Somewhere to Shine.

Somewhere to Grow.

Somewhere to Go.



Impact Report 2025/26

Foreword

From our CEO & Artistic Director

Every year, Theatre Peckham is shaped by the people who walk through our doors. Their ideas, creativity, energy and ambition continue to inspire us and remind us of the important role culture plays in creating connection, opportunity and belonging.

Throughout this year, I have witnessed special moments in all corners of our work. I have seen young people step onto a stage for the first time. I have watched artists share inspiring new stories. I have sat alongside parents, teachers, partners and community members whose belief in the power of culture continues to strengthen what we do.

These moments stay with me because they reveal the impact that can be achieved when people are given the opportunity to realise their potential. They remind me that creativity has the power to open doors that can shape a person's future. That is why spaces like Theatre Peckham matter. They provide room for people to discover new possibilities.

Relationships sit at the heart of this work. New people continue to join our community, alongside the lasting connections that have shaped Theatre Peckham across generations. Those relationships create a sense of belonging and continuity that remains one of Theatre Peckham's greatest strengths.

As we approach our 40th anniversary, I feel grateful for everyone who contributes to our story.

Our young people, artists, staff, freelancers, volunteers, partners, audiences, funders and supporters all play an important role in shaping what Theatre Peckham is today and what it will become tomorrow.

I hope this report captures the impact of Theatre Peckham and reflects the brilliant people at the heart of everything we do.

Dr Suzann McLean MBE
CEO & Artistic Director
Theatre Peckham



A Spotlight On 2025/26

The story of Theatre Peckham has always been one of possibility. Rooted in the belief that children and young people, artists and communities thrive when they are given the opportunity to realise their full potential and made to feel they belong.

In 2025/26, we defined the Theatre Peckham Model. This is our distinctive approach to developing talent, guiding children, young people and early-career artists from first participation to professional opportunity. Through a connected model of training, development and new work, we champion new voices and help shape a more inclusive creative sector.

At Theatre Peckham, we know that belonging matters, creativity builds confidence, and people thrive when their potential is recognised and nurtured.

That's why everything we do is designed to ensure children and young people, artists and communities have:

Somewhere to Go,
Somewhere to Grow,
Somewhere to Shine.

Everything highlighted in this report reflects the power of a connected ecosystem from first engagement through to artistic, personal and professional development.



13,069

workshops and activities were attended by young people in 2025/26

8,687

through our Academy

698 unique participants across 2 academic years

3,536

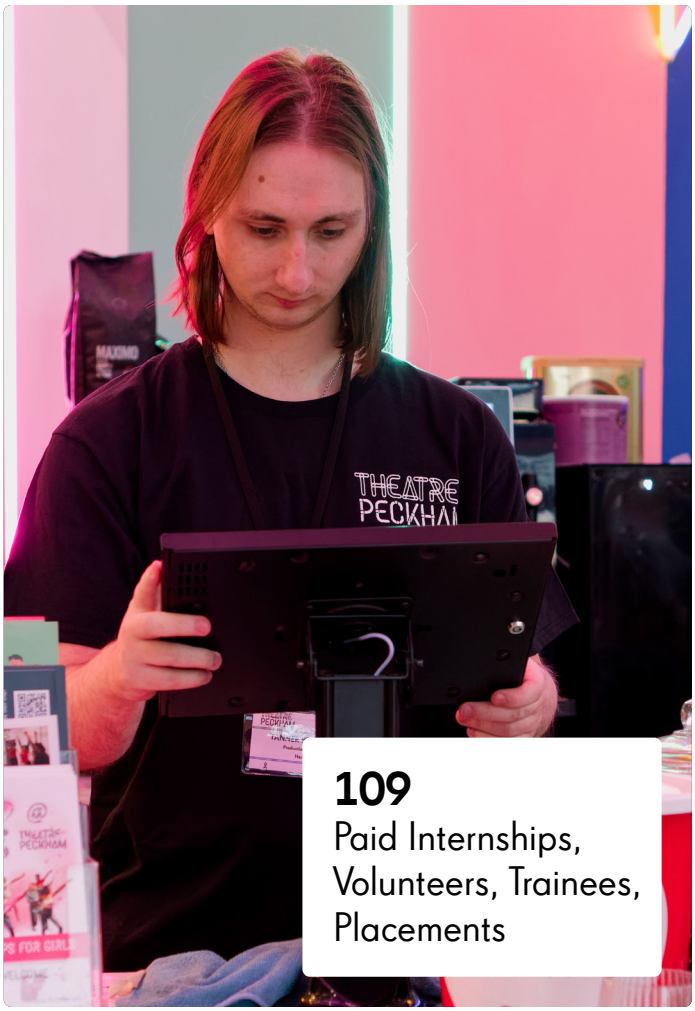
through Community workshops & placements

846

through Young Peckham

85 unique participants





109
Paid Internships, Volunteers, Trainees, Placements

25,602
total hours of creative activity

12,209
Academy

10,895
Community workshops & placements

2,498
Young Peckham

23,168
Audience Members

389
Artists Supported

260
Performances

38
Schools Engaged



1,142
Free rehearsal space hours to local artists

Why Theatre Peckham Matters Now:

Local Need. Lasting Impact.

In 2025/26, the need for Theatre Peckham's work remains clear. Across England, one in five children and young people aged 8-25 are facing challenges that affect their mental wellbeing. The demand for expert mental health support is at historically high levels. At the same time, nearly 950,000 young people across the UK were not in education, employment or training in spring/summer 2025, highlighting the challenges many of our children face in accessing opportunities and building confidence for the future.

These national challenges are felt even more acutely by the local communities we support on our doorstep. Peckham and Camberwell sit within one of London's most creative and diverse boroughs, and many families continue to experience significant inequality.

31% of children in Southwark are living in poverty after housing costs, compared with 21% nationally.

Behind these figures are young people growing up with fewer opportunities to access arts, culture, enrichment activities and professional networks. This matters because the creative industries are one of the UK's most dynamic and successful sectors, offering significant opportunities for employment and personal development. Yet those opportunities are not equally accessible to everyone, and many talented young people still face barriers to participation and progression.

Only 16% of people working in creative occupations come from working-class backgrounds.

These realities make our mission even more important. By placing local young people centre stage, creating accessible pathways into the creative industries, and championing diverse talent and leadership, we are helping to create a cultural sector that is inclusive, representative and resilient.

Sources: NHS England Mental Health of Children and Young People Survey 2023; Office for National Statistics (NEET statistics, 2025); Trust for London Poverty Profile (Southwark); Southwark Data Observatory; Creative Industries Policy & Evidence Centre; UK Social Mobility Commission.

The Theatre Peckham Model

The Theatre Peckham Model is the framework through which we deliver impact, connecting creative engagement, artist development and community infrastructure to support long-term outcomes in confidence, wellbeing, skills and progression. We believe that everyone's journey looks different, so people join us at different stages, move between opportunities and engage in ways that reflect their needs and ambitions. The strength of the model lies in the connections between these experiences, creating a stable and supportive ecosystem where people can develop, progress and reconnect over time, ensuring they always have Somewhere to Go, Somewhere to Grow and Somewhere to Shine. The achievements outlined below reflect the scale and reach of this work during 2025/26.

Create

Creative engagement for children, young people and families

Theatre Peckham Academy enabled over 300 young people to build confidence, develop creative skills and access performance and progression opportunities through weekly training.

Imagine & Play helped under-fives and their families develop creativity, confidence and social connection through 21 early years sessions.

We Move provided opportunities for young girls to stay active, build friendships and express themselves creatively through 19 holiday programmes.

Schools Programmes supported children and young people across more than 30 schools to improve wellbeing, navigate key transitions and raise aspirations through creative learning projects.

Develop

Artist progression and creative productions

Young Peckham supported 85 young people to develop creative skills, expand professional networks and progress towards employment, further education and careers in the creative industries.

Peckham Fringe Festival provided 223 early-career artists with opportunities to develop their practice, showcase new work and connect with audiences.

Young, Gifted & Black provided a platform for 57 young Black artists to share their work and amplify their stories.

Our Festive Show brought together young people and industry professionals to create and deliver a large-scale professional experience.

Connect

Community spaces and cultural infrastructure

Theatre Peckham provided a welcoming cultural hub where local people could participate in, experience and shape creative activity.

Canada Water Theatre expanded access to arts and culture by providing opportunities for communities to engage as audiences, participants and theatre-makers.

The Undercroft ensured young people on the Sceaux Gardens estate could access activities and support within their own community.

THEATRE PECKHAM

Wherever your journey begins, opportunity awaits.

Somewhere to Go

Ensuring children and young people, artists and communities have access to creative opportunities and a place where they belong.

Who accessed our opportunities?

We believe every young person deserves somewhere to go: a place where they feel welcome and encouraged to realise their potential. In 2025/26, we continued to connect more young people with creative opportunities. We also extended our reach within the communities at the heart of our mission:

71% of all participants self-identified as being from Global Majority backgrounds

- Across Young Peckham, 52% of participants lived in neighbourhoods within the lowest third of areas nationally by deprivation and 82% were from Global Majority communities.
- Our community programmes reflected a similar picture, with 77% of participants living in Southwark, 69% in the lowest third of LSOAs, and 85% identifying as Global Majority.



Theatre Peckham is a place where young people choose to stay,

85% of Academy students continue their participation between terms,

demonstrating the value of sustained creative engagement and the strong sense of belonging nurtured across our programmes. We also celebrated young people's achievements through 19 Jack Petchey Awards, which recognise outstanding young people.

Beyond participation, we continue to champion diverse talent throughout our artistic ecosystem, and remove barriers to access for young audiences:



Schools:

1700 students from 24 schools attended our Festive Show, through discounted ticket schemes

Partnerships with **38** schools allowed us to continue ensuring that creativity, culture and opportunity remained accessible to local young people

Local Ticket Schemes:

1 in 6 of all tickets sold this year were through our discounted Peckham Local scheme

Cultural Visits:

29 Young Peckham participants attended performances and industry experiences, gaining valuable insight into the wider creative sector as part of their training

Academy students accessed free opportunities to experience theatre beyond Peckham, in venues including Shakespeare's Globe

Participation:

69% of Peckham Fringe artists were from Global Majority backgrounds

92% of Young, Gifted & Black artists were from Global Majority backgrounds, whilst 71% were Southwark-based and 65% were under 30

Meet Zahira

Young participant

"I first attended Theatre Peckham at 6 years old, taking ballet, jazz and musical theatre classes. Since then, I've been in Young & Talented and Music Production where my class got to record and produce using industry level equipment whilst filming a music video at the state-of-the-art W1 Curates Studios. Digital music production taught me how to use technical applications like Logic and also introduced me to many new genres inaccessible through live instruments, and songwriting gave me a creative outlet when I was stressed with school and exams. For my participation and performance in this class I received a Jack Petchey Award.

Theatre Peckham has provided many opportunities to take part in a range of arts that I originally thought weren't my style such as King Solomon and the Queen of Sheba,

an opera/play, where I was able to learn from and perform with composer and script-writer Juwon Ogungbe and world-renowned opera singers Caroline Modiba and Grace Nyandoro who taught invaluable lessons on approaches and techniques to singing.

Theatre Peckham's Festive Show gave me the opportunity to perform 12 times with industry professionals in front of many audiences, who gave glowing reviews of the show, and the support and encouragement given by the creative team throughout helped me gain confidence in my ability to



perform and adapt to challenges that can occur when performing. The calibre expected of us in rehearsals pushed me to be a more focused and well-rounded performer and the difference I saw in myself by the end of the shows was clear.

Now I'm 17 and have returned to do work experience at Theatre Peckham as a Programming Assistant. When I reached out, I hoped my placement would teach me skills that I would need and use during future employment. I found that as well as that, I got hands on experience in marketing and advertising, even being trusted to design posters for the social media accounts. At first, I was worried that I wouldn't be able to keep up with the tasks handed to me but the friendly environment and time taken to ensure that I knew what I was doing and that I could ask for help helped me settle in easily.

Throughout my childhood Theatre Peckham was always a part of my life whether it be classes I was attending, performances I was going to see or activities hosted for the local community. The friendships and memories I've made there are invaluable and so it's comforting to know that no matter how much you grow or what you enjoy, there is something for you to return to at Theatre Peckham, whether you are a child or an adult, Theatre Peckham is there for the entire community."

Somewhere to Grow

Ensuring children and young people, artists and communities can build confidence and wellbeing through creativity.

What changed for our community?

Theatre Peckham champions creativity as a powerful tool for supporting confidence, wellbeing and personal growth. Through rehearsals, classes and performances, young people develop resilience, self-expression and the skills needed to navigate life's challenges. In 2025/26, participants consistently reported increased confidence, improved wellbeing and a stronger belief in their own potential, whether taking their first creative steps or progressing towards professional aspirations.

The impact of this work was particularly evident through Young Peckham:

- 90% improved their ability to work collaboratively as part of a team
- 90% strengthened their communication, oracy and presentation skills

90% demonstrated increased self-confidence and self efficacy



These outcomes reflect the broader impact of our model, where young people develop both the creative talents and the confidence, resilience and interpersonal skills that support success in education, employment and everyday life. Feedback from Academy families also highlighted the transformative effect of regular creative participation:

100% said their child felt happy at Theatre Peckham

- 92% of parents agreed that their child had learnt new skills
- 95% were happy with the progress their child had made during the year
- 90% said their family felt safe and supported through their involvements

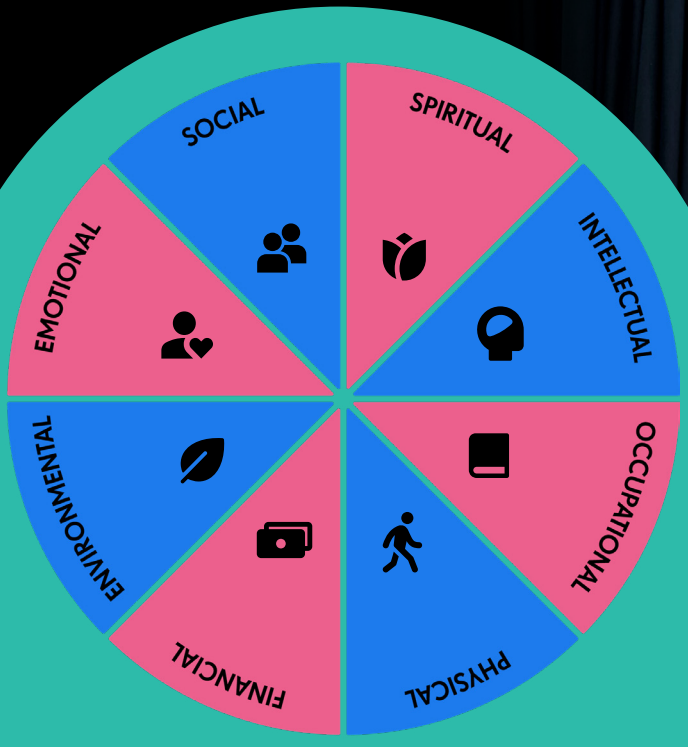
60% showed increased confidence at home and school

92% showed high levels of motivation to attend classes

97% showed strong enjoyment of the programme

68% of children made new friends at Theatre Peckham





The Wellbeing Wheel is a simple, holistic framework that helps portray how our work helps contribute to young people's lives across eight key areas of wellbeing.

Race Equity in Education

Community-led solutions for safer and more inclusive schools.

In 2025/26, Theatre Peckham continued to play a leading role in the Race Equity in Education Group, a community-led partnership with Paradigm Project and UDA. Bringing together young people, parents, educators and community leaders, the initiative works to address racial inequities within schools across Lambeth and Southwark and promote more inclusive learning environments for Black children. Placing lived experience at the heart of its work, the project created opportunities for young people and families to share their experiences while enabling schools, community organisations and local leaders to engage in meaningful dialogue around belonging, representation and educational equity. Through a commitment to collaboration and co-production, the partnership has strengthened relationships between communities and institutions and helped shape community-led approaches to improving experiences and outcomes for Black children. This work reflects Theatre Peckham's wider commitment to amplifying underrepresented voices, tackling barriers to opportunity and driving positive change through partnership and community leadership.





Futureland: Imagining Brighter Futures

180 young people engaged in creative learning, literacy and wellbeing activities.

In 2025/26, Theatre Peckham continued to deliver Futureland, in partnership with Words of Colour, an innovative creative learning programme designed to help young people explore their hopes, ambitions and visions for the future through creativity, storytelling and performance. Working with local schools, the project engaged Year 8 students in a series of creative play sessions that strengthened literacy, oracy and self-expression while encouraging them to think critically and confidently about the world they want to help shape.

By connecting creativity and wellbeing, Futureland provided young people with the tools to articulate their ideas, concerns and aspirations through a range of creative mediums culminating in a final performance.

At its heart, Futureland champions the belief that every young person deserves to imagine a positive future and feel empowered to play a role in creating it.



Positive Transitions

Supporting young people to approach secondary school with confidence and optimism.

In 2025/26, Theatre Peckham delivered Positive Transitions, a creative programme designed to support young people as they move from primary to secondary school. Through drama, forum theatre and creative learning, participants explored themes including identity, confidence, friendships, responsibility and wellbeing, helping them navigate this important stage of their lives with greater resilience and optimism.

By providing a safe and supportive space for discussion the programme helped young people build confidence, strengthen relationships and develop the skills needed to manage change.

As part of the programme, participants visited Theatre Peckham to see **Alice in Wonderland**, giving many young people the opportunity to experience live theatre and engage with the wider cultural opportunities available within their community. The programme reflects Theatre Peckham's commitment to supporting children as creative learners.

Elevating Spoken Word Theatre

Supporting young creatives to champion spoken word as a recognised and respected theatrical genre.

In 2025/26, Theatre Peckham continued Elevating Spoken Word Theatre, an ambitious project supported by the Esmée Fairbairn Foundation that seeks to position Spoken Word Theatre as a recognised and respected genre within the wider theatre landscape. Working alongside young creatives, artists and industry specialists, the project explored the future potential of spoken word as a theatrical form, while creating opportunities for young creatives to shape its development.

At the heart of the project is a commitment to youth leadership. Through focus groups, creative labs, workshops and performances, participants contribute to sector-wide conversations about the future of Spoken Word Theatre. The project also strengthened pathways for artists working in spoken word, creating opportunities to develop their practice and build professional networks. By championing an artform that has long been rooted in diverse voices and lived experience, Elevating Spoken Word Theatre is helping ensure that the next generation of artists can be seen, heard and valued.



Meet Alex

Young participant

"I first joined Theatre Peckham when I was three years old, as I was always the 'family entertainer' at home. At first, I didn't really want to go but once I started, I found it very fun and kept coming back. Since then, Theatre Peckham has become a really important part of my journey as a creative.

Over the years, I've done classes and workshops in Musical Theatre and in the Junior Acting Company, but now I do classes in Acting for Screen, Music Production and Spoken Word Poetry. These classes have helped develop my craft so I am able to do it outside of TP, and helped introduce me to new interests and hobbies that I wouldn't have the knowledge about otherwise. I have also received 2 Jack Petchey Awards for my outstanding participation in music production and songwriting.

Theatre Peckham has also helped lead me to real professional opportunities in the creative industry. My performance in the Festive Show led me to being signed by the popular talent agency Daisy and Dukes Ltd. This has helped me go on to professional work across stage and screen, including work with the RSC, Old Vic and BBC, all these being valuable experiences for me as a professional child actor.

I have performed in many Theatre Peckham showcases and even two of Theatre Peckham's Festive Shows, 'The Wonderful' (2022) and 'Alice in Wonderland' (2025). Through this, I got to gain experience working with professional scripts, refine my singing and dancing abilities and perform with experienced professional actors.



The support and encouragement given by both the creative teams and the cast in both productions has helped push me to be a more focused, mature and well-rounded performer.

This year, I completed work experience for a week at Theatre Peckham, working as a Programming Assistant. In doing this, I helped with creative projects and gave feedback on the songs and script for the next Festive Show, as well as working at reception, helping with auditions, and giving notes on possible events for the Young, Gifted and Black season.

By going to Theatre Peckham and working with them continuously, I feel like my skills and maturity has dramatically improved and I have become more comfortable expressing myself creatively. I've also made many friendships and have met many fellow creatives who I can collaborate with. One of my favourite things about Theatre Peckham is the atmosphere, because it's a place where you feel free to create, have fun and refine your craft. There's always a sense that you're encouraged to be yourself and see where your ideas can take you."

Somewhere to Shine

Ensuring children and young people, artists and communities can realise their potential and achieve their ambitions.

Where did participants progress to?

We know that talent is everywhere, but opportunity is not. Our role is to create pathways that turn creativity, ambition and potential into lasting impact. In 2025/26, we supported even more young people to develop the skills, networks and experiences needed to progress into further education, training and employment. Through Young Peckham alone, participants received 2,500+ hours of creative training and every participant identified at least one clear career goal or progression pathway within the creative industries. By combining practical learning with mentoring, industry insight and real-world experience, we helped young people move from aspiration to action:

16 participants auditioned for drama schools, with 4 securing places

- 12 progressed into employment across acting, backstage, producing and administrative roles



- 30 young people created professional showreels and 19 received industry-standard headshots, equipping them with the tools needed to pursue professional opportunities
- 85%+ built meaningful connections with at least 3 industry professionals working in their chosen field through workshops, networking events, performances and placements
- Across the programme, employment and education outcomes were strong, with 65-70% of participants moving into full-time employment or developing a portfolio of freelance work, while 20% progressed into higher education

Through Theatre Works, we engaged 81 young people from 4 schools in industry-led workshops, introducing them to creative careers and broadening their understanding of the opportunities available within the sector.

Through placements, training and paid opportunities, Theatre Peckham continues to contribute to a more diverse and representative creative workforce.

Participants contributed more than 6,015 hours of work-based learning during the year

- Over 90% completed 80+ hours of practical experience

We also continued to support artists to thrive this year across our artistic programming and beyond.

In 2025/26, Theatre Peckham:

Supported 389 Artists

Provided 1,142 hours of free rehearsal space

Worked with 223 artists through Peckham Fringe

Worked with 57 artists through Young, Gifted & Black





Meet Montel

Artist and ambassador

"My connection with Theatre Peckham began in 2018, shortly after graduating from university. I wanted to immerse myself in my local theatre and become part of a creative community that reflected the people and stories I grew up around. I joined Theatre Peckham's first Rep Company, and not long afterwards, I was selected to be part of its first resident company, a paid six-month opportunity during the Covid pandemic.

During that time, when much of the industry had come to a standstill, Theatre Peckham and Suzann McLean took a chance on me. Alongside working front of house, I was allowed to begin developing the first draft of my debut play, One Way Out. That belief changed the course of my career. One Way Out was first performed at Theatre Peckham before transferring to the Edinburgh Festival Fringe, where it won the Untapped Award. It later returned to London for a sold-out run at Brixton House. Looking back, none of that would have been possible without the opportunities Theatre Peckham created for me at such an important moment in my development.

Being an Ambassador means representing Theatre Peckham to the best of my ability. It means being proud of its diversity, the depth of talent that walks through its doors, and the opportunities it creates for artists from all backgrounds. It also means being a spokesperson for the organisation and championing the work it does within the community. Just as importantly, it means "sending the lift back down." Through teaching and facilitating, I now have the privilege of supporting young people as they develop their own creative practice, just as others supported me when I first arrived at Theatre Peckham.

The Resident Company remains the most significant opportunity Theatre Peckham has given me. At a time when theatres were closed, and creative opportunities were incredibly limited, Suzann and the team invested in my potential rather than my CV. They gave me the time, space, and confidence to develop as an artist, and that belief has stayed with me throughout my career. It is something I will always be grateful for.

Today, my relationship with Theatre Peckham has come full circle. I have gone from participant to performer, ambassador, playwright, director and facilitator. One of the most rewarding experiences has been directing the Junior Acting Company and watching young people grow in confidence, skill and ambition each week. Seeing students discover their voices reminds me why this work matters.

Organisations like Theatre Peckham are essential because they create opportunities where barriers often exist.

They provide professional training, genuine pathways into the industry and, most importantly, a sense of belonging. They don't just develop artists; they develop people.

Theatre Peckham represents possibility. It is where I found my voice as an artist and where I continue to help others find theirs. I would not have the career I have today without the opportunities, trust and belief Theatre Peckham placed in me, and I hope to continue contributing to that legacy for many years to come."



‘One teacher said that they had been inspired to join a local community garden initiative following our session. Students started to discuss the systems we live in- what works and what doesn’t. One student wanted to share a poem they had written outside of the session.’

- Teacher of Futureland Project

Strengthening Our Community Through Culture

Through festivals, performances and community partnerships, Theatre Peckham strengthens South London's cultural infrastructure, creating opportunities for people to connect, share experiences and see their stories reflected on stage. In 2025/26, our work reached thousands of audience members across Southwark and beyond, creating opportunities for people to come together, share experiences and celebrate diverse stories:

5,071
through Peckham Fringe

1,379
through Young, Gifted & Black

4,201
through our Festive Show



Our impact was amplified through many of our new and existing partnerships, and across the year we worked on a regular basis with 12+ brilliant community and sector organisations, including Words of Colour (Futureland), Poetic Unity (Elevating Spoken Word Theatre), Young and Talented, RADA and Guildhall (Originate), National Theatre (NT Connections), supporting creative participation, artist development and community engagement through our joint programmes. Meanwhile, our growing Ambassador Programme continued to play a vital role in shaping Theatre Peckham's future, with local volunteers programming Peckham Fringe, supporting strategic plans for our 40th Anniversary and championing our work through various local networks and events.

Having managed the venue since 2023, we secured a landmark new five-year agreement with Southwark Council to manage Canada Water Theatre,

enabling us to continue building a vibrant programme of artistic and community activity for local residents and build long-term audiences for our programmes:

2,299
Southwark residents benefitted from the space as participants, audience members or members of community groups hiring the space

915
artists used spaces at the theatre, 254 of whom were from Southwark

10
community groups used the theatre

58
unique opportunities for local people to engage with the theatre through public workshops, performances or events

Alongside partners including Canada Water Library and British Land, we look forward to strengthening creative opportunities in the area and ensuring culture remains at the heart of Canada Water's continuing transformation.

Meet our Ambassadors

Our Ambassadors are dedicated local volunteers who support Theatre Peckham by programming Peckham Fringe and connecting us with our local community.

Meet Vanessa

"I reluctantly hung up my Ambassador hat at the end of this years' Peckham Fringe after 5 years in role. Moving to Edinburgh right before Fringe here has given me plenty of cause for reflection about the exemplary festival we developed year on year. At Theatre Peckham, participating artists can immerse themselves in all the fun, fervour and surprises one hopes for when debuting experimental new theatre, but the support structure and community fostered there also ensures that no one will be eaten alive by the machine of it all. This crucial aspect of care when platforming emerging artists is infused through all of Theatre Peckham's work, from the careful development of age and stage-appropriate tiers of engagement, to facilitating community-building for Fringe artists which will serve them far beyond the confines of the initial festival.

Over the years, first as an employee, then as an ambassador, and always as a member of the local community, I have seen TP provide a place to imagine, space to create and sometimes more important than all the above, just a place to be. With the wider decimation of third spaces and inequalities around arts access growing year on year, organisations like Theatre Peckham are more vital then ever before and should be protected at all costs. Supporting the organisation has been a joy and a privilege and I'd recommend it to anyone."

Meet Sujoy

"I've been a Theatre Peckham parent for six years and an Ambassador for four years. I was brought up and have lived in Peckham all of my life and I genuinely feel TP is and must be a reflection of the whole, vibrant, colourful Peckham community. Being an ambassador is a privilege and a serious responsibility. For me, TP is a champion for underrepresented and marginalised people in the Performing Arts. This work is more important now than it has ever been and is a unique and important responsibility for Theatre Peckham. As an Ambassador, I must help safeguard that mission while ensuring we maintain the highest standards and recognise all talent.

As an Ambassador, I've enjoyed creating new connections in the local community. My favourite has been helping curate the last four Peckham Fringe festivals. The Ambassadors are a brilliant team of passionate and engaged people from diverse backgrounds and there is a great sense of teamwork towards building a community festival. I've especially enjoyed learning from those in the arts and with inputs from legal and financial perspectives. It has become clearer to me that achieving, maintaining and delivering meaningful change is dependent on teamwork and the coordinated input and hard work of so many, and not any one individual. Anyone wishing to be part of teamwork and camaraderie, while helping build something worthwhile, should consider volunteering with TP. It's a huge pleasure to be involved with TP and

I am excited for the change we can help deliver in the future."

A Spotlight on our Festive Show: Alice in Wonderland

Every year, our Festive Show brings our model to life. In 2025/26, **Alice in Wonderland** demonstrated how creative opportunities can create a powerful pathway from participation to progression, combining everything that sits at the heart of **Somewhere to Go, Somewhere to Grow and Somewhere to Shine.**

For many young people, the journey began with **Somewhere to Go**. Academy students were given the opportunity to take part in a professional production alongside experienced actors, directors and creatives, becoming part of a company working towards a shared artistic goal. Within a supportive environment, they found a place to belong, build friendships and develop their passion for the performing arts.

Throughout rehearsals and a **three-and-a-half-week run**, our young company experienced **Somewhere to Grow**. Working to professional standards, they developed their acting, singing and performance skills while building confidence, resilience, discipline and teamwork. Performing alongside industry professionals gave them valuable insights into the realities of creating and delivering high-quality theatre while raising their aspirations.

Those same young people had **Somewhere to Shine**. Performing to paying audiences, schools and community groups, they shared their talent with thousands of audience members, received recognition through industry reviews and media coverage and achieved several sold-out performances.

Reviews recognised both the quality of the production and Theatre Peckham's commitment to developing young talent. One reviewer praised the show's "talented, well directed young company ensemble" performing alongside professional actors, while another highlighted Theatre Peckham's "commitment to placing young local performers at the heart of its storytelling."

Alice in Wonderland was a clear example of the Theatre Peckham Model in action: creating opportunities for young people to belong, develop their skills and realise their potential through high-quality creative experiences.





‘We are so grateful for Theatre Peckham’s commitment to accessibility.

By removing financial barriers, you are ensuring that talent and enthusiasm, rather than a family’s circumstances, determine a child’s future in the arts. Your support has given my daughter a space to flourish that she otherwise would never have had.’

- Parent of an Academy partcipant

Looking Ahead

In May 2026, Theatre Peckham will celebrate its 40th anniversary. This milestone provides an opportunity to recognise the generations of children and young people, artists, staff, volunteers, partners and supporters who have contributed to Theatre Peckham's story and impact.

On 2nd May, we will mark Theatre Peckham's official birthday with a celebration that reflects the creativity, ambition and community spirit that have defined TP for four decades. This day will also mark the beginning of the fifth Peckham Fringe Festival. Over five years, the festival has grown into an important platform for artists and audiences and a key part of Peckham's cultural calendar. The anniversary edition will showcase outstanding new work, support artist development and strengthen connections across the local creative community.

Children and young people will be at the heart of our anniversary year. Our 40th Anniversary Academy Gala Showcases will celebrate the talent, creativity and achievements of the young people who shape Theatre Peckham today.

The year ahead will also be an important one for organisational development. Continued investment in Theatre Peckham will enable us to strengthen our programmes, support more children and young people, invest in artists and expand our impact across Southwark and beyond. We will continue to build strategic partnerships, diversify our income and secure the resources needed to deliver our ambitions.

Canada Water Theatre will continue to play an important role in our future. Following the agreement to manage the venue for a further five years, we will expand artistic activity, deepen community engagement and create more opportunities for local people to participate in culture. Our ambition is to ensure that Canada Water Theatre continues to be a vibrant cultural destination for Southwark residents, artists and audiences.

Our priorities

Our priorities for the year ahead remain clear. We will widen access to creative opportunities for children and young people, artists and communities. We will strengthen our creative health and wellbeing work, helping more people build confidence, resilience and positive relationships through participation in the arts. We will develop pathways into education, employment and creative careers through training, mentoring, placements and industry partnerships. We will continue to champion artists, audiences and stories that reflect the diversity, talent and experiences of our community.

Forty years on, Theatre Peckham continues to be shaped by the energy and ambition of the people who walk through our doors. The future will bring new challenges and new opportunities. Our commitment is to continue listening, evolving and strengthening Theatre Peckham's role as a creative catalyst and trusted community anchor for generations to come.

Our Manifesto for the Future

We believe every child deserves

Somewhere to Go, Somewhere to Grow, Somewhere to Shine.

We therefore call on Government to:



01

Recognise hyperlocal cultural organisations as essential social infrastructure:

Community-based cultural organisations should be recognised alongside youth services, libraries and sports clubs as trusted civic institutions that contribute to stronger communities, education, wellbeing and opportunity.

02

Introduce a national Somewhere to Go Guarantee:

Every child should have access to affordable, high-quality opportunities beyond the school day where they can build relationships, develop their talents and spend more time offline. Those opportunities may be provided through theatre, sport, music, youth clubs, volunteering or other trusted community organisations.

03

Place creativity at the heart of the Government's Youth Strategy:

Community-based arts organisations should be recognised as strategic partners in helping young people develop the capabilities they need for life, work and active citizenship.

Thank You

Every person deserves Somewhere to Go, Somewhere to Grow and Somewhere to Shine. Thanks to the support of our funders, partners and community, we are helping to make that vision a reality every day.

Your donations are vital now more than ever to create pathways into participation in the arts so that more underrepresented young people can platform their creativity and artistic excellence.

To find out more about how you can get involved please contact our Development Team on **development@theatrepeckham.co.uk**

We would love to hear from you!

THEATRE PECKHAM

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