



FANS AT THE BMS AWARDS — LIVE PERFORMANCE, BRADFORD

CAPABILITY DOCUMENT · 2026

MUSIC SCENE CIC

MUSIC SCENE CONSULTANCY, UK WIDE

Building thriving grassroots music ecosystems, city by city

Founded on the success of Bradford Music Scene — a city-wide platform connecting artists, venues and audiences — Music Scene CIC is a community interest company whose consultancy practice advises councils, cultural organisations and arts institutions on how to build music communities that last.

DARREN ELLIS · CHARLOTTE FURNESS

BRADFORD, UK

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INTRODUCTION

Who we are

Music Scene CIC is a community interest company. We work with cities, venues and cultural organisations to strengthen local music and creative communities through research, events and engagement. We are practitioners first: everything we advise, we have already built and run in Bradford.

Our consultancy combines artist development, venue support and audience engagement into one coherent strategy for a city's cultural infrastructure.

CREDIBILITY

- Founders of Bradford Music Scene — the city-wide platform connecting artists, venues and audiences.
- Contributors to Bradford's district music strategy, working alongside the council, cultural organisations and arts institutions.
- Organisers of live showcases, awards, networking sessions and sector conversations celebrating local talent.
- Builders of BMS Live — the digital platform where a city's gigs, artists and venues live in one place.



DARREN ELLIS & CHARLOTTE FURNESS — BRADFORD LIVE, 2025



CHARLOTTE FURNESS — LET THEM EAT CAKE, WOMEN IN MUSIC

DARREN ELLIS & CHARLOTTE FURNESS

Founders, Music Scene CIC / Bradford Music Scene



DARREN ELLIS — CO-FOUNDER, MUSIC SCENE CIC (IMAGE: NIGEL H BAIN)

PROOF, AT A GLANCE

10k

footfall, Darley St Market
opening weekend

80k+

monthly social reach,
Instagram alone

5×

growth in mailing list
through engagement

2021

building Bradford's music
ecology since

THE PROBLEM MANY CITIES HAVE

The challenge for local music ecosystems

01 Isolation

Venues, artists and promoters operate separately, duplicating effort and competing for the same small audience.

02 Missing insight

Councils want to support music but lack grassroots intelligence: who is active, what is fragile, where a small intervention changes everything.

03 Lost talent

Local artists cannot find the opportunities that already exist, and leave the city to find them elsewhere.

04 Invisibility

Cultural activity happens, but audiences never hear about it. Nights go half-full and venues carry the risk.

STRONG MUSIC ECOSYSTEMS DON'T HAPPEN BY ACCIDENT

They require coordination, visibility and collaboration — sustained over years, by people the scene trusts.



BAD BOY CHILLER CREW FANS AT BRADFORD LIVE — PROMOTED WITH BMS AT THE INVITATION OF THE ARTIST'S PRESS TEAM

Why local music matters

Grassroots music venues are cultural, social and economic infrastructure. They are the only places where a first gig, a first crowd and a first review can happen — and they are the cheapest cultural asset a city will ever own.

Economic

Footfall into the city centre after 6pm, spend in bars, taxis, food and retail, and a night-time economy that supports jobs.

Social

Cohesion across backgrounds, ages and communities. Live music is one of the few settings where a city mixes.

Developmental

A ladder for emerging artists: open mic to support slot to headline to touring, without leaving the district.

Identity

Distinctiveness, civic pride and cultural tourism. Cities are remembered for their scenes, not their strategies.

Wellbeing

Participation, belonging and routine connection — outcomes public health teams are already funding elsewhere.



HAPPY DAGGERS AT BRADFORD INTERCHANGE (IMAGE: NIGEL H BAIN)

MUSIC IN UNUSUAL PLACES

“Over 700 people saw the band while they were there and they loved it.”

Telegraph & Argus — Bradford Interchange takeover



DARLEY ST MARKET TAKEOVER — LIVE ACOUSTIC SET



DARLEY ST MARKET TAKEOVER — DJ SET, DAYTIME CROWD

THE LINE TO HOLD

Live music builds connections, brings people together across backgrounds, and fosters a sense of place and belonging.

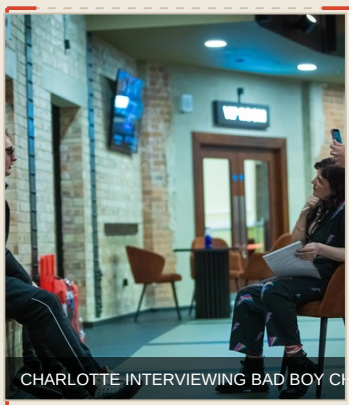
What we do

01

Music ecosystem reviews

We meet venues, artists, promoters and organisations to map local music activity — identifying strengths, pressures, gaps and the opportunities that are already sitting there unclaimed.

- VENUE AND ARTIST MAPPING
- STAKEHOLDER INTERVIEWS
- BARRIERS AND RISKS
- REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS



CHARLOTTE INTERVIEWING BAD BOY CHILLER CREW

02

Cultural event programming

We curate events, showcases and networking that bring a community together, live and digitally, and put local talent in front of real audiences.

- CURATED LINE-UPS AND SHOWCASES
- MULTI-VENUE EVENT SERIES
- DIGITAL GIG GUIDES
- ARTIST FEES AND FAIR BOOKING



CHARLOTTE FURNESS — HOST

03

Talks and workshops

We share what actually works: building sustainable grassroots communities, social media that people engage with, event management, artist development and diversity in music.

- SECTOR TALKS AND PANELS
- PRACTICAL WORKSHOPS
- VENUE AND PROMOTER TRAINING
- ARTIST DEVELOPMENT SESSIONS



GUEST SPEAKERS — INDUSTRY TALK

DELIVERY, NOT JUST ADVICE

Every recommendation we make has been tested in Bradford first — as a live platform, a public event series, an awards show and a venue forum. We hand cities a method that has already survived contact with reality.

Bradford Music Scene

Bradford Music Scene was founded in 2021 to support the city's music ecology. Not to run one night, but to create a scene and then connect it — artists, venues, audiences and promoters — and to make the whole thing visible.

OBJECTIVES

- Create the scene, then connect it: artists, venues, promoters, audiences.
- Grow visibility for what was already happening.
- Raise the city's cultural profile beyond its borders.
- Promote artists into real opportunities and real fees.

WHAT WE BUILT

Gig guides

Artist promotion

Artist bookings

BMS Awards Shows

Let's Make a Scene

Let Them Eat Cake

Buy and sell events

Music in Unusual Places

Busking festivals

Editorial and interviews



HEALTHY MINDS — MUSIC COMMUNITY SESSION, BRADFORD



BMS BRANDING ON SITE — DARLEY ST MARKET TAKEOVER



BRADFORD ARTIST ON THE BMS STAGE — DARLEY ST TAKEOVER

FIVE YEARS OF METHOD

A platform, an event series, an awards show, a venue forum and a media channel — built in one city, designed to be replicated in another.

BMS Live

BMS Live is the digital home of Bradford Music Scene: a community-run platform connecting artists, venues, promoters and fans across Bradford and West Yorkshire. It helps people discover gigs, follow who they love, and makes it far easier for the people behind the scene to put on and promote live music.

Built mobile-first with a bold, neon-accented identity, it brings listings, profiles, ticketing links, fan tools and admin controls into one place — a community-powered marketplace and discovery hub, not another events directory.

For fans

Browse gigs by date, genre or venue, follow artists and venues, save events to a personal calendar and get reminders. Fan profiles carry gig history and badges; a For You feed personalises recommendations.

For artists

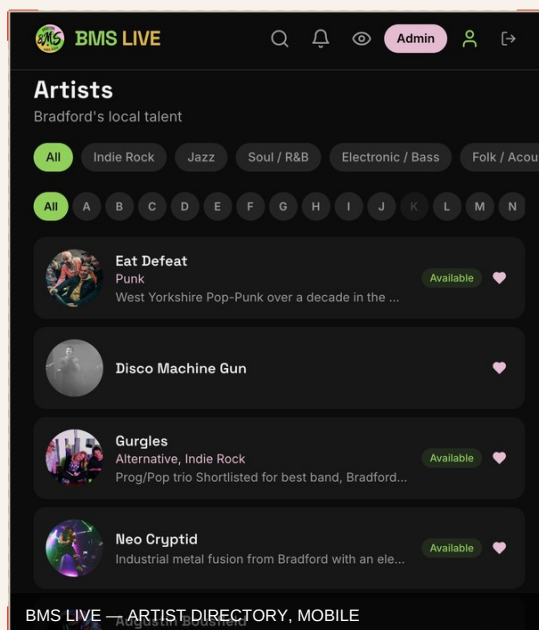
A media-rich public profile — photos, bio, genres, socials — plus a gig engine: submit events you are playing, or paste a whole run of dates into the bulk-add tool and let AI parse them.

For venues

Get found and booked. Claim your listing, publish location, capacity, photos and gig history, manage your own events and take booking enquiries directly or through the BMS Programme.

For promoters

A per-venue grant system: request approval to submit on behalf of a venue, and once approved your events for that venue auto-publish.



UNDER THE HOOD

ROLE-BASED ACCESS · DATABASE SECURITY · MODERATION · NOTIFICATIONS · ADMIN

Role-based permissions and strict database security sit under everything, with follow notifications, moderation tools for comments and photos, and an admin layer that lets BMS HQ manage approvals, featured content and preview the site exactly as a fan sees it. The platform is city-agnostic by design: the same system can be stood up for another district without rebuilding it.

DELIVERED, AT SCALE

Live events and programming



LET'S MAKE A SCENE — NETWORKING EVENT, FULL ROOM

Darley St Market

Large-scale delivery with 10,000 footfall across the opening weekend — a new civic space activated with live music from the first day it opened.

Let's Make a Scene

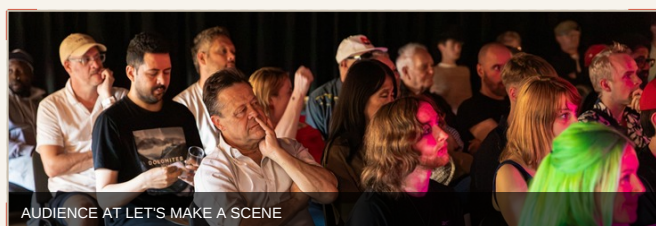
A recurring networking series that put artists, venues, promoters and organisations in the same room, on purpose, on a schedule.

Formats that learn

Indoor acoustic versus outdoor amplified, line-up length, stage placement — every format adjusted from the last event's evidence.

WHAT WE HANDLE

- Multi-act line-up coordination
- Artist liaison and contracting
- Paid performances across multiple venues
- Stage, sound and technical planning
- Marketing, listings and press
- Post-event evaluation and reporting



AUDIENCE AT LET'S MAKE A SCENE



PERFORMER ON THE DARLEY ST MARKET BALCONY — OUTDOOR STAGE

Digital reach

We do it different.

By posting every day — creating, sharing, tagging, reposting, commenting and genuinely engaging — we built something that feels alive, inclusive and worth following, whichever part of the scene you come from.

CHANNELS

Instagram

Facebook

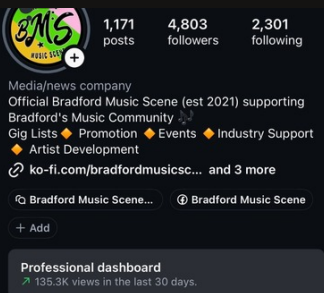
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TikTok

Threads

Mailing list

Gig guides and printed material distributed across cafés, venues, shops, bookshops and local businesses — the digital channel and the paper channel feeding each other.



Media/news company
Official Bradford Music Scene (est 2021) supporting
Bradford's Music Community
Gig Lists • Promotion • Events • Industry Support
• Artist Development
ko-fi.com/bradfordmusicsc... and 3 more
Bradford Music Scene... Bradford Music Scene
+ Add
Professional dashboard
135.3K views in the last 30 days.

INSTAGRAM — 4,803 FOLLOWERS • 135.3K PROFILE VIEWS IN 30 DAYS

135.3K

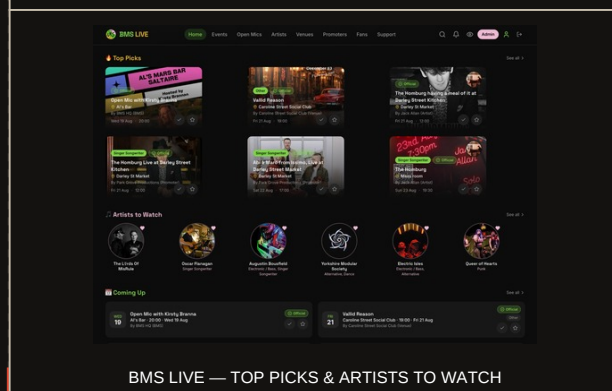
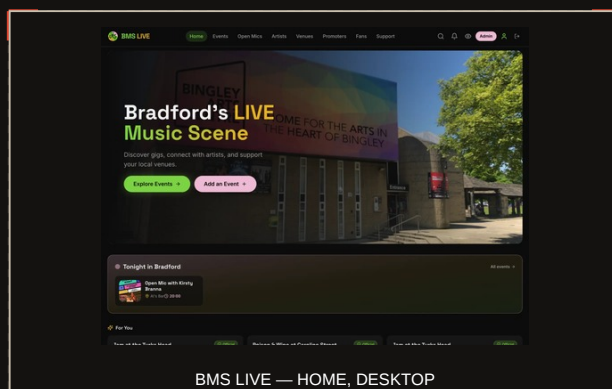
Instagram profile views
in the last 30 days

5×

mailing list growth driven by
engagement, not ads

Daily

posting rhythm sustained
since 2021



The gig list

Every month we compile and publish a comprehensive list of gigs across Bradford — the major venues, the music pubs and the clubs — in one place. It is one of our most popular publications, reaching thousands of people every month online, through our mailing list and in print.

It is unglamorous, relentless work and it is the single most useful thing we do. A city that can see its own listings behaves differently: audiences plan, venues fill midweek, and small promoters stop competing for the same Friday.

HOW IT REACHES PEOPLE

- Published online as a browsable monthly guide, indexed and shareable.
- Sent direct to a growing mailing list of engaged local music fans.
- Printed and distributed through cafés, venues, shops and local businesses.

COMMERCIAL MODEL

We sell paid advertising within the mailing list edition and the printed copies — gigs, shows and local businesses — so the listing pays for part of its own distribution rather than depending entirely on grant funding.



EDITION #34 — APRIL 2025 COVER



THE GIG LIST OUT IN THE CITY — OCT 2022



BACK COVER — PAID ADVERTISING

47

comprehensive monthly gig lists published to date

Monthly

compiled, checked and published without a gap

3

channels: online, mailing list and print

WHY IT MATTERS TO A COUNCIL

A CITY THAT CANNOT SEE ITS OWN GIGS CANNOT SUPPORT THEM

The gig list doubles as a live dataset: which venues are programming, how often, in what genres and at what scale. It is the evidence base underneath every recommendation we make — and it can be replicated for another district within a single season.

Awards and recognition

Artists aspire to the Brits or the Grammys. Our inaugural BMS Awards brought that feeling to grassroots artists, promoters and venues — recognition for work that usually goes unrecorded, in a room full of the people who do it.

It was a hit: significant community recognition, positive press and genuine industry visibility. More importantly, it created encouragement and a sense of shared achievement that carried into the following year's programming.

BMS Awards

Community recognition for artists, venues, promoters and organisers, with press and industry attention.

Seasonal Top 8 Artists to Watch

A curated guide sent to BBC Introducing, local media and venues — a direct route from bedroom to booking.

Women in Music gigs

Let Them Eat Cake: equity and diverse participation programmed deliberately, not as an afterthought.

Tangible outcomes

Artists we supported have gone on to performances and media exposure they can point to.



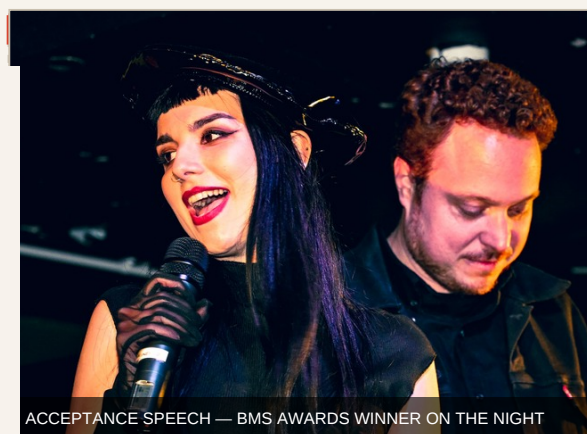
BMS AWARDS — BEST MALE ARTIST PRESENTED ON STAGE



BMS AWARDS 2024 WINNER — BEST MALE ARTIST



BMS AWARDS — A FULL ROOM, VIEW FROM THE BACK



ACCEPTANCE SPEECH — BMS AWARDS WINNER ON THE NIGHT

WHY AN AWARDS NIGHT

Recognition is cheap to give and disproportionately effective. It retains people in a scene, gives press a reason to write, and gives a council a visible, dated moment to point at.

Community, artists and equity

A scene is a network of people who know each other. Most of our development work is simply making sure the right people meet, repeatedly, with something to do when they get there.

WHAT WE RUN

- A working network of musicians available for events, collaborations and public exposure.
- Seasonal Top 8 Artists to Watch, distributed to BBC Introducing, local media and venues.
- BMS Awards celebrating artists, venues and organisers, driving positivity and recognition.
- Let Them Eat Cake — Women in Music events promoting inclusivity and visibility.
- Networking events and talks with influential industry professionals.

OUTCOMES

Artists we have supported have gone on to festival slots, media coverage and paid work. The measure is not how many events ran, but how many careers moved forward because the city finally had a route through.



LET THEM EAT CAKE — WOMEN IN MUSIC, BRADFORD



LET THEM EAT CAKE — PERFORMER AND BAND



LET THEM EAT CAKE — INDOOR WOMEN IN MUSIC SHOW



LET THEM EAT CAKE — AUDIENCE, DARLEY ST MARKET

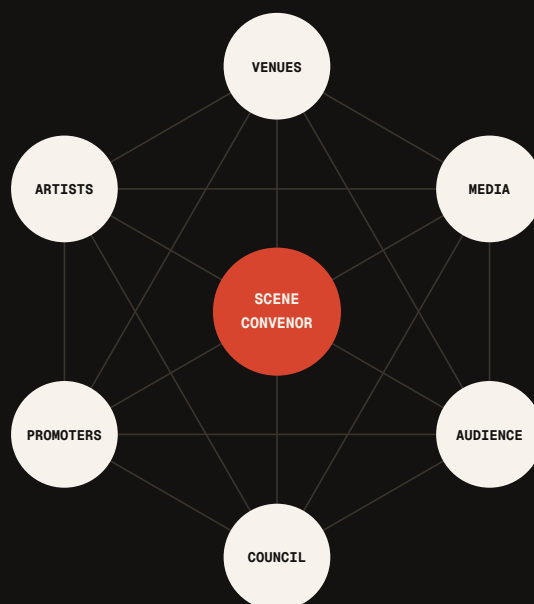
Convening the venues

We host and chair private venue meetings, bringing local venue owners into one room to share challenges and solutions they would not put in writing. It is the single highest-value hour in the calendar.

- Chaired venue council meetings with clear agendas and follow-up.
- Collaboration and cohesion encouraged across the city's ecosystem, including competitors.
- Strong working relationships with councils, cultural organisations and arts institutions.
- A model designed to be replicated in new cities from a standing start.



THE CONVENING ROLE



Someone has to hold the middle. Cities rarely lack talent or venues — they lack a trusted, neutral convenor with no competing commercial interest in the room.



Consultancy services

A**Music scene audit and report**

Mapping venues, artists, infrastructure, gaps and funding needs, with written recommendations.

B**Social and digital strategy**

Building and growing a city-wide platform, channel by channel, with a team who can keep it running.

C**Curated gig guides and programming**

A public listing that people actually use, plus programmed events to fill it.

D**Networking and scene-building**

Let's Make a Scene sessions, venue forums and industry talks on a sustained schedule.

E**Women in Music and diversity**

Programmes that widen who performs, who attends and who feels welcome.

F**Training, talks and workshops**

Practical capability building for venues, promoters and artists.

G**Long-term strategy and reporting**

Council-ready reporting, evidence and forward strategy for institutional stakeholders.

INDICATIVE ENGAGEMENTS

Scene Audit

8-12 WEEKS

Mapping, interviews, evidence base and a written report with recommendations a council can act on.

FEE ON APPLICATION

Scene Activation

6-12 MONTHS

Audit plus delivery: digital platform, gig guide, event series, networking programme and evaluation.

FEE ON APPLICATION

Retained Advisory

12 MONTHS+

Ongoing strategic support, quarterly reporting, programming guidance and an annual recognition moment.

FEE ON APPLICATION

Packages are indicative and shaped to the city. Elements can be commissioned individually.

Talks, workshops and keynotes

We are asked to speak as often as we are asked to deliver. Alongside consultancy we run full-day workshops, deliver talks and keynotes, and sit on or chair panels — sharing exactly how a grassroots scene is built, promoted and sustained, with the evidence of having done it in a city that started from very little.

01

All-day workshops

A full day, hands-on, for bands, venues, promoters or council teams. People arrive with a project and leave with a promotion plan they wrote themselves.

- HALF DAY OR FULL DAY
- 10-40 PARTICIPANTS
- WORKBOOK AND TEMPLATES

02

Talks and keynotes

Conference keynotes, council briefings, college sessions and industry events, tailored from strategic overview to practical detail.

- 20-60 MINUTES
- TAILORED TO THE BRIEF
- Q&A INCLUDED

03

Panels and chairing

We sit on panels and chair sessions — venue forums, cultural summits, night-time economy debates — keeping a room honest and useful.

- PANELLIST OR CHAIR
- AGENDA AND PROMPTS
- WRITTEN FOLLOW-UP

W H A T A W O R K S H O P D A Y C O V E R S

A Promoting your band

Identity, content that travels, press and radio, getting on the right bills and being asked back.

B Filling a venue midweek

Programming, listings, partnerships and the promotion habits that turn a half-full room around.

C Building a scene

How artists, venues and promoters stop competing and start compounding each other's audiences.

D Digital and social that works

Daily posting, tagging and engagement — the method behind 80k+ monthly reach.

E Listings, print and press

Running a gig list, distributing print, and getting local media to care.

F Fair pay, access and safety

Paying artists properly, inclusive line-ups, safeguarding and accessible events.

WHO IT IS FOR

Bands and emerging artists
Venues, promoters and pub operators
Council culture and economy teams
Universities, colleges and youth projects
Festivals and cultural organisations

FORMATS

Full-day workshop, in person
Half-day intensive
Keynote or conference talk
Panel appearance or chairing
Remote or hybrid delivery

WHAT YOU LEAVE WITH

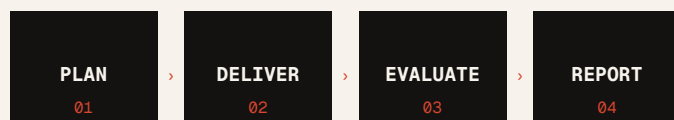
A written promotion plan
A working contacts list
Templates for listings and press
A realistic 90-day action list
An open line to us afterwards

Fees scale with format and travel. Workshops can be commissioned on their own or built into a wider scene programme.

How we work

- Collaborative: we work with stakeholders and institutions rather than reporting on them from outside.
- Evidence-based: surveys, event metrics, social analytics and direct interviews, not anecdote.
- Flexible delivery: in person, hybrid or remote, scaled to the budget available.
- Managed properly: planning, delivery, evaluation and reporting, with named responsibilities.

PROJECT CYCLE



FIRST 90 DAYS

Days 1-30

Listening: interviews with venues, artists, promoters and officers. Baseline mapping begins.

Days 31-60

Evidence: survey and analytics, gap analysis, first convening session with venues.

Days 61-90

Direction: draft findings, a prioritised action list, and the first public-facing activity live.

WHAT YOU RECEIVE

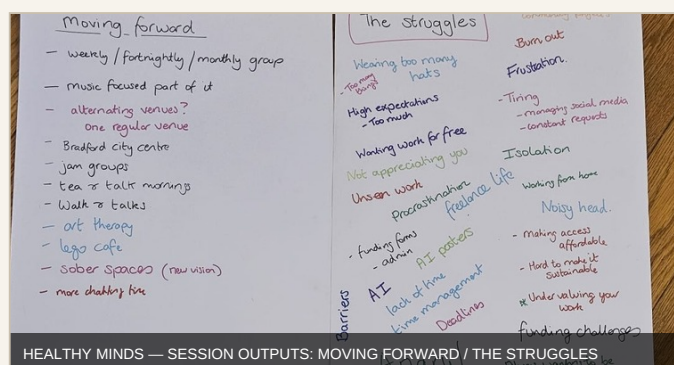
- Written report with recommendations
- Dataset of venues, artists and stakeholders
- Live digital platform and gig guide
- Delivered event series with attendance data
- Evaluation against agreed measures
- Forward strategy for years two and three

COUNCIL PRIORITIES

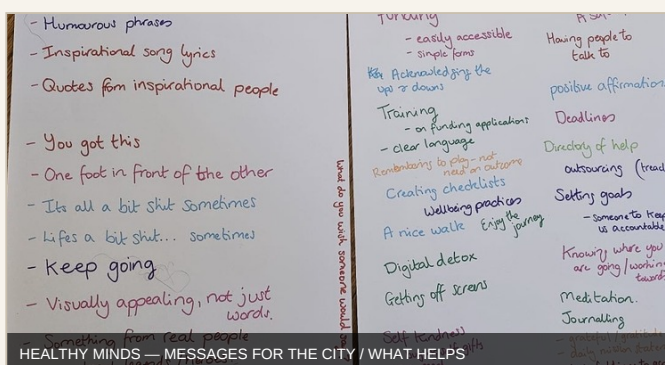
Agent of Change · night-time economy · cultural strategy · place-making · health and wellbeing · youth engagement · high street footfall · cultural tourism

RISK AND COMPLIANCE

Public liability insurance in place, licensing requirements understood and respected, safeguarding considered at every public event, and access and inclusion planned in from the outset.



HEALTHY MINDS — SESSION OUTPUTS: MOVING FORWARD / THE STRUGGLES



Example roadmap for a city

01

Scene audit

Identify venues, artists, promoters and stakeholders. Establish the baseline and the pressure points.

02

Digital platform

Create the channels and gig guide, and build a local team who can sustain them.

03

Networking and events

Scene-building initiatives: convening sessions, venue forum, first showcases.

04

Programming guidance

Curated events, artist pathways and venue support with fair fees built in.

05

Annual recognition

An awards moment that celebrates achievement and gives the press a story.

06

Evaluation and reporting

Reports and recommendations for council and institutional stakeholders.

OUTCOME: A SCENE THAT RUNS WITHOUT US

The measure of success is not our contract length. It is whether the platform, the network and the habits we build are still working in the city two years after we stop invoicing for them.

Next steps

TESTIMONIALS

"Keep up the good work!"

— ALEX ROSS SHAW FORMER LABOUR COUNCILLOR, BRADFORD

"Thanks again for the amazing opportunity to perform at Bradford Live — it was a fantastic event!"

— IAN BAREHAM MUSICIAN

"Thanks for all your amazing support!"

— JONATHAN WHYATT DRELLA (BAND)

"Thanks so much for the gig guide. It's an awesome thing you guys do."

— RUMBLE EVENTS PROMOTER

"We love Bradford Music Scene and you should too!"

— THE FOURTH ACT BAND

"Epic work you guys — we love you."

— CITY OF COUNTERCULTURE LOCAL ORGANISATION

"Thanks for all you do!"

— ALS BAR SALTAIRE



THE BRAND IN THE WILD

BMS merchandise worn behind the bar in a Bradford venue — five years of building a scene identity people choose to wear.

WHY WORK WITH US

- A proven track record, built in public over five years.
- Deep networks with venues, artists, promoters and institutions.
- Measurable impact: footfall, reach, artists paid, events delivered.
- We advise, plan and deliver — including the events themselves.
- A method designed to be handed over, not depended on.



THE ROOM WE BUILD FOR — LET'S MAKE A SCENE

START THE CONVERSATION

Happy to run a free initial call on your city's music ecosystem and where the quick wins are.

Music Scene CIC · Darren Ellis & Charlotte Furness

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