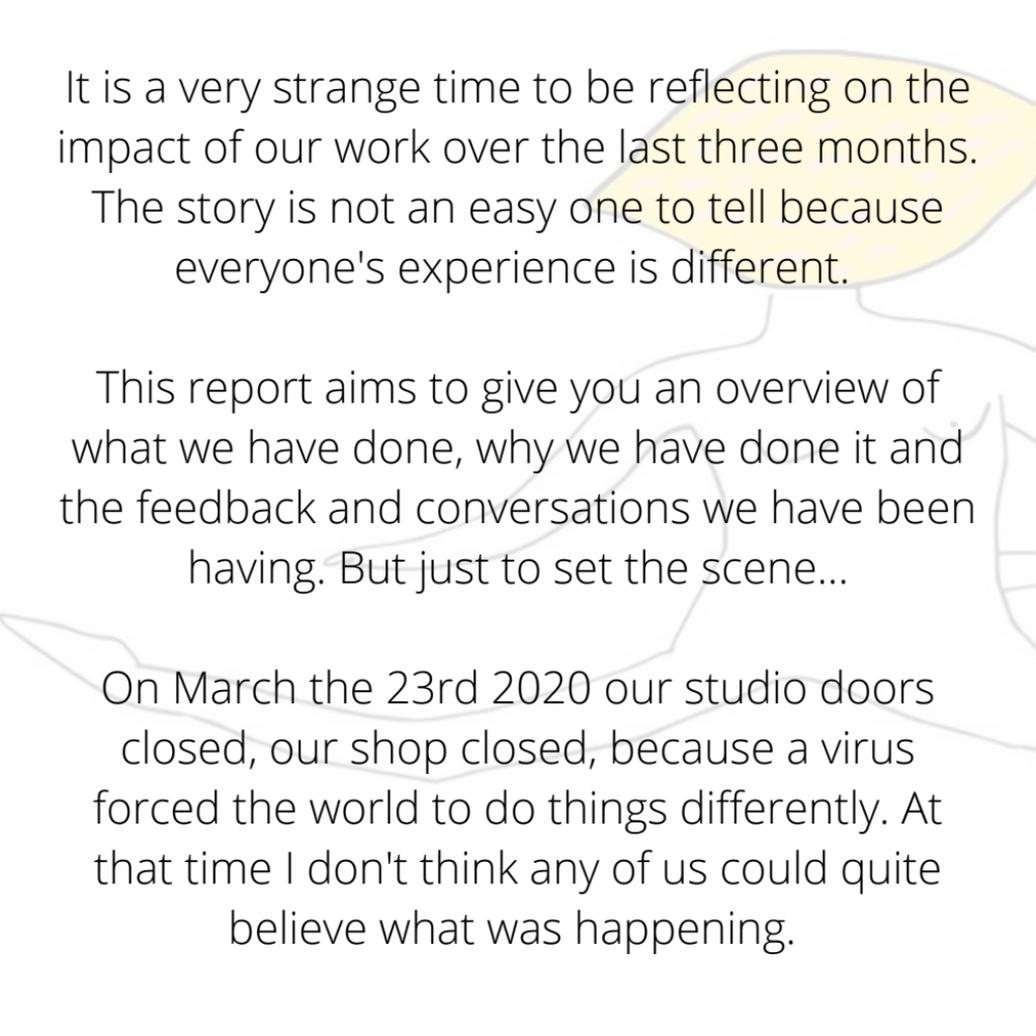


designs in mind.

Q1 Report 2020

+ a bit **extra**





It is a very strange time to be reflecting on the impact of our work over the last three months.

The story is not an easy one to tell because everyone's experience is different.

This report aims to give you an overview of what we have done, why we have done it and the feedback and conversations we have been having. But just to set the scene...

On March the 23rd 2020 our studio doors closed, our shop closed, because a virus forced the world to do things differently. At that time I don't think any of us could quite believe what was happening.

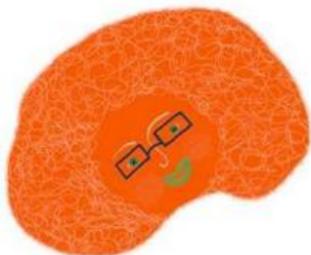
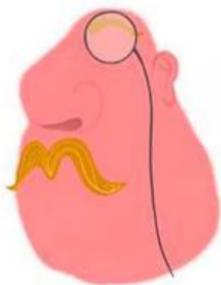


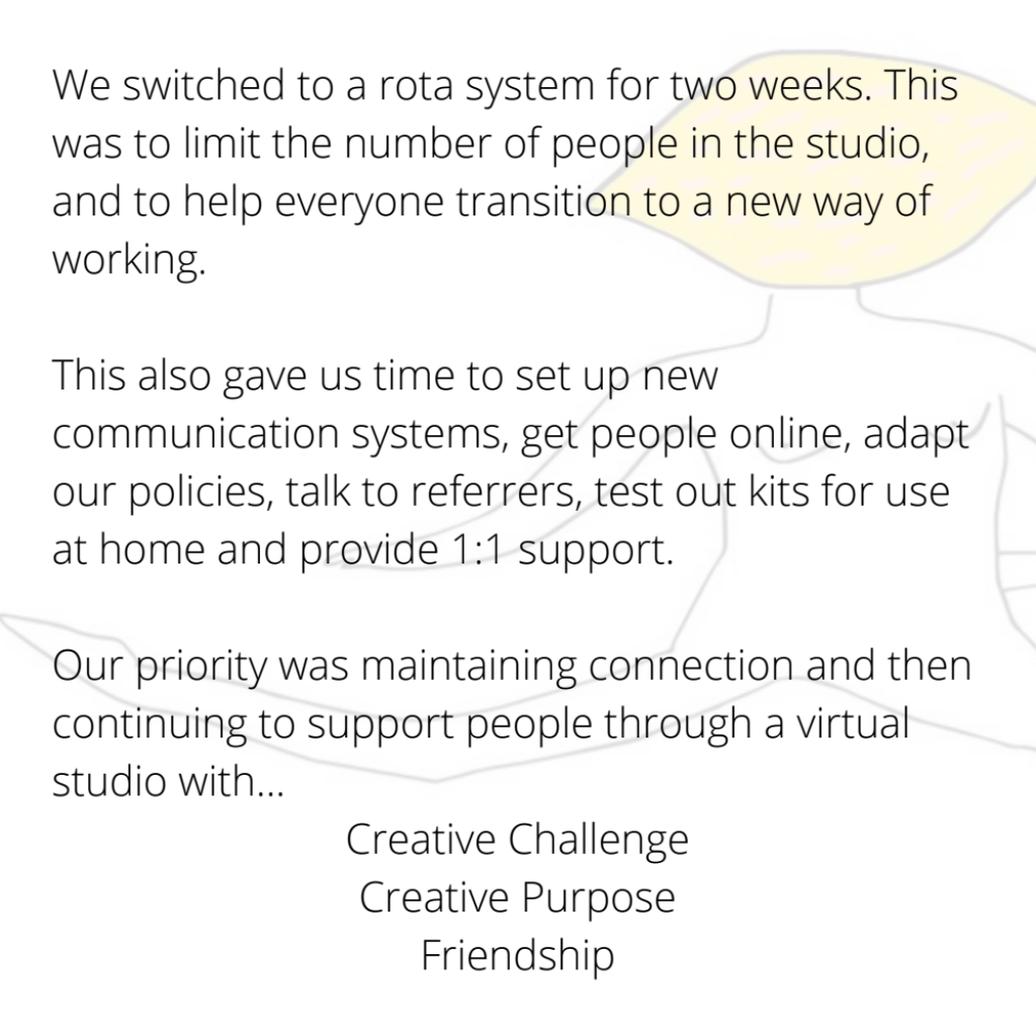


Twelve weeks ago we were supporting over 100 adults referred through mental health services who came to our studio once, twice, three times a week. We were in full on production with a commission for public art at The Robert Jones and Agnes Hunt Orthopaedic Hospital and new designs and products for retail. We would hear...

*'I don't know what I will do if
the studio is not there.'*

*'you are the only people I see,
please don't take that away from me.'*





We switched to a rota system for two weeks. This was to limit the number of people in the studio, and to help everyone transition to a new way of working.

This also gave us time to set up new communication systems, get people online, adapt our policies, talk to referrers, test out kits for use at home and provide 1:1 support.

Our priority was maintaining connection and then continuing to support people through a virtual studio with...

Creative Challenge
Creative Purpose
Friendship



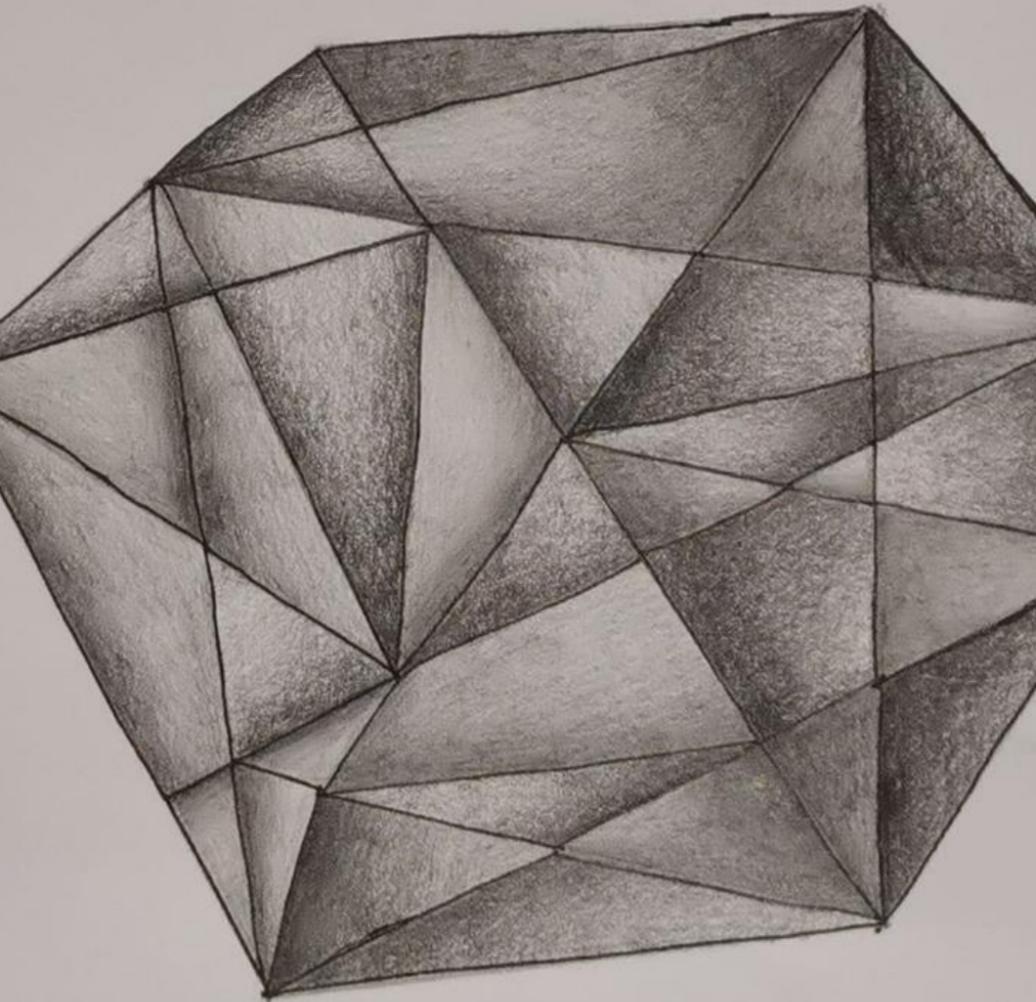
Culture challenge...

We are a community- staff, volunteers and members work alongside one another, supporting one another.

Often when you come in to the studio you can't tell who has what role. Roles and responsibilities can and do shift often.

Peer support happens naturally, without facilitation when we are alongside, people want to contribute as well as gain from being part of the community. When you take away the physicality of being alongside you lose the subtlety that invites this equality, and power dynamics shift.

In addition there has been an overload of information to process and inform decision making, which has ultimately narrowed the number of people involved



Culture challenge...

There are no trained mental health professionals at Designs in Mind and the sudden switch to remote support, which focused on talking and listening and not making, design or being together changes who we are.

We are predominantly a paper based organisation. Information is in filing cabinets, folders, on the wall- its visual and tangible. Our communication thrives on being face to face and not everyone has access to, or likes technology.

We had to tell people- 'no you can't do anything'. The furlough scheme felt uncomfortable and isolating, however valuable financially.



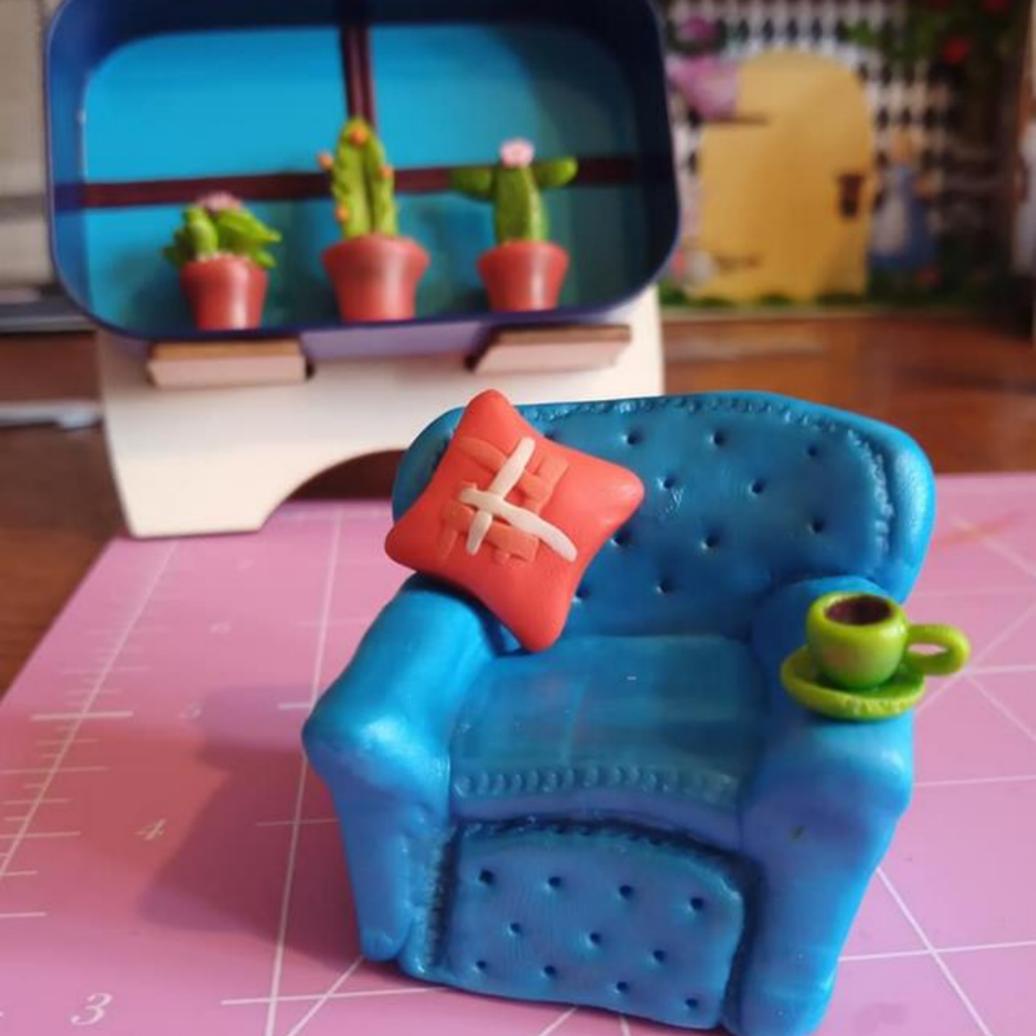
So what have we been doing?

For people who were already members of Designs in Mind, and part of production days...

Creative Challenge

- Making creative kits available- Felting, embroidery & clay
- Setting creative challenges for people to interpret and explore at home.
- Online workshops- that can be done from home, with simple and limited materials- eg oil based painting
- Specialist online workshop- guest artist Jim Parkyn senior model maker for Aardman Studios (also converted to DVD)

The sharing of work created during lockdown, with peers in a private and safe way (private social media group, email, newsletter (on and offline) has been essential for motivation and inspiration. This also built a sense of community where we are all contributing to content and feedback.



So what have we been doing?

For people who were already members of Designs in Mind, and part of production days...

Creative Purpose

Our online shop has been open throughout the last 12 weeks and has continued to sell work made by members, ensuring we are still visible and sharing our story.

During lockdown we have set design tasks to create new digital downloads for people to share with family and friends, and design tasks to turn in to greeting cards which we can get manufactured.

Our latest collection of designs has also gone live during the last 12 weeks as a series of posters and cards.



So what have we been doing?

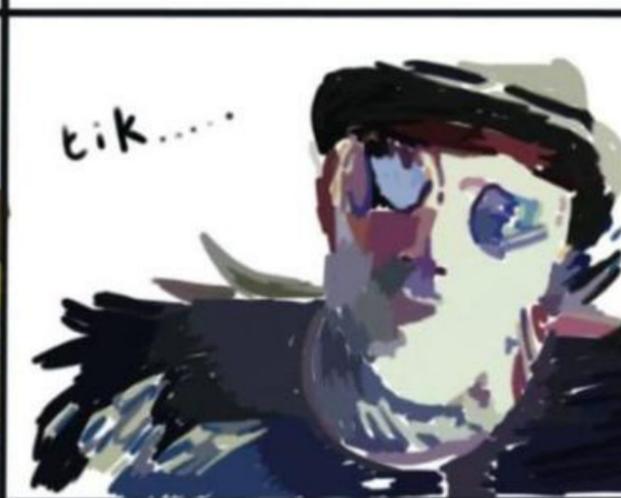
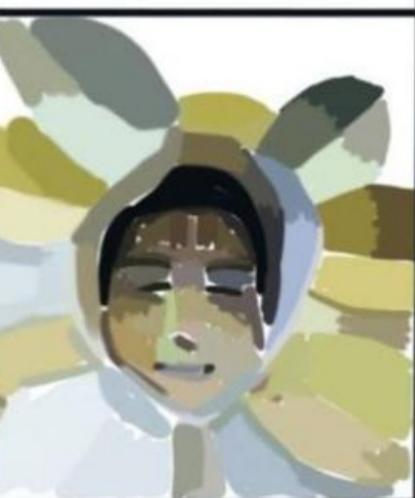
For people who were already members of Designs in Mind, and part of production days...

Friendship & Community

We have adopted the Camerados Spoon Rooms to run online peer support groups- as coffee mornings. These are a chance to talk, a chance to listen and hopefully a way to make video calls more sociable and less awkward. A place to be together, permission to be rubbish, no fixing, where we can look out for each other and get through tough times.

Making Alongside is a regular zoom where people can come and bring whatever they are working on be with others.

Fancy Dress (no pressure) zoom has been a Friday Night Social- a way of celebrating another week.



What have people said...

'I have had on several occasions really strong desires to self harm and have suicidal thoughts, but just being able to connect has been invaluable'

'Bridie's workshops and the creative challenges were what kept me busy and gave me ideas for work that I wanted to do for myself. The challenges have led me to do things outside of my comfort zone and I think I've grown more confident in what I can achieve. The good things facebook group was great for keeping in touch with what everyone else was doing.'

'It has given me the confidence to start work recently'

It has helped to still feel a part of the designs community when it felt initially all was lost.



What have people said...

'As the weeks went by I realised how much I enjoyed just reading about how all of my friends at DIM were and still are dealing with life at the moment. Seeing them do things that I am not comfortable doing, felt like I was still apart of it all. Seeing their wonderful artwork and photos became a part of my daily routine and that is just magic.'

'The telephone check ins have lifted my spirits'

'I talk differently to you on the phone, if I talk honestly with family they will just worry, but you listen and I feel better.'

'The various meetings & creative projects have improved my artistic skills & kept me busy. The social media pages have been very successful too I think it's been very important to keep in touch with each other, especially those of us who live alone.'



What have people said...

'DM makes me think positively about my future'

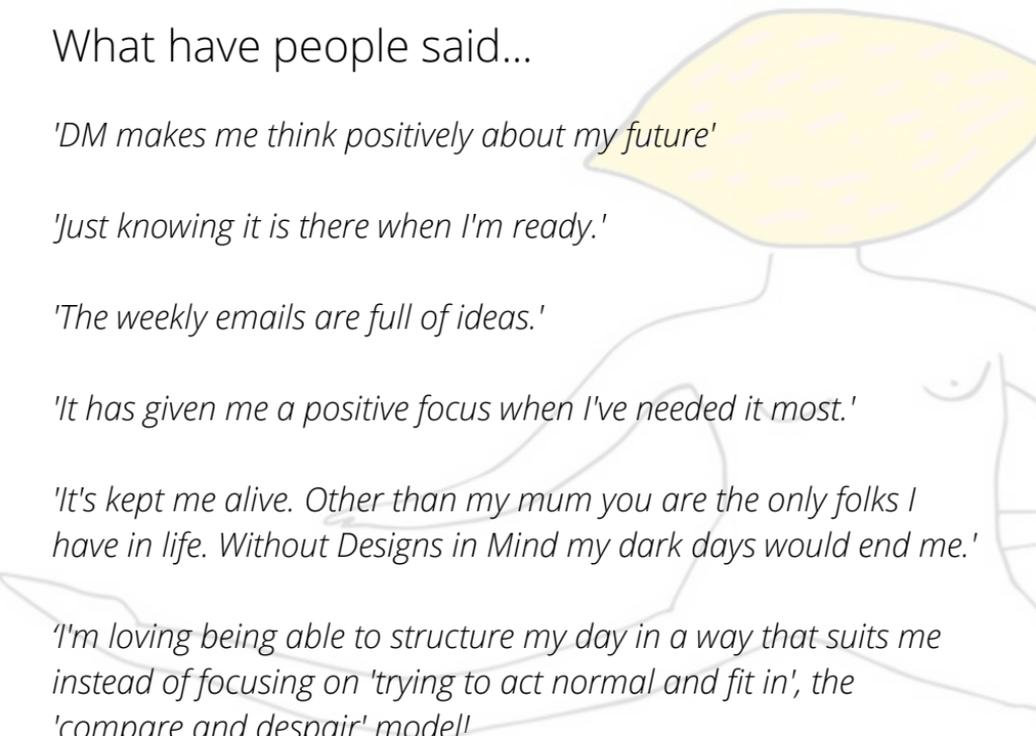
'Just knowing it is there when I'm ready.'

'The weekly emails are full of ideas.'

'It has given me a positive focus when I've needed it most.'

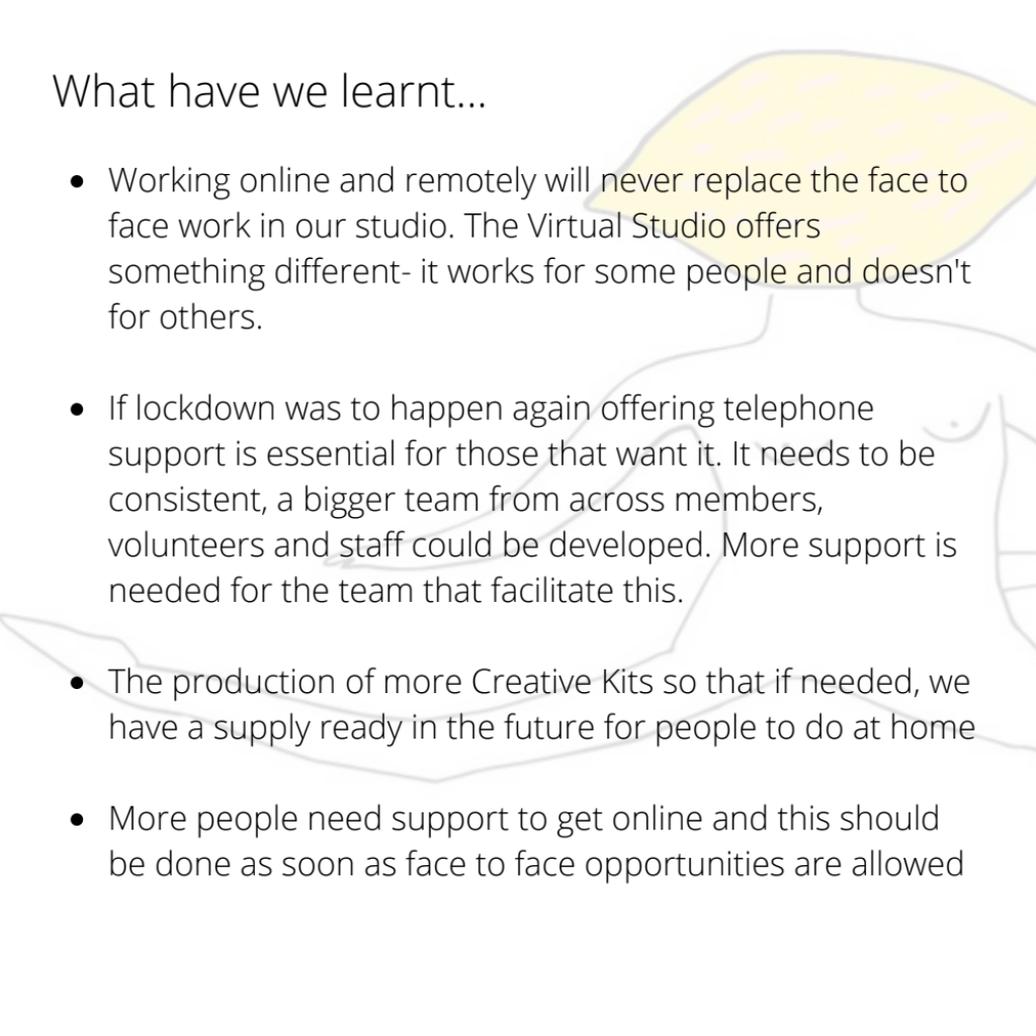
'It's kept me alive. Other than my mum you are the only folks I have in life. Without Designs in Mind my dark days would end me.'

'I'm loving being able to structure my day in a way that suits me instead of focusing on 'trying to act normal and fit in', the 'compare and despair' model!'





What have we learnt...

- Working online and remotely will never replace the face to face work in our studio. The Virtual Studio offers something different- it works for some people and doesn't for others.
 - If lockdown was to happen again offering telephone support is essential for those that want it. It needs to be consistent, a bigger team from across members, volunteers and staff could be developed. More support is needed for the team that facilitate this.
 - The production of more Creative Kits so that if needed, we have a supply ready in the future for people to do at home
 - More people need support to get online and this should be done as soon as face to face opportunities are allowed
- 



New Referrals- Virtual Studio

Finding a way to support new people, and people who haven't yet joined the production team felt like a huge challenge. How can we develop a relationship and build a community between strangers? How do we still offer something creative, with limited resources that people can do at home? How can we support people emotionally if we have never met?

On the 18th of May we launched our Virtual Studio for new referrals. With a similar structure to the rest of the studio, when people are first referred to Designs in Mind, they are brought together with 7 other people to form a small and supportive group, for a 12 week programme. This is supported by 5 members of our team- 3 of whom have been members of the studio for the last few years.

Each week people learn creative skills, share their work in the Raspberry Gallery and come together in a Spoon Room.



New Referrals Virtual Studio

Just to say, absolutely loving the zoom thing! Can't believe I'm enjoying it so much, especially as I'm so terrified of cameras.

Thank you for doing this. Just wanted to say, thank you very much for doing the first video workshop this week. It was lovely to see you both!

I love your emails. They are always so full of wonderfully interesting stuff, and the 'chatty' intro always makes them feel so much more personal. Like I'm hearing from a friend.

I love Pip's reminders about the Zoom meetings and the workshops. One feels like I'm receiving a present in the post each week the other like it's an invitation to a party with a group of friends. Which it is really I suppose!



Q1 in numbers...

The Team

72 Members

26 New Referrals

9 Volunteers 162 hours

9 Staff Active, 7 Staff furloughed (currently 3) 2 Redundancies

2 Members take on paid responsibilities

4 Members take on voluntary responsibilities

6 members actively involved on Executive

Creative Challenge

Making Alongside Zoom- 36 attendances 8 sessions

Workshop videos- 12 films 419 film views

Creative Kits- 178 kits delivered

Creative Purpose

New products online- 17 new designs and products

Commissions/ Public Art Development- 2

Hits on JOLT website- 782

Hits on Designs in Mind website- 1167

Audience on social media- 5437

Sales Income- £639

Friendship and Community

Spoon Room Zoom (Peer Support Groups)- 64 attendances 30 sessions

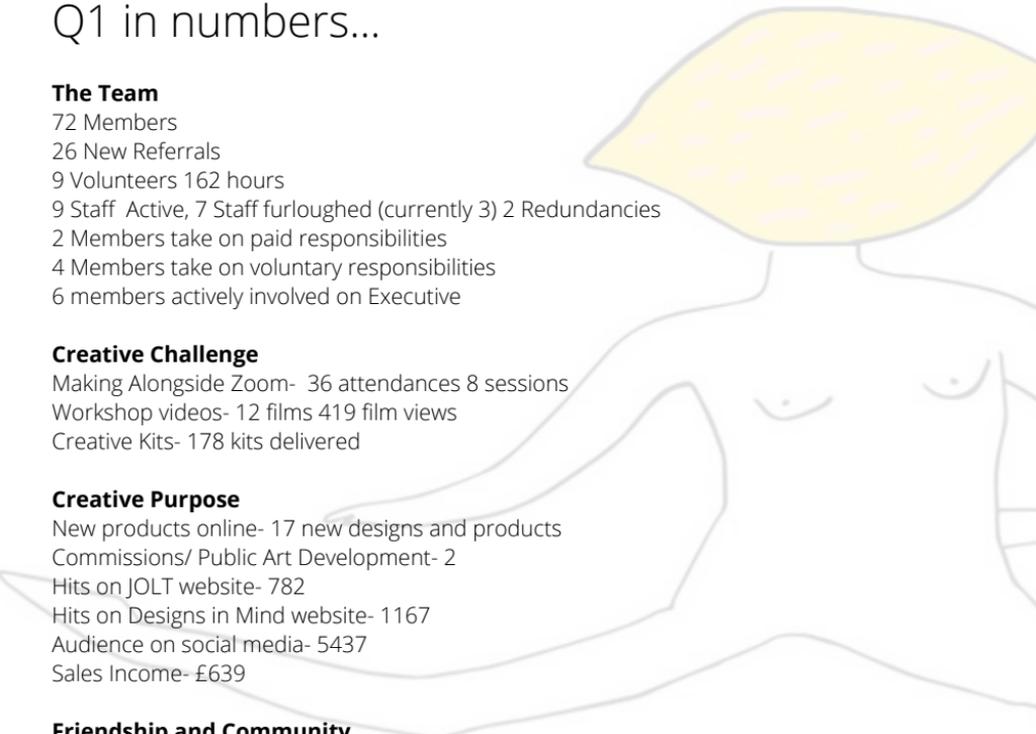
Friday Night Fancy Dress Social Zoom- 124 attendances 12 sessions

Good Things Facebook Community- 722 posts 52 Active Members

Group support newsletters- 463 clicks to links shared

1:1 Support Calls- 576

Connections to other services- 78/ Os Nosh partnership food deliveries- 36





Q1 in numbers contd...

New Referrals

26 people referred

Referral partners...

Shropshire Recovery Partnership
Psychosis West Pathway
Community Interventions Pathway
Occupational Therapy
Churchmere GP Group

Creative Challenge

3 workshop opportunities
6 kits delivered

Friendship and Community

Spoon Rooms (Peer Support Groups) - 13 opportunities 24 attendances
Raspberry Gallery - 71 shares of work created
Telephone Calls - 48

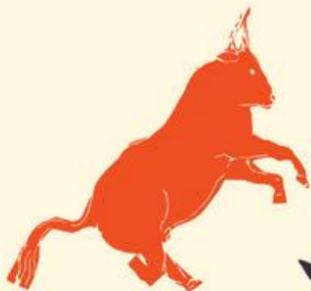
Training and Development

Equality and Diversity Shropshire Training - 11 staff and volunteers
Resilience Shropshire Training - 14 staff and volunteers
Listening support with Samaritans - 4 staff and volunteers

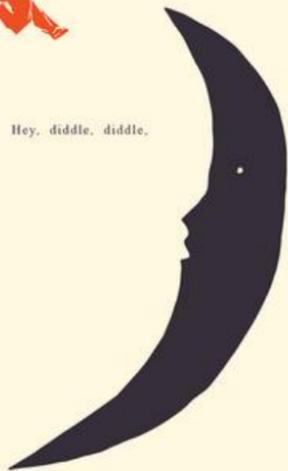
Other Developments

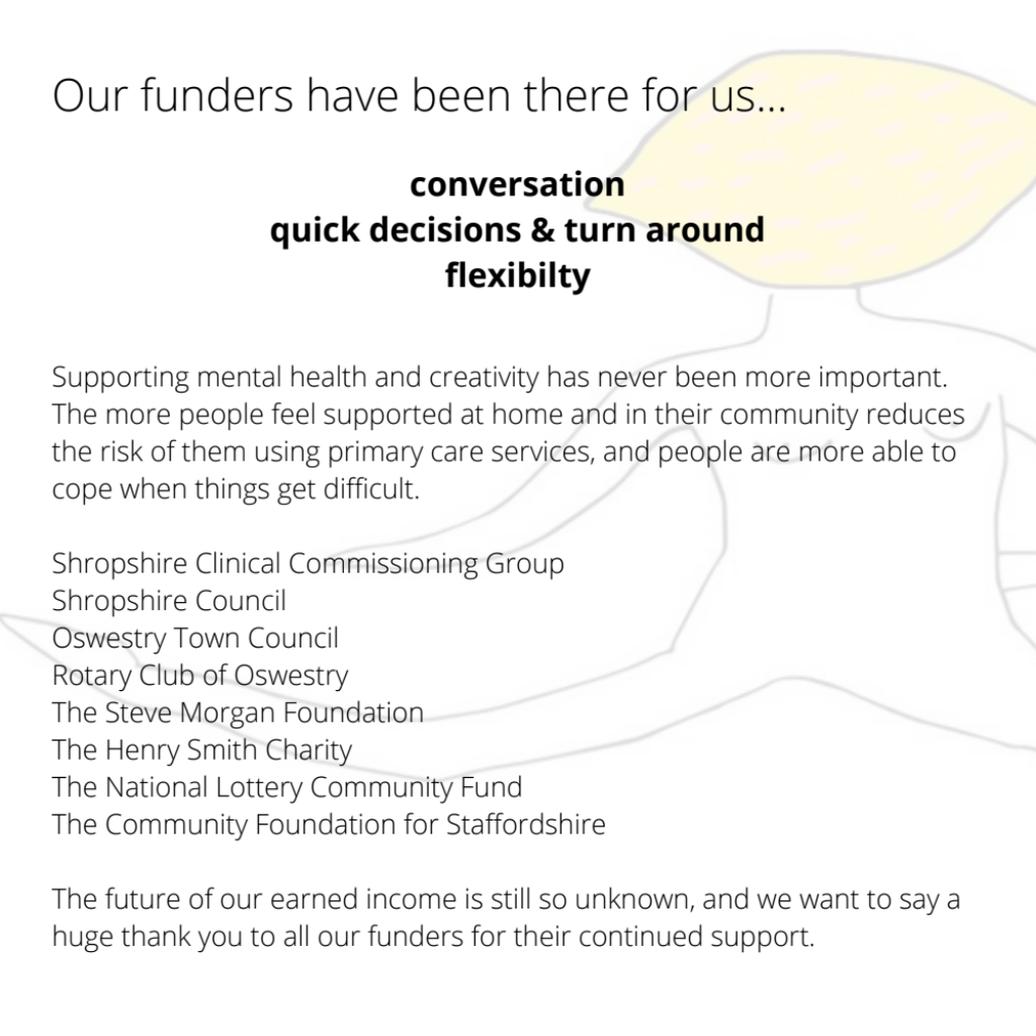
Mental Health Partnership Board - 1
Shropshire Mental Health Resilience and Prevention Network - 6
Shropshire CCG Support Meetings - 4
Social Enterprise UK Support Meeting - 1





Hey, diddle, diddle,





Our funders have been there for us...

conversation
quick decisions & turn around
flexibility

Supporting mental health and creativity has never been more important. The more people feel supported at home and in their community reduces the risk of them using primary care services, and people are more able to cope when things get difficult.

Shropshire Clinical Commissioning Group
Shropshire Council
Oswestry Town Council
Rotary Club of Oswestry
The Steve Morgan Foundation
The Henry Smith Charity
The National Lottery Community Fund
The Community Foundation for Staffordshire

The future of our earned income is still so unknown, and we want to say a huge thank you to all our funders for their continued support.



Finance Report....

Income

Contract Income- £26,550

Grant Income- £52,963

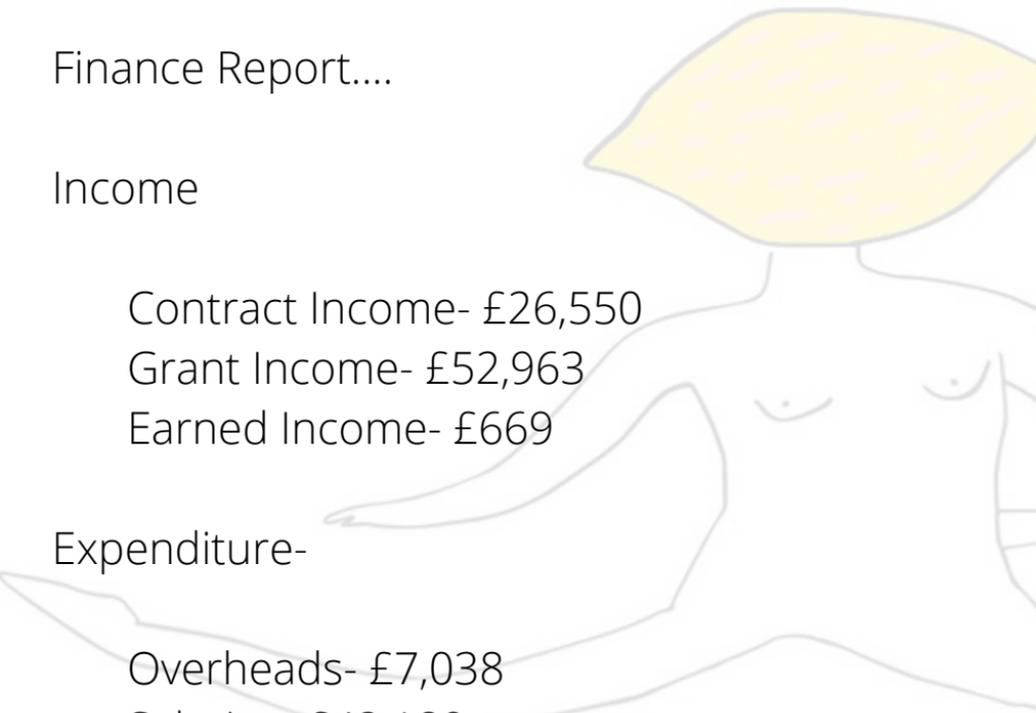
Earned Income- £669

Expenditure-

Overheads- £7,038

Salaries- £42,189

Restricted project budget- £1025.26



CREATE YOUR SPACE

We want you to get modeling in line with the fun that Jim Pakyn from Aardman studios has created for us. You will receive a kit to create your own miniature world out of polymer clay. This can be a replica of the space around you (seeing as we're all stuck at home) or it can be your dream of a white room or just an element - like a piece of furniture or your furnishings. If you are able to then photograph and send them in to us we can have a virtual gallery of our work.

In your kit you will receive a variety of polymer clay colours and some basic tools for shaping.

These kits will help inspire us to make something new at home and keep us connected through the

What comes next...

Our priority is being able to open the studio again, to be together again, making alongside.

In the short term we are planning to open in a different venue to ensure ease of access and so that people can come together safely.

We have two public art projects to get started on, (dare I say it) Christmas to prepare for, new designs to experiment with and a huge #GoodEgg campaign to launch. There is a lot to be excited about.

Our virtual studio will continue to grow and develop as we use this to connect to more people looking for support across Shropshire.





And finally...

This is the last report I will write as CEO. I am stepping down from the end of this month and Designs in Mind will now be led by two incredible people- Ruth Thomas and Cailline Lea. With a huge passion for the company, both have had roles within Designs in Mind over the last 4-5 years and at this time this experience is so important.

A new creative adventure is about to begin.

Being part of Designs in Mind is wonderful, there is nothing else like it, I love it. I will still be around and part of the team in a different way. Designs in Mind has changed my life and I am so so so glad I found it.





Mental Health support, creativity and community have never been more important.

Together we are finding ways to live life.

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