learning disabilities to accomplish their goals, dreams and aspirations. People in circles of support are most often friends and family but may be others who are invited to join as and when needed

<sup>3</sup> [Coronavirus and the social impacts on disabled people in Great Britain - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)

<sup>4</sup> [Stop using coronavirus powers to neglect care duties, UK councils told | Social care | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com)

<sup>5</sup> [MPs and Peers call for Disability Inclusion | Disability Rights UK](https://www.theguardian.com)

<sup>6</sup> ['Brink of collapse': parents of disabled children buckling under 24-hour care | Disability | The Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com)

involving COVID-19 was 3.7 times greater compared with people who did not have a learning disability<sup>7</sup>. PAW's decision to stay open throughout the pandemic was based on the needs of their communities. At the beginning of the pandemic, PAW acknowledged the risk to its organisation at a time of uncertainty in funding, and how the spread of Covid-19 might impact on the organisation's ability to work. However, the needs of those unable to advocate for themselves - and at greatest risk - compelled PAW to remain in full delivery mode to support each other.

PAW has invested in its workforce of Core Team and Artist Team members, to develop their technology and communication skills in order to respond as quickly and effectively as possible to the rapidly changing external environment. Whilst PAW acknowledges continuing uncertainty due to the pandemic – and how this affects all aspects of the organisation – it has established a strong position to make a strategic step-change in both scale and impact of its ambitions in 2021/22 and beyond. Through ART FREEDOM CARE and all of its preceding work, PAW aspires to:

i. **Strengthen how neurodivergence is represented in culture**

In November 2020, Project Art Works were joint winners of the Film London Jarman Award 2020 giving the organisation unprecedented access to new audiences and publicity. In addition, PAW became a global partner for **documenta fifteen** taking place over 100 days between 18 June and 25 September 2022. PAW is the only artist collective/organisation representing the UK. This will provide the organisation with significant new reach in awareness raising for the complexity of issues for families, caregivers and neurodiverse communities.

ii. **Demonstrate the growing need for the organisation**

PAW's new core programme ART FREEDOM CARE and its future direction is a direct response to demand from key stakeholders, as well as cultural commissioners. PAW's programme delivery and its success during the past three years reflects a deep understanding of how we live now. PAW has demonstrated that representation of neurodivergent artists in both cultural and civic life is only possible if they are provided with access to skilled and inclusive attitudinal cultures from organisations and communities.

iii. **Galvanise its role as civic enablers**

PAW is working more expansively to influence systemic change in health and social care, while providing platforms for the lived experience of neurominorities and caregivers to be explored and exhibited through art and culture. The quality of PAW's work has been recognised and accepted within mainstream cultural institutions as reflected in the Jarman Award 2020 (joint win), and a number of other high profile exhibitions. PAW's collaborative approach to working with communities - alongside its neurodiverse collective - reflects a growing movement within the international art scene, as demonstrated by the selection as one of fifteen international organisations for **documenta fifteen**. May 2021 saw the launch of the major national outdoor advertising campaign of Camelot's National Lottery, sharing work by neurodivergent artist Siddarth Gadiyar in cities and towns across the country, while celebrating PAW's longstanding relationship with this funding body.

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<sup>7</sup> [Updated estimates of coronavirus \(COVID-19\) related deaths by disability status, England - Office for National Statistics \(ons.gov.uk\)](https://ons.gov.uk)



## 2 Art Freedom Care

ART FREEDOM CARE is a programme highlighting the creative and social contribution of people with complex support needs, their families and support workers. PAW recognises that without a circle of support around the individual, neurodivergent artists would not be able to participate freely in their creative practice and their life. The programme offers holistic personalised facilitation and support across creative practice, advocacy, training and skills development for individuals and their caregivers via two vital, interconnected strands.

### **Artist Collective**

The creative programme is delivered across five days per week for adults with complex support needs, including those with profound and multiple needs. The Artist Collective creates changing installations and sensory environments to engage participants in collaborative and individual creative journeys. A wide range of professional media and creative processes are available including painting, drawing, printmaking, collage, sculpture, animation and photography. Participants also have regular opportunities to visit exhibitions and events at galleries, parks and nature reserves as Covid-19 restrictions have eased.

### **Support Collective**

The Support Collective is a peer-led group of people with lived experience of disability including family carers, support workers, Personal Assistants and representatives from health and social care, established and facilitated by PAW. Members collectively share the aim of working towards person-centred, accountable and inclusive models of support and care, protecting the rights of people with support needs. The co-produced Charter of Ambition and Rights informed the Support Collective, previously known as the Peer Support Network.



The aims of ART FREEDOM CARE are as follows:

- 1 To co-design and provide bespoke, personalised creative pathways for neurodivergent artists/makers, with an emphasis upon artistic excellence, independence, relevance and choice.
- 2 To provide stability for neurodivergent participants with behaviours described as challenging, offering new and diverse pathways to creative development and support.
- 3 To provide platforms for the voice of neurodivergent artists through the dissemination of new artworks through mainstream exhibitions, encounters and workshops, residencies, film and art festivals and digital platforms.
- 4 To provide deep, personalised and holistic support to families, including peer support, access to legal advice, and training and practical guidance to build greater resilience and independence with caregivers.
- 5 To support caregivers to understand and navigate through health and social care systems, and the tools to have greater choice and control over care and support.
- 6 To build partnerships with specialised support and advocacy organisations, as part of a holistic programme of support.

The evaluation aims to capture the inputs, outputs and outcomes of ART FREEDOM CARE for the full range of participants including: Associate Artists, their families and wider support networks; Support Collective members; PAW's Core Team, Artist Team and volunteers; partner organisations and wider stakeholders, with a focus on the programme's overarching aims and objectives.

*"PAW has a significant impact upon the community. Their practice is empowering and allows their artists independence, creativity, and skills development within an open but supported space. The support PAW provides goes above and beyond the direct needs of participants, it has huge resonance and impact upon the wider support circle of care around each artist they work with. This provides a vital lifeline to carers, parents and family members who are often put under huge strain especially due to cutbacks in care budgets. Project Art Works recognises these issues and offers invaluable support, respite and practical advice which is a service that is in great need within our communities."*

Relationship Manager (Visual Arts)  
Arts Council England



### 3 Methodology

Through consultation with PAW's Core Team, an evaluation methodology was proposed including both quantitative and qualitative measures. The aims of the ART FREEDOM CARE interim evaluation are to:

- Examine the inputs, outputs and outcomes for those individuals and organisations participating in ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22
- Measure the successes of ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22 against its prescribed aims and objectives, as established in the Three Guineas Trust's approved funding purposes
- Draw out any general lessons for effective practices for the further development and sustainability of ART FREEDOM CARE and the work of PAW more broadly.

Data for analysis was collected between September 2021 and August 2022 via the following means, in order to document and evaluate the processes, outcomes and impacts of ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22:

- Planning meetings with PAW Core Team to establish aims and objectives of the independent evaluation, supporting the development of an evaluation framework and tools
- 10 site visits, observing and documenting full range of ART FREEDOM CARE activity (i.e. Core Team and Artist Team planning days; Artist Collective programme; Support Collective meetings; CPD workshops; visits to partner venues; exhibitions and special events)
- 35 formative audio recorded interviews completed with participants (i.e. Artist Collective and Support Collective; Artist Team and Core Team; partner organisations and audience members)
- 15 summative questionnaires completed by members of PAW's Artist Team and Core Team
- Transcription, coding and analysis of quantitative and qualitative datasets, resulting in brief interim evaluation report.

Important themes have then been analysed, compared and contrasted from each set of data, in order to develop meaning and illuminate the findings. It is hoped that this method follows on logically from the objectives, to provide a robust and holistic evaluation to support the further development of ART FREEDOM CARE 2022-23 and beyond.



#### 4 Inputs and outputs

As described in Table 4.1 (over page), PAW has achieved those goals established at the outset of ART FREEDOM CARE, exceeding many quantitative targets in its first twelve months. These outputs have been made against the backdrop of delivering the programme as we continue to navigate the impacts of COVID-19 - with all of the continuing challenges it has brought - a point worthy of note. The Three Guineas Trust funded programme has resulted in the following inputs and outputs during the past year:

- The recruitment of one new Creative Programme Coordinator, one Support Collective Lead, 14 supporting artists and six volunteers, in order to deliver ART FREEDOM CARE
- The design and delivery of 304 (on-site) creative workshops to 40 individual artist/makers
- The design and delivery of 41 creative workshops (outside of PAW's regular studio programme) by five supporting artists and engaging with ten participant artist/makers
- The delivery of four diverse exhibitions/artist residencies, including i.e. Turner Prize 2021 at Herbert Museum and Art Gallery, Coventry; Ignition at Hastings Contemporary; PAW artist residency at Rye Harbour Discovery Centre; PAW artist residency on ONCA Barge, Brighton
- The delivery of two seminars (i.e. Another Way Home: Parts One and Two), bringing together housing providers, families managing their own housing provision, and aligned initiatives to share models of independent and supported living from across the UK with 40 participant caregivers
- The design and delivery of PAW's Support Collective, comprising 30 individual family meet-ups (online and in person), 18 training sessions/workshops and engaging with 21 parent/carers
- In addition, the development of bespoke and personalised PATH programmes with 11 PAW artist/makers, their families and wider circles of support
- Successful digital and social media campaigns sharing 14 films and 735 postings, engaging with 474,036 online audience members, 9,466 social media followers and 2,355 subscribers to PAW's mailing list
- Circulation of regular publicity and press releases generating media coverage in ArtNet, The Guardian, Vogue, The Quietus, BBC News, ITV News.

#### 4 Inputs and outputs: September 2021 to August 2022

Programme activity	Inputs and outputs (proposed)	Inputs and outputs (actual)	% achieved
Delivery of studio workshop programme in close collaboration with neurodivergent young people and/or adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 304 x creative workshops (on-site)</li> <li>- 37 x participant artist/makers</li> <li>- 14 x supporting artists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 304 x creative workshops (on-site)</li> <li>- 40 x participant artist/makers</li> <li>- 14 x supporting artists</li> <li>- 6 x volunteers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% achieved</li> <li>108% achieved</li> <li>100% achieved</li> <li>N/A (no target set)</li> </ul>
Delivery of off-site creative workshop and residency programme in collaboration with neurodivergent young people and/or adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 20 x creative workshops (outside of regular programme)</li> <li>- 10 x participant artist/makers</li> <li>- 5 x supporting artists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 41 x creative workshops (outside of regular programme)</li> <li>- 10 x participant artist/makers</li> <li>- 5 x supporting artists</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>205% achieved</li> <li>100% achieved</li> <li>100% achieved</li> </ul>
Co-production and delivery of ART FREEDOM CARE exhibitions, film festivals and online events in close collaboration with neurodivergent young people and/or adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 x exhibitions/artist residencies</li> <li>- 2 x national conferences</li> <li>- 1 x new digital platform profiling artists/organisations</li> <li>- 1 x digital awareness raising toolkit</li> <li>- 1 x new national network</li> <li>- 100 x neurodivergent artists/organisations represented</li> <li>- 1 x publication</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 4 x exhibitions/artist residencies</li> <li>- 2 x national conferences</li> <li>- 1 x new digital platform profiling artists/organisations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>100% achieved</li> <li>100% achieved</li> <li>100% achieved</li> </ul>
Design and delivery of programme of meetings and events for c.20 parent carers/families engaged in PAW's Support Collective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 x 1:1 meetings with parents/families</li> <li>- 10 x family PATHS developed</li> <li>- 20 x parent carers/families participate in meetings</li> <li>- 10 x training sessions/workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 30 x 1:1 meetings with parents/families</li> <li>- 11 x family PATHS developed</li> <li>- 21 x parent carers/families participate in meetings</li> <li>- 18 x training sessions/workshops</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>300% achieved</li> <li>110% achieved</li> <li>105% achieved</li> <li>180% achieved</li> </ul>
Monitoring, evaluation and dissemination of programme's impacts and learning outcomes for full range of stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 6 x evaluation site visits</li> <li>- 30 x evaluation interventions</li> <li>- 1 x interim evaluation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- 10 x evaluation site visits</li> <li>- 45 x evaluation interventions</li> <li>- 1 x interim evaluation report</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>166% achieved</li> <li>150% achieved</li> <li>100% achieved</li> </ul>



## 5 Outcomes

### 5.1 Artist Collective

ART FREEDOM CARE aims to co-design and provide bespoke creative pathways for neurodivergent artists/makers, with an emphasis upon artistic excellence, independence and choice. During the first year of delivery, the Artist Collective worked in close collaboration with 50 neurodivergent individuals, to develop a wholly personalised programme of practice with each artist/maker. Exploring the full range of media (e.g. creative writing; drawing, painting and print making; film and photography; music and sound), artist/makers have been supported to pursue specific interests and/or themes (e.g. Al Murray; Walt Disney; Yayoi Kusama; Natural History; Red Dwarf), ensuring the programme remains appropriate and relevant for everyone engaged.

*"I'm really interested in animals and birds, as you can see! Today I'm working on this bird of prey, attaching these feathers to its wings. I had to clean them first before sticking them on. We've been experimenting with making the claws but they keep melting in the heat. I think it will look really good with my paintings at the museum. I'm going to have an exhibition at Hastings Museum and Art Gallery. I think it's next year, so there's still lots of time to get everything ready."*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Through the Artist Collective and Studio Programme, ART FREEDOM CARE aims to provide stability for neurodivergent participants with behaviours described as challenging, offering new and diverse routes to creative development and support. During the past year, the Artist Collective has facilitated 345 participatory sessions across a diversity of on and off-site settings (e.g. PAW Studios; Hastings Contemporary; Herbert Museum and Art Gallery, Coventry; ONCA Barge, Brighton; Rye Harbour Discovery Centre), extending ART FREEDOM CARE and PAW's practice to a far broader public. Described as 'calming', 'friendly', 'fun', and 'helpful', participants have had access to high quality materials and highly skilled practitioners, promoting an atmosphere conducive to quiet concentration. Those artist/makers presenting with behaviours described as challenging have remained focused and engaged, attesting to the positive impacts of PAW's holistic, person-centred approach.

*"X really enjoys making things but often needs lots of support to help him focus. Being here is helping him enormously. When he comes here, everyone is instinctively quiet and gentle. It's a lovely relaxed atmosphere and I think that helps. If it was all noisy and manic, I don't think X would enjoy it or be able to concentrate. He would become very distressed. To see him so happy and engaged is wonderful! I don't know where we'd be without PAW."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

ART FREEDOM CARE aims to provide a platform for the 'voice' of neurodivergent artist/makers through the dissemination of artworks through mainstream exhibitions, encounters and workshops, residencies, film and art festivals and digital platforms. Over the past months, the Artist Collective has exhibited widely (e.g. Autism and Cinema 2021, Barbican Centre; RA Summer Exhibition 2021; Turner Prize 2021, Coventry; Ignition, Hastings Contemporary; To All The Kings Who Have No Crowns, Margate; Have You Ever Had, Bexhill), sharing both individual and collective artworks with arts organisations and audience members from across the UK and beyond. Described as 'extraordinary', 'inspiring', 'insightful' and 'necessary' by audiences, these interventions have engaged a wider public in exciting, new artworks, while deepening an understanding of neurodiversity.

*"There's something about being offered another medium and the opportunity to use other senses – rather than just language or the written word – that can give people access to self-expression in a fresh and different way. These artists are so sensorily sensitive, so having this creative outlet is really important. It's critical that this work is shown. We are all part of this community, we all belong here and we all should have a place here. It's super important and I'm so proud of Hastings!"*

Audience Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22



## 5.2 Support Collective

As part of ART FREEDOM CARE, the Support Collective (formerly the Peer Support Network) brings together people with lived experience of complex support needs, their circles of support, families, carers, support workers, PAs and representatives from health and social care. Through the Support Collective and PATH more specifically, PAW aims to provide a deep, personalised programme for families – including peer support, access to legal advice, and training and practical guidance – to build greater resilience and independence with caregivers. During the first year of delivery, the Support Collective has worked with 21 families who are living with and/or caring for individuals with complex support needs, in providing free training, skills development and advocacy.

*"The Support Collective offers solace and support to many people who are feeling isolated and abandoned and possibly in moments of despair. Just through sharing and being listened to, it provides a relief for many. Whether those individual situations are similar or not, there's always something that's learnt and something that can be given. There's a lot of information and knowledge shared within the group, which is invaluable. Then of course you have Esther at the helm, who is such a discreet and gently guiding support. It's a very 'kindly' collective."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

The Support Collective aims to assist caregivers in understanding and navigating their way through the health and social care systems, providing the tools to enable greater choice and control over the care of their loved ones. Over the past months, the programme has included 30 one-to-one meetings with parent/carers and 18 individual training sessions, enabling families and caregivers to access resources, share their experience and develop new skills. Described as 'informative', 'non-judgemental', 'life saving' and 'kind', participant parent/carers have greatly welcomed the opportunity to engage with other caregivers, thereby decreasing social isolation and improving whole family resilience. In addition, 11 families have embarked on the PATH programme, being supported to develop a bespoke and holistic plan for the future – including creative practice, health and social care, housing options, legal advice – enabling families to formulate a meaningful pathway in collaboration with their loved ones.

*"PATH is a tool to help parents and the people they support to look to the future, with promise and not dread. It helps families to make informed choices and there's continuing support from PAW, so it feels like they are holding your hand as you embark on this journey. The workshops were excellent! They were professional and friendly and it was all about us, our family and our expectations and desires for the future. Y was at the centre of the process throughout. That's the only way it could work. It's her life, so it has to evolve around her."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Finally, the Support Collective aims to build partnerships with specialised support and advocacy organisations, as part of a holistic programme of support. During the past year, the programme has delivered two seminars (i.e. Another Way Home: Parts One and Two), bringing together xxx housing providers, advocacy organisations, adult social care professionals and caregivers to share models of independent and supported living from across the UK (e.g. Gettalife, My Safe Home, Shared Lives). Attended by 40 families and other stakeholders, these events were reported to 'engage with professionals', 'raise awareness', 'experience new models', enabling families to learn about alternatives to traditional residential care and supported living. Each conference demonstrated how 'small support' might enable agency, continuity and longevity of care for individuals with complex support needs.

*"Another Way Home was so helpful as we are now reaching that point where Z would like to live independently but we just don't know where to begin. There were real life examples from other families like ourselves to show that there are alternatives to the usual residential home or supported living setting. It opened our eyes to new ways of thinking and gave us some hope for the future."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22





## 6 Case Studies

In order to best understand the processes and potential longer term impacts for individual Associate Artists, Support Collective members and cultural partners engaged in ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22, in-person and online interviews were conducted with a sample of PAW's artists, families and partner organisations at several points during the past year. The aim was to capture the journey of each, through their engagement in ART FREEDOM CARE. The data collected provides rich and affirmative stories, while ensuring the 'participant's voice' remains at the heart of the evaluation, as aligned to PAW's wider ethos and practice. The resulting case studies are therefore presented in the following order:

- Artist/Maker
- Parent/Carer
- Organisation.



### 6.1 Artist/Maker

Lucy is a prolific, multi-talented neurodivergent artist and musician who has been a member of PAW's Artist Collective since 2018. Her work spans a wide range of media and genres. The common factor in much of Lucy's work is her love of animals and particularly her admiration of dogs. She has an incredible knowledge of the different characteristics of each breed. She has designed comics and short stories which feature many of her own canine characters, while some of her creations have been brought to life through comedy and performance. Lucy makes the costumes for each of these creatures by hand, from the initial design to the final stitch. The characters have then been seen giving guided gallery tours at, e.g. De La Warr Pavilion, Hastings Contemporary, Herbert Museum & Art Gallery and MK Gallery.

*"Cosmic is going to be giving the tour today but I have brought some other characters that might make an appearance later. I'm feeling excited about the tour. I've done it quite a few times now and in lots of different places. I've done it at Bexhill, at the De La Warr Pavilion, that was the first. I've also done one at Milton Keynes and in Coventry. I've done one at the Towner Art Gallery, a long time ago but this is the first one I've done at Hastings Contemporary. All of these characters are doing a little tour across the UK at the moment!"*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

In addition to providing an opportunity to share these extraordinary artworks with audience members in museums and galleries across the country, Lucy offers a fresh and different interpretation of the works on display, working in close collaboration with Tom, a member of PAW's Artist Team. This model enables Lucy to feel at complete ease in any new setting, engage with the general public while describing her creative practice and her many interests.

*"I enjoy playing a character to give the tour. It makes it a bit different for the visitors and for the gallery. The visitors tend to respond very well and they enjoy it. We get asked the odd question, you know, what are we doing in the gallery, what can we tell them about the artworks and so on. I generally do the tours with Tom and it's a kind of collaboration. Tom and I perform a little double act together. That works well because Tom can ask me questions and I can play my character."*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

PAW demonstrates that representation of neurodivergent artists in cultural and civic life is only possible if they have access to skilled and inclusive attitudes from organisations and communities. In December of last year, Lucy attended the Turner Prize Award Ceremony at the Herbert Museum & Art Gallery in Coventry. Rather than prompting anxiety and/or stress for PAW's artist/makers who attended the high profile event, many felt excited and happy to be included with the care and support provided by members of PAW's Artist Team and Core Team. Lucy describes the experience as wholly positive, enabling her to showcase two of her recent creations 'Unimeleon' and 'Scratch Cat', both of whom were greatly appreciated by those audience members attending in person and online.

*"When I went up to Coventry, I got to actually show off two of my other characters. I took up Unimeleon, which is a chameleon crossed unicorn! I also took up a rag doll cat and cross orange cat, called Scratch Cat, who's got a bit of Elton John and Boy George thrown in. Everyone loved them! We were able to look around the Turner Prize spaces then when the gallery closed, we went to Coventry Cathedral for the party. We were being filmed by the BBC and got to see the whole presentation. It was a really good event!"*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Asked about her current work, Lucy describes a life that is busy, productive and generous. In addition to spending two days of each week working as a member of PAW's Artist Collective, she volunteers with the PDSA, plays in her band Delta 7 and helps her family with household chores, cooking and gardening. However, she acknowledges moments of feeling overwhelmed in managing the numerous projects she sets herself. Rather than rein in this endless imagination and creative spirit, PAW's Artist Team enables Lucy to achieve her goals via trusting, non-hierarchical relationships.

*"I've had so many ideas on the go! That's been a bit of a struggle but everyone here helps me when I get a bit overwhelmed. It just means we can get different things done and we can have more time together as well. When you've got more hands, it helps to get things done quicker. Tom has been kind enough to help me with my Sonic costumes which are nearly finished. Then I work with Ollie in the studio and he's been kind enough to help me start on a banner, which I want to take to Coventry for Mandy's display."*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Alongside her creature costumes, animated films, comics and banner work, Lucy has recently been invited to take part in the residency programme at Wysing Arts, Cambridgeshire. She has completed an introductory visit and was inspired by the well-equipped artist studios, rural location and natural surroundings. If she decides to participate, this residency will take place at some point during 2022. Listening to Lucy, it is evident that PAW's holistic and person-centred practice promotes agency and autonomy amongst the Associate Artists, increasing confidence and self-acceptance. Importantly, this approach empowers Lucy and her peers to advocate for the organisation and its work at a public level, recognising the immense value of being an integral part of this respectful, creative community.

*"I've had a good look at the Ignition exhibition, it's really nice. I'm very impressed with the work that's gone in there. They've got lots of bright coloured stuff and people are able to meet some of the artists. Then they're able to do a bit of work at the end with PAW's staff. The work is really big too and that's important for people to see. It's good for visitors to get an idea of the different kinds of work people with special needs make. They'll also get more awareness of PAW and the exhibition. Maybe it'll inspire them to do something of their own."*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22



## 6.2 Parent/Carer

Karen is the parent and main carer to her daughter Natalie, a member of PAW's Artist Collective since 2020. Natalie is a highly talented visual artist, enjoying all forms of drawing, ceramics, painting and printmaking. Karen joined the Support Collective at the same time, seeking advice regarding Natalie's care and also, the general wellbeing of the family. Karen describes the Support Collective as 'inclusive', 'informative' and 'genuinely helpful'. The opportunity to meet other parent/carers with lived experience in a non-judgemental environment – in person and online – has provided Karen with essential skills and resources to ensure the best care for Natalie and the family more broadly.

*"The Support Collective is very informative for parents. Everyone is so good at sharing their experiences, they really want to help their fellow parent/carers. You don't have to explain things, people just understand. You listen to someone and you know exactly what they mean because you've been through the same or you're feeling the same. Unless you've been through it yourself, you can't understand what someone else is feeling. There have been discussions with other professionals about housing and funding, legal advice. There's been such a wide range of topics covered. It's very positive."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

As part of the Support Collective, Karen and her family were invited by PAW to take part in PATH (Planning Alternative Tomorrows with Hope), a visual aspirational planning tool. Through the PATH programme, PAW works with artist/makers and their circles of support to explore hopes and aspirations guided by their 'North Star' which represents an ideal future. PATH helps to identify long-term goals for individuals such as Natalie, spanning employment, education, creative practice, interests, friendships, and community life. Karen was immediately attracted to this programme, since Natalie has expressed a desire to live and work independently for some time, yet Karen suggests she is overwhelmed by the challenges associated with navigating the channels of health, housing and adult social care in supporting her adult daughter with Down syndrome and associated learning differences.

*"It's a complete maze out there, you just don't know where to start! PATH focuses your attention and lays things out. PATH breaks everything down into manageable bitesize pieces that you can cope with. Because it's a really big thing to look into the future. It's terrifying really! PATH makes you stop and think about things you don't necessarily want to think about but you have to. It's been such a big support for us as all. It's not only PATH for Natalie, it's PATH for me as well, for the whole family in fact."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Through a series of bespoke, participatory workshops attended by Karen, Natalie, her brother and other members of Natalie's circle of support (including PAW's Artist and Core Team members), PATH is delivered by highly skilled practitioners who record the stages and support needed – in visual format – to then reach those specific goals Natalie would like to achieve. Karen suggests there were feelings of anxiety for Natalie before the programme began, feelings which naturally extended into the family. However, now that Natalie understands PATH, she has become empowered through the workshops allowing Karen to trust in the process and relax a little.

*"It's like going to meet up with friends because it's non-judgemental and they really care. They make us feel important, Natalie and myself. It's helpful doing the follow-up workshops to discuss the things you've worked through and how life has improved. Because it's that focus again, rather than just muddling through. PATH is motivational but the nicest part of that is the friendliness of it all. They're not going to tell you off because you haven't done something. There isn't that pressure put upon you but they'll celebrate your progress with you. It's really good!"*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Natalie is now volunteering both in a local charity shop and also, with PAW's Art Breaks. In addition, she successfully completed a ceramics course through the Adult Education Service which Karen describes as teaching her to let go a little more and respect Natalie's independence. These are undoubtedly huge strides in Natalie's onward life journey. However, Karen is realistic about the continuous struggles resulting from Natalie's care, leaving her feeling worried and exhausted. She suggests the next goal will be to complete Lasting Power of Attorney for Natalie, while investigating the potential options for independent living. This has naturally resulted in inner conflict, yet with the guidance of PAW's Support Collective, she hopes to find the best way forward for Natalie, herself and the wider family.

*"It's still a big thing about her moving out and living somewhere. The main thing for me is where she's going to live and how we're going to get there. We spoke about doing the Lasting Power of Attorney. It's important to get that in place before it's needed. We're going to find out how Hastings Council runs their Housing Support Scheme. It's really positive this discussion is going on, although it's still a maze for me and quite scary. Half of me wants her to be independent and half of me wants to protect her at home. I'd like a bit of a life as well, it's very hard!"*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Since embarking on PATH, Natalie has already achieved many of the aspirations set out in her personal plan. Karen describes with enthusiasm how Natalie has begun attending the Parchment Trust again and through this, has reconnected with friends who she meets independently at the weekend or at Millie's Nightclub each month. This has allowed Karen some respite and an opportunity to regain her own life interests. Through PATH, Natalie is encouraged to describe the progress she has made over the past months, enabling Karen to reflect upon these positive steps toward Natalie's North Star and take pride in the family's progress.

*"Natalie really enjoys the PATH workshops now. Before the very first one, she felt a bit anxious. I did too! It's all about her and it's a bit overwhelming to start off with. Now that we're working through it, it's fine and she accepts it. She also understands the way PATH is laid out. She knows exactly what it's all about and she knows Sarah. She looks forward to meeting up and telling everybody what she's been doing. She's so very proud of herself as well, which is wonderful to see!"*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22



### 6.3 Organisation

During the spring 2021, while museums and galleries across the country were closed to the public, PAW temporarily took over part of Hastings Contemporary for a collaborative residency. This exciting initiative was a continuation of the long-term relationship established between the two organisations, while it also marked the emergence from isolation to a more hopeful environment within the gallery. During lockdown, passers-by looking through the windows of the closed gallery were able to view the studio practices of PAW's Artist Collective. Hastings Contemporary Team Members described the unique residency as 'joyful', 'life-affirming', 'uplifting' and 'meaningful', suggesting the project had lessened feelings of isolation and provided a renewed sense of purpose.

*"It has been really lovely having PAW's presence in the building! You sense the difference on those days. Whether it's a quiet day with one or two workshops or there's a lot more going on, there's a different rhythm to those days. It's been really positive in bringing us as Gallery staff into more of a normal routine, opening the building, welcoming people in, making sure it's all ready for them. It's just been really uplifting to have their energy here, knowing that the space is being used in a meaningful way."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Coinciding with PAW's Turner Prize exhibition in Coventry in the autumn 2021, the resulting Ignition exhibition provided an opportunity to see the finished artworks created in lockdown and a wider selection of pieces made by the Collective. It celebrated the dynamic contribution of neurominorities to art and society, while reflecting the commitment and ambitions of Hastings Contemporary to become a cultural hub for Hastings. Ignition was displayed in the ground floor space of the Foreshore Gallery, with both parties describing the planning process as 'collaborative', 'cooperative' and 'respectful'.



*"We discussed what was possible in the space, what PAW was hoping to achieve, to look at some of the hanging techniques, etc. It was really helpful to have that collaborative approach so early on in the process. PAW had a very clear idea of what they wanted which was brilliant from our perspective. We worked to PAW's plan and came up with suggestions and solutions to any issues encountered. PAW's technicians know our building well and our technicians know PAW which made things easier."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

In addition to planning discussion meetings, PAW invited Hastings Contemporary staff and volunteers to visit their studios where they delivered bespoke training to provide awareness and understanding of working with neurodiverse communities. This element of the project was suggested to be immensely valuable by the full range of participants, including senior management staff, visitor services staff, technical staff and volunteers. The session was noted to 'increase confidence' across the gallery team, encouraging a more 'engaging' and 'inclusive' approach towards the full range of visitors. The exhibition was accompanied by a vibrant series of events delivered by PAW's Artist Collective and Associate Artists. A celebration took place to coincide with the Turner Prize Award Ceremony, with live screening and party. Although navigating the numerous practical considerations and heightened emotions proved challenging for each organisation, the experience was felt to provide important learning for the future.

*"There were a lot of emotions - excitement and anxiety - before the event so it was inevitable that there might be some friction but all was resolved with a conversation and it's definitely something we learned from and will take forward into other partnership projects in the future. Being really clear from the outset so that those kinds of issues or problems might be lessened, with all parties knowing and understanding the many constraints we are under as a gallery."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

Asked about any organisational changes made as a result of their collaboration with PAW, Hastings Contemporary staff suggest the project has prompted revisiting several policies, including visitor ticketing, team training and audience development. Gallery staff have discussed the need for further training in equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) and are investigating the resources necessary to take this forward. During the Ignition exhibition and in line with other cultural organisations across the UK, the gallery tested new ticketing arrangements, enabling visitors with additional needs and their carers/companions to gain free entry. Witnessing the benefits of this small but significant change – in terms of wider and more diverse audiences accessing the gallery – this policy has since become standard for all exhibitions.

*"We've changed our ticketing policy, so that anybody visiting with a carer or anyone needing a companion, can have free entry to the gallery. That's now advertised on the outside of the building, on our website, in all of our printed publicity. It was something we began in the exhibition but have since instigated as part of our ongoing practice. That was a clear impact that came from our discussions and work with PAW. They were able to advise on the most appropriate wording, once again to make it appropriate and accessible."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

It is evident that both organisations benefited from the Ignition project; PAW was able to share its unique practice with a wider (regional and national) audience in a local setting, while Hastings Contemporary was able to use its spaces during lockdown in a dynamic, meaningful manner. Audience members described the resulting exhibition as 'dynamic', 'different', 'exuberant' and 'wonderful', many of whom had not visited the gallery before. The vibrant, large scale artworks captured the attention of many passers-by, while the exhibition and accompanying events were noted to engage with a more diverse public.

*"Obviously the parties, both the opening and closing events, were incredible tools in being able to open our doors to members of the community who might not have previously felt comfortable coming into the gallery. We are in Hastings which is a deprived area of the south east, we are a diverse community in many ways, we're also a very hard, black building which might not look especially inviting. Having those events was a really good way of breaking down both perceived and real barriers. Our visitor demographic is gradually evolving and this collaboration has certainly assisted in its development."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

With further developments in mind, staff suggest learning outcomes from PAW's residency and exhibition have stimulated exciting ideas regarding using gallery spaces in new and different ways. In addition to the testing of 'membership cards' for locally based artists and their circles of support, the gallery is keen to explore using the Foreshore Gallery as an experimental project space. In these and other ways, Hastings Contemporary aims to diversify and increase its audience, while attaining its ambition of becoming a renowned cultural hub within the area.

*"We've had the idea of Partnership Hubs for some time, as a way of developing our audiences. It's a collective with over forty members and with the guidance of PAW, we've created specific membership cards, so that artists and their families or their wider network of support could come and go throughout the run of the exhibition. Alongside that, we'd like to use the Foreshore Gallery – that PAW so perfectly animated – as an experimental project space. We'll invite proposals from the community to take part in this new, organic programme we're keen to develop. That is finitely a result of our collaboration with PAW."*

Cultural Partner, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22



## 7 Learning

Findings suggest ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22 resulted in benefits for the larger majority of stakeholders, including i.e. Artist Collective members; Support Collective members; Core Team and Artist Team members; PAW's partner organisations. This interim evaluation has also resulted in valuable insights to assist PAW in the forward planning of this and all other programmes. The following learning outcomes encompass data collected across the first year of ART FREEDOM CARE and as such, provide a description of programme strengths, challenges and suggested developments to support PAW's wholly responsive approach to learning. Data collected via internal monitoring, on site and telephone interviews explored the aforementioned themes, with findings presented as follows:

- Programme strengths
- Programme challenges
- Suggested developments.

## 7.1 Programme strengths

Data collected via observation, interviews and questionnaires attests to the strengths of PAW's unique work and ART FREEDOM CARE more specifically. As described in Figure 7.1 below, the programme was noted to include a number of significant features contributing to its successful delivery and high quality outcomes during the past year, e.g. enabling social integration through creativity; empowering families through advocacy and peer support; responding to individual participant needs; sharing skills and resources across the sector; encouraging a greater awareness and understanding of neurodiversity.

Figure 7.1 Programme strengths

### Enabling social integration through creativity

*"PAW has helped me get back on my feet, definitely. It's to do with seeing people but also, having some routine in my week. I love people and I love being creative! It's definitely a good skill to have, being able to create things helps distract you from other things going on. At first, I was very shy and it took me a while to come out of my shell but once I got settled in, I was fine. The people here at PAW are so lovely, they're brilliant really and I'm learning new stuff every time I come!"*

Associate Artist, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Empowering families through advocacy and peer support

*"PAW has introduced me to so many others who are experiencing similar difficulties and require support. It offers an opportunity to meet a variety of people, not just parents and carers but also, professionals from across the sectors of health and social care. We are given vital help in navigating the care and funding systems that are really difficult to find one's way around. My experience is entirely positive and one where families face their difficulties together, through information sharing and acknowledgement of the challenges we all face day to day."*

Parent/Carer, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Responding to individual participant needs

*"The consistency of personalised creative support for all artist/makers has been particularly positive. Many individuals and families have spoken about the studio programme as the only place where they feel supported and understood. The team has been very focused on delivering a programme that meets the needs of those with the most complex support needs. This has meant adapting and remaining flexible at all times of year so people don't feel isolated, even when the studios are on a break."*

Team Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Sharing skills and resources across the sector

*"It has been very special having PAW's presence here in the building. The expertise from the Core Team, the Associate Artists and family members that come to support the participant artists, all of them demonstrate such immense skills and experience, real professionalism as well. Although PAW's artists are different to the artists we might usually work with - in that they have different needs and ways of communicating - the professionalism is exactly the same as it would be in any other exhibition set up and has taught us so much."*

Partner Organisation, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Encouraging an understanding of neurodiversity

*"This exhibition is very impressive and really colourful! I love the exhibits I've seen so far. Definitely, the work should be on show here; it's so important that anyone wishing to express themselves has a place to do so. Anyone who came in here could find something to relate to or something that inspires them in some way, even if they don't know it immediately. It's made me think a lot about diversity already. It's having a lasting impression in terms of understanding the different needs, experiences and skills of those people around us."*

Audience Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

## 7.2 Programme challenges

In addition to those aforementioned strengths, ART FREEDOM CARE has naturally experienced certain challenges during its first year of delivery. As described in Figure 7.2 below, key issues during the past twelve months appeared to be focused upon, e.g. increased demand for programme places in a post-pandemic landscape; responding to new ways of working; decreased health and social care provision; maintaining channels of communication; balancing individual artist needs and expectations.

Figure 7.2 Programme challenges

### Increased demand in a post pandemic landscape

*"With the artist and staff teams being stretched with multiple programmes being delivered, it has been challenging to provide the consistency certain individuals need. Whilst most have returned after COVID restrictions were lifted, others have found the changes difficult and are only just starting to find a way back into the programme. Then PAW's increased profile alongside other services being closed, has seen an increase in demand for places on the programme. Funding and space restrictions mean that ultimately, we've been unable to provide everyone a space."*

Team Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Responding to new ways of working

*"The way we work as a consequence of COVID has become more atomised, due to having to spread out across the Arches. While having more space is great, something has been lost. New participants have joined, yet haven't been introduced to our previously collaborative way of working, so aren't used to this and are sometimes resistant. It's become less collaborative and more about individual practice. While this may suit some individuals, the benefits of communication/interaction/engagement that comes from collaborative processes has been somewhat lost, which feels a shame."*

Team Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Decreased health and social care provision

*"The pandemic and Brexit have contributed to severe staffing crises in health and social care, consequently the Support Collective is supporting and signposting more families struggling to navigate health and social care systems, or to recruit and retain staff. Worryingly, social and healthcare assessments for adults and children are still taking place remotely without the individual being present and are frequently going to appeal stage, which is causing significant stress to all involved."*

Team Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

### Balancing artist needs and expectations

*"The knowledge of artwork selling and this being how value is placed on what we are doing feels problematic. Of course the work deserves an audience and to be bought, but there have been some difficult conversations and expectations being created that perhaps might not be met. At the same time, showing and selling work clearly makes our artist/makers feel really proud, so this is also a good thing."*

Team Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22

## 8 Recommendations

- i. PAW is recommended to share the findings of this interim evaluation report across both Core Team and Artist Team members in order to:
  - Discuss the inputs, outputs and outcomes from ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22
  - Acknowledge financial, partnership and in-kind support
  - Celebrate the programme's achievements and learning outcomes
  - Investigate ways to address those issues described in the interim evaluation
  - Refine the aims and objectives of ART FREEDOM CARE for 2022-23.
  
- ii. PAW is recommended to take account of those individual factors contributing to the highly positive outcomes of ART FREEDOM CARE during the past twelve months, thus ensuring the successful delivery of the programme in its second year:
  - The delivery of unique, multi-sensory, person centred studio programme(s)
  - Nurturing individual interests and skills, thereby maximising potential
  - Maintaining a focus on artistic excellence across all ART FREEDOM CARE activity
  - Supporting whole family development through the Support Collective and PATH
  - The recruitment of highly skilled, experienced and empathic practitioners
  - Developing an entirely authentic, compassionate and kind environment.
  
- iii. PAW is advised to reflect upon and discuss the challenges experienced in delivering ART FREEDOM CARE during the past months, as described by both Core Team and Artist Team members as part of this interim evaluation process:
  - Responding to the changes in working practices resulting from COVID-19
  - The pressures put upon in-house programmes, as a result of off-site initiatives
  - Maintaining effective channels of communication between on and off-site activity
  - An increase in demand for Artist Collective and Support Collective programmes
  - Balancing Associate Artist needs with expectations regarding exhibiting/selling artworks
  - Supporting families coping with reduced health and social care provision.
  
- iv. PAW is recommended to take account of those improvements and/or developments suggested by Core Team and Artist Team members during the delivery of ART FREEDOM CARE in its first year, thereby maximising potential benefits and supporting the programme's delivery in its second year:
  - Ensure regular, meaningful communication across both Core Team and Artist Team
  - Strengthen and embed relationships with health and social care services
  - Investigate the potential for a dedicated in-house Studio Coordinator
  - Expand the pool of Associate Artists to include e.g. movement, music, sound practitioners
  - Revisit in-house programme structure, roles and responsibilities.



## 9 Summary and conclusions

This interim evaluation has described the inputs, outputs and outcomes of ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22, as experienced by those individuals engaging with and delivering the project during the past twelve months. Evaluation data suggests PAW's new in-house programme has resulted in benefits for the larger majority of stakeholders in its first year, including i.e. Artist Collective members; Support Collective members; Core Team and Artist Team members; PAW's partner organisations. In addition, the majority of quantitative targets established for ART FREEDOM CARE have been exceeded in the first year of delivery, as PAW – and indeed the world – navigate the enduring negative impacts of COVID-19. Outcomes for members of the Artist Collective described in this report include: increased confidence and self-esteem; social integration through creativity; a development of individual artistic practice; a sense of acceptance, agency and autonomy; the sharing of artworks with an international audience. For members of the Support Collective meanwhile, outcomes include: increased confidence and self-esteem; decreased social isolation; access to valuable skills and resources; increased family resilience. Finally, outcomes for partner organisations evidenced in the evaluation include: an improved awareness and understanding of neurominorities; access to professional skills and resources; audience engagement and development; the stimulation of important new initiatives.

It is widely acknowledged the global pandemic brought about a sense of fear and anxiety across the UK during 2020-21. This phenomenon inevitably led to psychosocial and mental health implications for both individuals and communities. The magnitude of impact has been – and continues to be – determined by a range of vulnerability factors including: developmental age; pre-existing health and/or mental health condition(s); being economically underprivileged; being quarantined due to infection and/or fear of infection. Coronavirus has been particularly challenging for individuals with learning disabilities, autism and complex needs. The need for routine and structure has been severely disrupted during the past two years, with people unable to go out and about, visit familiar places and/or take part in their regular weekly activities. Neurodivergent individuals may not have completely understood why their lives changed so dramatically, or may not have been able to verbalise their frustrations, while their usual support networks have been coping with the challenges of caring in an ever changing landscape. All of this has placed undue pressure upon PAW's Associate Artists, their families and wider circles of support, not least in terms of reduced health and/or social care provision.

Research suggests COVID-19 has resulted in both short and longer term impacts, increasing divisions in education, employment, health, social care and mental health. Without sustained and meaningful intervention, this widening gap is predicted to affect the physical, psychological and economic wellbeing of large parts of the population for the rest of their lives. It is evident then there is a pressing need for planning longitudinal and developmental programmes, to cater for the psychosocial and mental health needs of vulnerable individuals in this post pandemic landscape. There is also a necessity to improve and increase access to services as health and social care professionals attempt to address the COVID-related backlog, while the UK experiences its most severe economic crisis in fifty years. In spite of these serious global challenges, PAW has embarked on several large scale initiatives during the past year, alongside ART FREEDOM CARE. The nomination for the Turner Prize 2021 required extensive time spent planning and delivering an off-site exhibition and events programme, likewise with PAW's participation in Documenta 15. These projects have undoubtedly extended the profile of PAW's Artist Collective and Support Collective nationally and internationally. However, each has had impacts upon the delivery of in-house programmes, something to consider when moving into the next phase of ART FREEDOM CARE.

This interim evaluation has described the positive effects of an arts and community focused programme for individuals with complex needs and their supporters. In the current climate, the value of peer support and creative interventions such as ART FREEDOM CARE should not be underestimated and as such, make a valid case for further investment in both research and practice. The successful delivery of PAW's ground breaking and far reaching programmes are undoubtedly due to the shared vision, skills, energy and commitment of PAW's Core Team, Artist Team and volunteers. As PAW extends and develops its new and diverse ventures, time should now be taken to discuss the achievements of ART FREEDOM CARE during its first year, prior to moving forward in the most sustainable manner for all involved.

*“The funding landscape is becoming more and more challenging. We rely on securing around eighty per cent of the funding for the delivery of the programme through grants. Going forward, we will need to find ways of maintaining the level of support for those who need it but also, to look at ways where those who can start to develop their practice without the same level of support to reduce number of artist facilitators. There may be ways to lever funding through government incentives but currently there's a great deal of uncertainty across the sector.”*

Team Member, ART FREEDOM CARE 2021-22