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The Met

Annual Report

2024 / 2025

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Registered Charity No. 701879



Welcome

It's been a truly special year, filled with memorable moments and meaningful celebrations. At its heart was the 50th anniversary of The Met, a milestone that offered a wonderful opportunity to look back on how the organisation has grown and evolved over the years. It also gave us a chance to reflect on the important role it continues to play at the heart of Bury's cultural life, bringing people together through music, art, theatre and stories and enriching the community in so many ways.

Our golden anniversary encouraged us not only to celebrate our rich history but also to look forward with ambition and confidence. Throughout the year, we have celebrated both our own story and the creativity of the people and communities of Bury and Greater Manchester.

We have seen growth, with bookers showing the biggest increase at over 25%. A contributing factor to this being strong pantomime sales, which achieved a gross income of £100k and audiences over 6000. We deepened our commitment to grassroots music by expanding our support for northern artists. Our programme gives emerging songwriters and touring musicians, the space, expertise knowledge and audience connections they need to thrive.

We made meaningful progress on environmental responsibility through our involvement in Julie's Bicycle's Capital Readiness Programme, helping us move steadily toward our ambition of becoming a carbon neutral organisation.

Alongside these successes, we have continued to navigate the same financial pressures felt across the arts sector, with rising costs affecting every part of our work. Even in this climate, we remain firmly committed to ensuring that every experience at The Met, on stage, in our building, or through our community programmes, is delivered with care, quality and creativity. This commitment is only possible thanks to the ongoing support of our funders, partners and audiences, whose belief in our work helps us keep culture thriving in Bury.

We are especially grateful for the continued backing of Arts Council England, Greater Manchester Combined Authority and Bury Council. Their support enables us to deliver an ambitious programme that inspires audiences, supports artists and strengthens our place within the region's cultural landscape.

We also want to extend our heartfelt thanks to our corporate supporters, members, donors, volunteers and everyone who buys a ticket. Your contribution, in every form, helps us continue offering high-quality cultural experiences and ensures The Met remains a vibrant and valued part of Bury's creative community.

Lynsay Robinson
Chair of the Board

Victoria Robinson
Chief Executive

Audiences

Ticketing for 2024/2025

Bookers:

10,873 (↑25.6%)

Tickets sold:

42,456 (↑11.7%)

Ticket income:

£676,687 (↑8%)



Photo credit: Jenny O'Reilly

Audiences for 2024/2025

71%

of audiences came from Greater Manchester

42%

of audiences live in Bury

6%

of audiences live within 1 mile of The Met

14k

Facebook followers

5,285

Instagram followers

369,320

annual website visits

79%

of sales through the website

200+

live events delivered across music, comedy, theatre and family programming

37

volunteers contributed

680

hours

Supported over

1,000

individual artists

Programme & Artist Development

The 24/25 season delivered a vibrant and wide-ranging programme of live performance, strengthening our position as a key regional cultural hub.

Excluding pantomime activity, we hosted **201** live performances, offering a consistent platform for touring productions, emerging talent and established performers.

Highlights included three sold out work-in-progress performances by Paddy McGuinness and two sellout shows with IQ, which drew full capacity audiences from across the region and beyond. Nick Cope's Family Show, Judie Tzuke and Sleeper further reinforced our ability to attract high profile national touring artists.

Our partnership with Big Imaginations enabled us to programme high quality touring family theatre from both emerging and established creatives, expanding our offer for children and families in Bury.

We launched our Get A Round In series to support and showcase emerging songwriting talent from across Greater Manchester, reinforcing our commitment to grassroots music development and regional artist progression.

Our outstore partnership with Wax and Beans continued to complement our core programming, with performances from The Zutons, Joey Valence & Brae and The K's contributing to a dynamic live offer.



Our programme audit highlighted the breadth and inclusivity of our activity:

50%

supported female-identifying artists

35%

supported emerging artists

60%

featured new work

15%

supported LGBTQ+ artists

10%

supported artists are people of colour

24%

featured international artists

We have proudly been the home to three resident artists; Two Crows Arts Studio CIC, The League of Curiosity CIC, and local musician and youth facilitator Liam Frost. We are delighted to have welcomed over 70 bookings in our recording studio, through commercial income, project funded grants and in-kind support.

We continued to support local artist development through in kind rehearsal space and practical support for regional companies developing new work. This included supporting Bolton-born musician Toria Wooff with the recording of a music video for her debut album, which subsequently reached the Official Folk Albums Chart.

Looking ahead, we remain committed to expanding this strand of activity and strengthening The Met as a supportive base for local creatives and a launchpad for touring productions and new work.

Engagement & Access

A year of deeper connections, creative opportunity and community impact

The Met's **Engagement & Access** programme grew in scale, ambition and impact this year. We expanded workshops, strengthened school partnerships and deepened our focus on inclusion, wellbeing and creative development.

Expanding Creative Opportunities for Young People

We widened our offer for children and young people, responding directly to local need.

- **Leaps and Bounds** and **Bury Youth Dance** launched with Sport England's support, bringing high quality dance and movement to ages 7–18.
- **Bury Youth Theatre, Aiming High** and **Met Express** continued to thrive, producing regular performances and building confidence, skills and community. Together they raised over **£1,000**, with a further **£3,000** donated **in memory of a much loved Met Express member** - a powerful testament to the value of this work.
- **Meet Me At The Met** and **Movers and Shakers** secured two year National Lottery Community Fund support, ensuring stability for these vital community sessions.

These programmes remain central to reducing isolation, improving wellbeing and creating welcoming spaces for people of all ages.

Schools, Education & Cultural Leadership

The Met played an active role in shaping cultural education across the borough through our work with Bury's Local Cultural Education Partnership. We hosted a new South Asian Aspirations event for sixty Year 9 students, featuring four guest speakers sharing their journeys into the arts and culture sector. The event highlighted experiences of South Asian Communities entering the creative industries and offered relatable role models for young people. This work strengthens our role as a cultural leader and as an advocate for equitable access to creative futures.



“

“It has really moved him on with regards to being more confident. Couldn't believe it as he spontaneously sang along to 2 different songs whilst playing the drums in front of us.”

– Parent of participant

”

“

“I would like more opportunities like this for me to excel in my singing, and support with my dyslexia to help me be more confident with my singing and gain more knowledge about the music industry.”

– Participant

”



“

“The project came at a time when I needed to rebuild a sense of my own value and self esteem. It gave me an identity and future focus when I needed it most. And it was such fun – thank you.”

– Northern Female Voices Participant

”



Creative Projects Highlights

A series of ambitious, funded projects deepened our engagement with communities and emerging artists, enabling us to deliver meaningful creative opportunities across Bury:

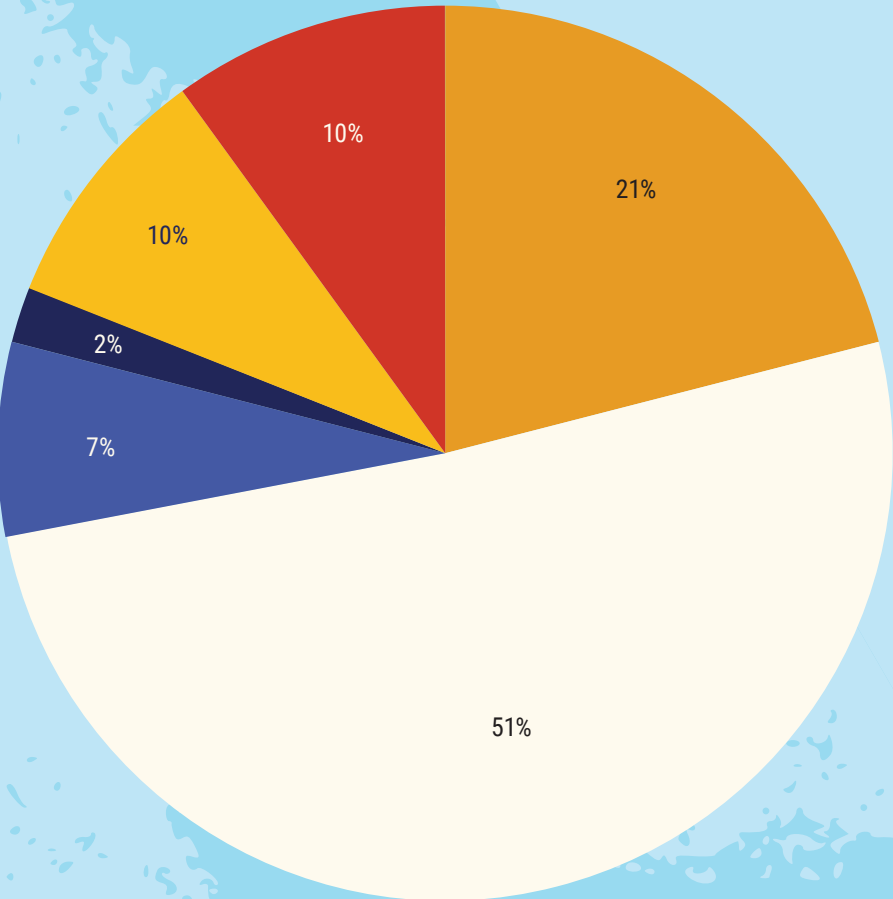
- **Northern Female Voices**, delivered with the Royal Exchange Theatre, supported 10 women through 16 hours of creative writing workshops, culminating in a sharing for 40 women at Heritage Open Weekend.
- **The Met EXperts Project** trained Met Express members as peer mentors, supporting SEND pupils from Holy Trinity Primary School to create their first original drama piece, performed at The Met for an audience of 30.
- **Arts for Wellbeing**, delivered with the ARC Centre, offered a 10 week music project for young people aged 11–16 experiencing challenges with mental health or emotional wellbeing.

Finance

Expenditure Sources

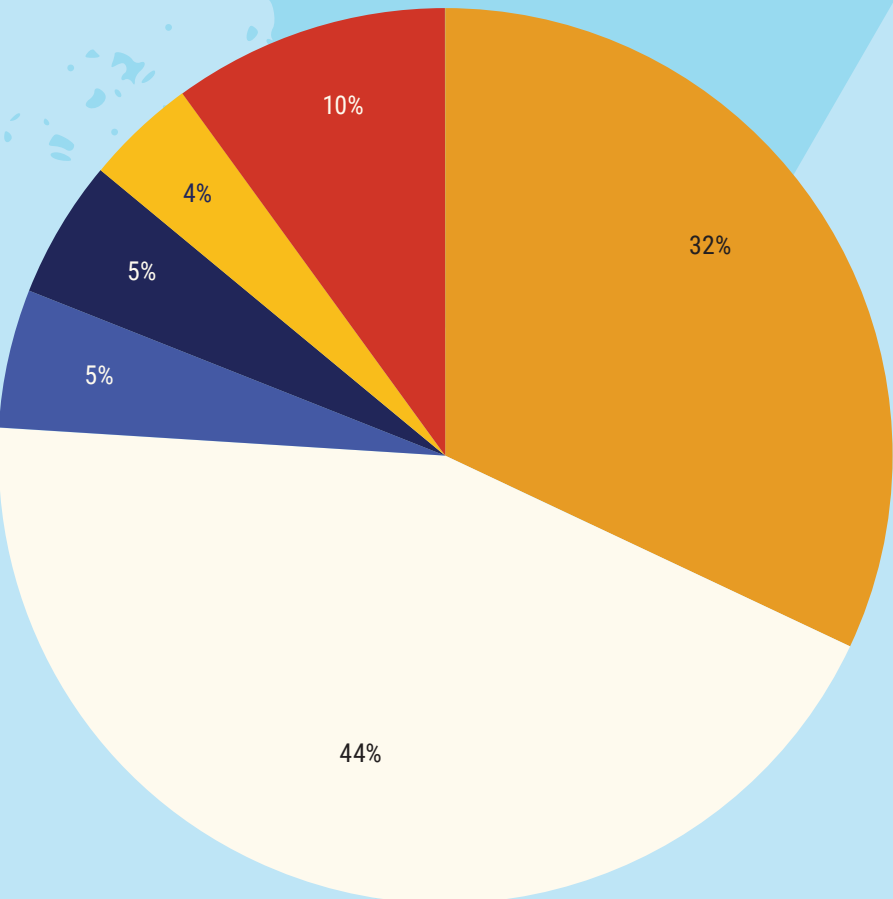
2024 / 2025

- Artists Costs
- Staff Costs
- Education & Outreach
- Infrastructure
- Bar & Catering
- Overheads



2023 / 2024

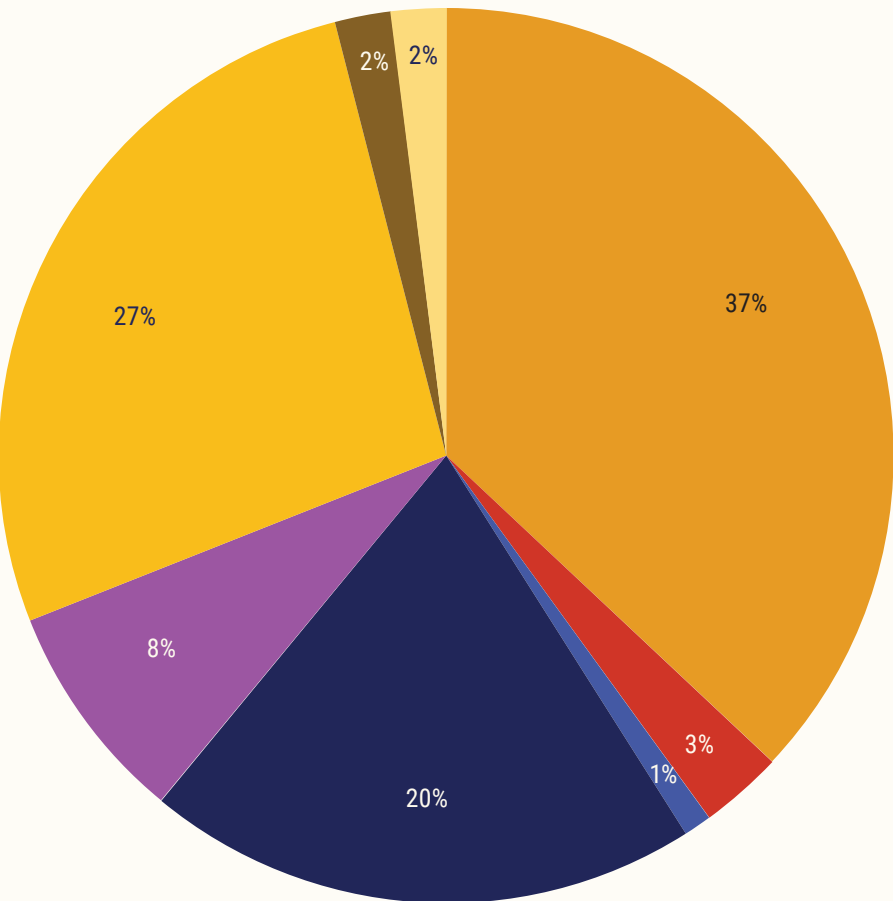
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- Overheads



Income Breakdown

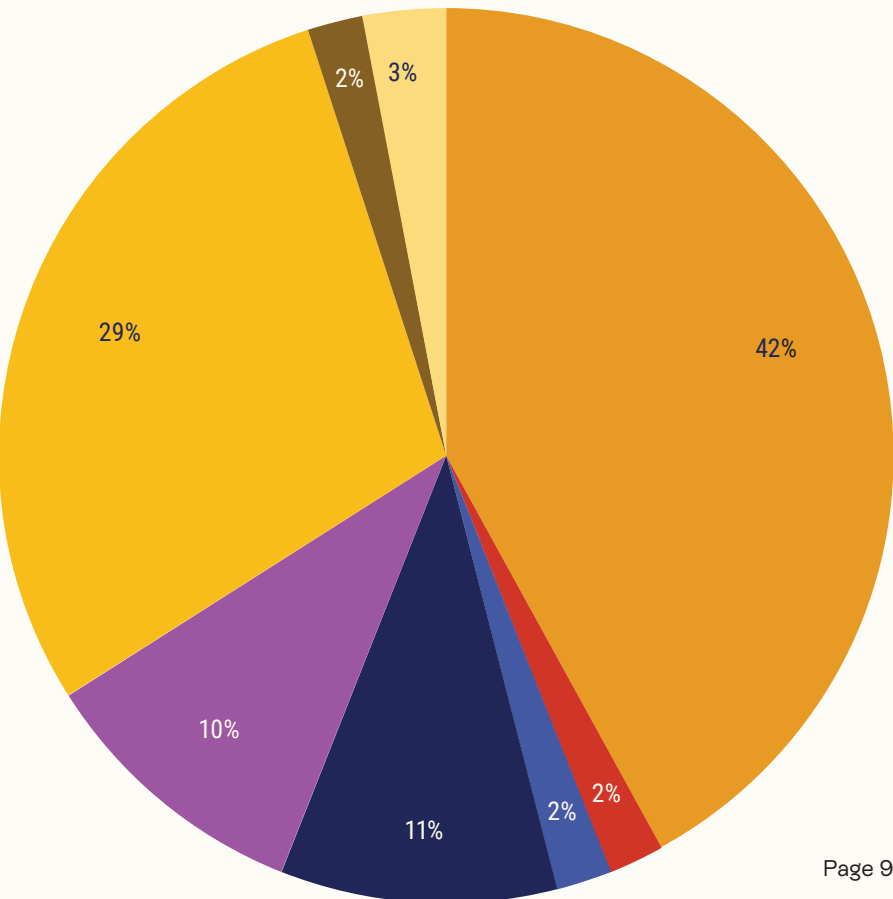
2024 / 2025

- Ticket & Hires Income
- Donations
- Sponsorship
- Catering (including Stanley Bar)
- Outreach & Education
- Grants
- Investment Income
- Other



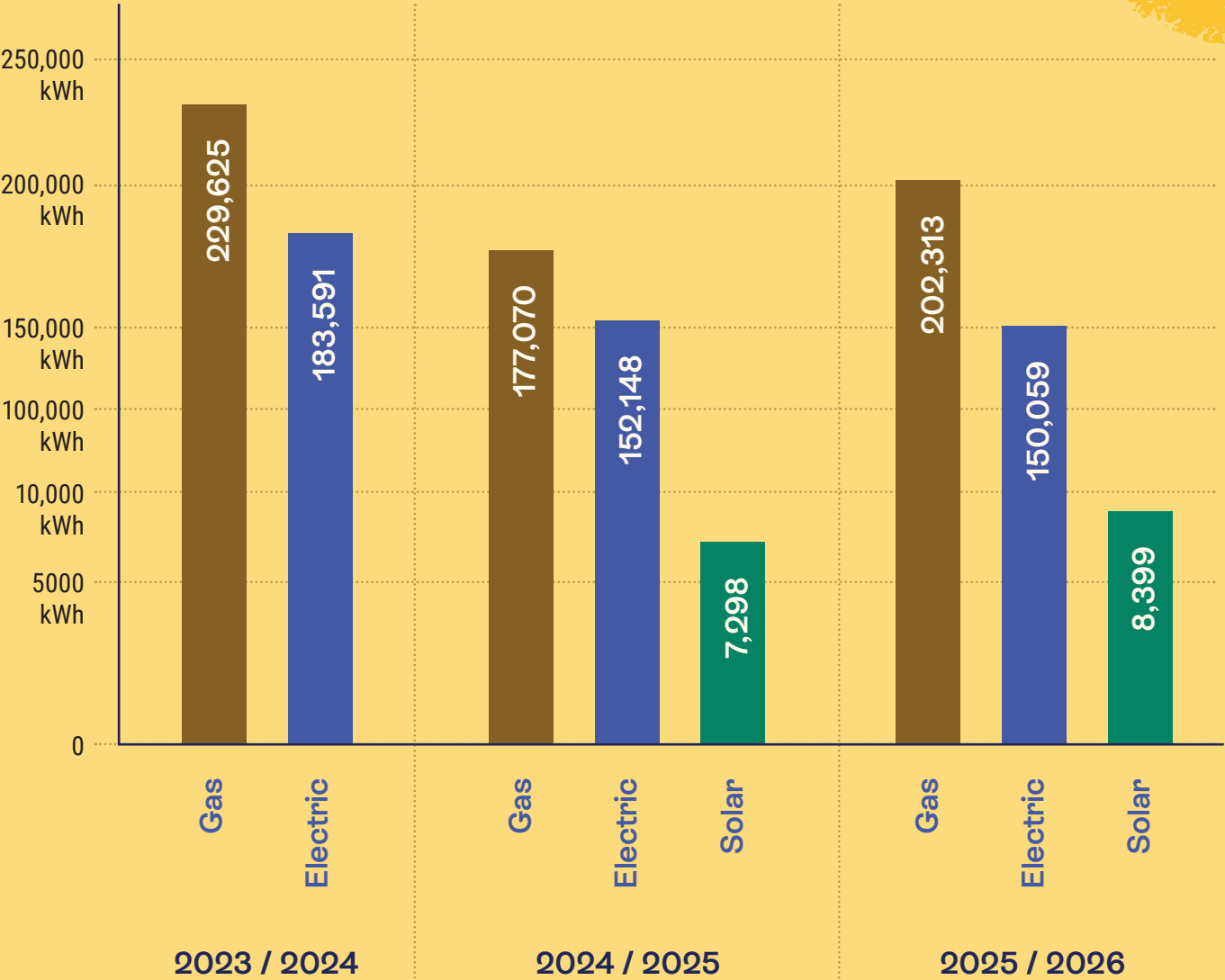
2023 / 2024

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Environment and Sustainability

Energy performance in 25/26 showed really encouraging progress, with a small drop in electricity use, a rise in solar generation, and overall steady consumption that reflects more efficient day-to-day management of the building. These improvements highlight the impact of our carbon-literacy training and the continued work of our internal Environment Group to embed greener practices across The Met.



Join us as a Corporate Partner

The Met is a registered charity and nationally recognised grassroots music venue, reinvesting every pound into independent live music, emerging artists, community programmes and the future of arts and culture in Bury.

Partnering with The Met gives your organisation more than brand visibility

We co create tailored partnership packages that align with your business goals, values and audiences, ensuring your support delivers meaningful impact and strong brand alignment.

Your investment nurtures local talent, helping young people, adults and families access high quality creative opportunities that build confidence, wellbeing and skills.

You strengthen Bury's creative economy, supporting jobs, training pathways and the development of the next generation of artists, producers and cultural leaders.



Your support delivers measurable social value, helping you meet **Environmental, Social and Governance, Corporate Social Responsibility** and community impact objectives with a trusted, well loved cultural charity.

Partnering with The Met demonstrates genuine commitment to community wellbeing, inclusion and cultural opportunity - values increasingly important to customers, employees and stakeholders.

You align your brand with a respected, long standing cultural institution at the heart of Bury, known for quality, integrity and positive impact.

It's a meaningful way to make a lasting difference, supporting creativity, local pride and the future of independent live music where it matters most.

If you're interested in working with us, or would like to explore corporate partnership or sponsorship opportunities, we'd be delighted to hear from you. Please contact us at marketing@themet.org.uk.

This information has been extracted from the annual 2024/25 audited statutory accounts. For the full statutory accounts download from Companies House.

With thanks to our key funders, Arts Council England, Bury Council and GMCA for their core funding support.

Major Donors:

Ian Warburton, Nick Halstead

Patrons:

Noreen Kershaw, Mark Potter,
Ian Warburton, Sasha Lord, Tony Walsh,
John Banbury, Craig Potter, DJ Paulette

Headline Members:

Jean Tarry, Julie Halliwell, Mr & Mrs
Neil Kirby, Jim Hurst, Ken Punshon,
Jacqueline Halstead, Nick Halstead,
Yael Eardley-Dutton, Shefali Henry,
Lawrence Johnson

Our Funders



Supported using public funding by
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ENGLAND**

**Bury
Council**

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Platinum sponsor



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