

BEYOND THE STAGE

**“As full of spirit as the month of May,
And as gorgeous as the sun in Midsummer...”**

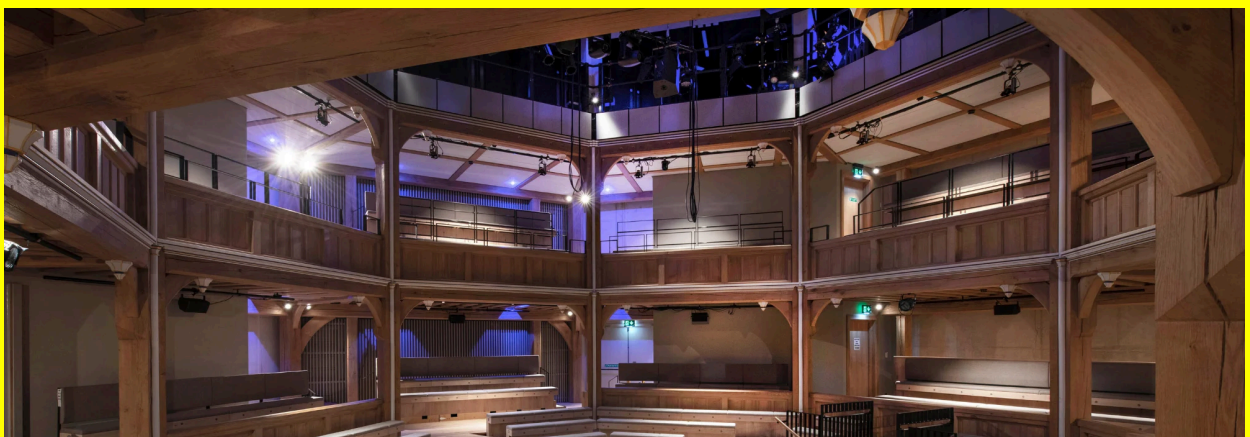
(Henry IV, Part 1
Act 4, Scene)

Hi, @FIRSTNAME@

Spring has finally arrived, and with the changing season comes a reminder of how much work has been happening out of sight. As flowers bloom, and the warmth of the sun returns, there's a sense of renewal all around us.

Alongside what appears on our stages, there is so much happening across the organisation that might go unseen. This collection of recent stories reflects our social impact, sharing how collaboration, opportunity and place-based practice continue to shape a more resilient and inclusive sector.

SPRING 2026 Stories:





Report highlights major economic impact of Shakespeare North Playhouse

Shakespeare North Playhouse is delivering millions of pounds of economic benefit, supporting new jobs, strengthening local businesses, and acting as a major catalyst for the regeneration of Prescot and the wider city region, according to the findings of an independent evaluation.

[Read more](#)



Prescot bidding for UK Town of Culture 2028

The historic town of Prescot in Knowsley has submitted a bid to be crowned the UK's Town of Culture in 2028. The winning town will receive £3 million to deliver a cultural programme in summer 2028. Additionally, the two finalists from their category will receive £250,000 each to deliver elements of their bid.

[Read more](#)



A Night built on Belief in Artists

Bringing together people from across the region to connect through Shakespeare and new work alike, the Gala helped us move one step closer to a future rich with bold new artists, underlining why championing fundraising, new voices and artist development remains not just important, but essential.

[Read more](#)



Celebrating Success and Community Partnerships

Knowsley Council's Cabinet has welcomed the findings of a recent Scrutiny Review into the Shakespeare North Playhouse, highlighting the theatre's inspiring impact on the borough and its growing role as a community asset.

[Read more](#)

“Community sits at the heart of everything we do. Prescot’s story is not just about heritage or buildings, it’s about the people, partnerships and creativity that bring this town to life every day. Through our diverse programme, workshops, outreach programmes and opportunities for local voices to be heard on and off stage, we’ve seen first-hand how culture can connect, inspire and empower. Prescot’s bid for Town of Culture 2028 is about celebrating that shared spirit and ensuring our communities continue to shape and benefit from Knowsley’s cultural future.”

(Lisa Allen, CEO and Creative Director at Shakespeare North Playhouse on Prescot's bid for Town of Culture 2028)



Free Theatre Tickets for Knowsley School Children

Around 1,800 Knowsley school children will receive free tickets to Shakespeare North Playhouse in Prescot, providing pupils with an exciting cultural and educational experience.

[Read more](#)





New Trustees & Deputy Chair for our Board

Shakespeare North Trust, the organisation that runs Shakespeare North Playhouse, has appointed four new trustees and a Deputy Chair, further strengthening its Board as it builds on recent successes.

[Read more](#)

**Arts For
Impact**

BigGive

Fundraising Success: Arts for Impact

In March, we have exceeded our fundraising goal during the Arts for Impact Campaign. We have raised £2,584.31 to support wellbeing and creative engagement in our community.

[Read more](#)





Edge Hill University and Shakespeare North unlock the 'secret to happiness' in youth performance

A recent performance and panel discussion explored how a 400-year-old literary legacy can help address today's mental health crisis. This work is part of a strategic partnership between Edge Hill University, its Research Centre for Arts and Wellbeing, and Shakespeare North Playhouse.

Explore the partnership
(Video on LinkedIn)

Read more



**Two by Jim Cartwright:
Full circle moments and creative opportunities.**

This production took a fresh approach by offering creative roles to the Shakespeare North team, creating valuable development opportunities. Team members stepped into new artistic positions, expanding their skills and creative practice. At a time of diminishing opportunities, supporting artists to grow and thrive is essential, alongside the vital contribution of freelancers.

Siobhan
(Assistant Director)

Kay (Set and Costume Designer)

Adam
(Sound Designer)



Students to gain practical professional-standard training through new partnership

Shakespeare North Playhouse and the University of Lancashire have entered a new partnership for their BA (Hons) Acting programme. From autumn 2025 students will take part in an expanded programme of training and real-world experience delivered in collaboration with Shakespeare North Playhouse.

Read more

“Creativity has the power to connect and inspire hope, making the arts vital for supporting wellbeing, building confidence, and developing the skills to navigate life. Through events like this, we create space for meaningful dialogue between young people and leaders across sectors, working together to improve mental wellbeing. Shakespeare’s stories remind us of what it means to be human; full of humour and empathy, they explore experiences everyone can relate to which can be a powerful source of happiness.”

(Lisa Allen, CEO and Creative Director at Shakespeare North Playhouse about the secret of happiness.)



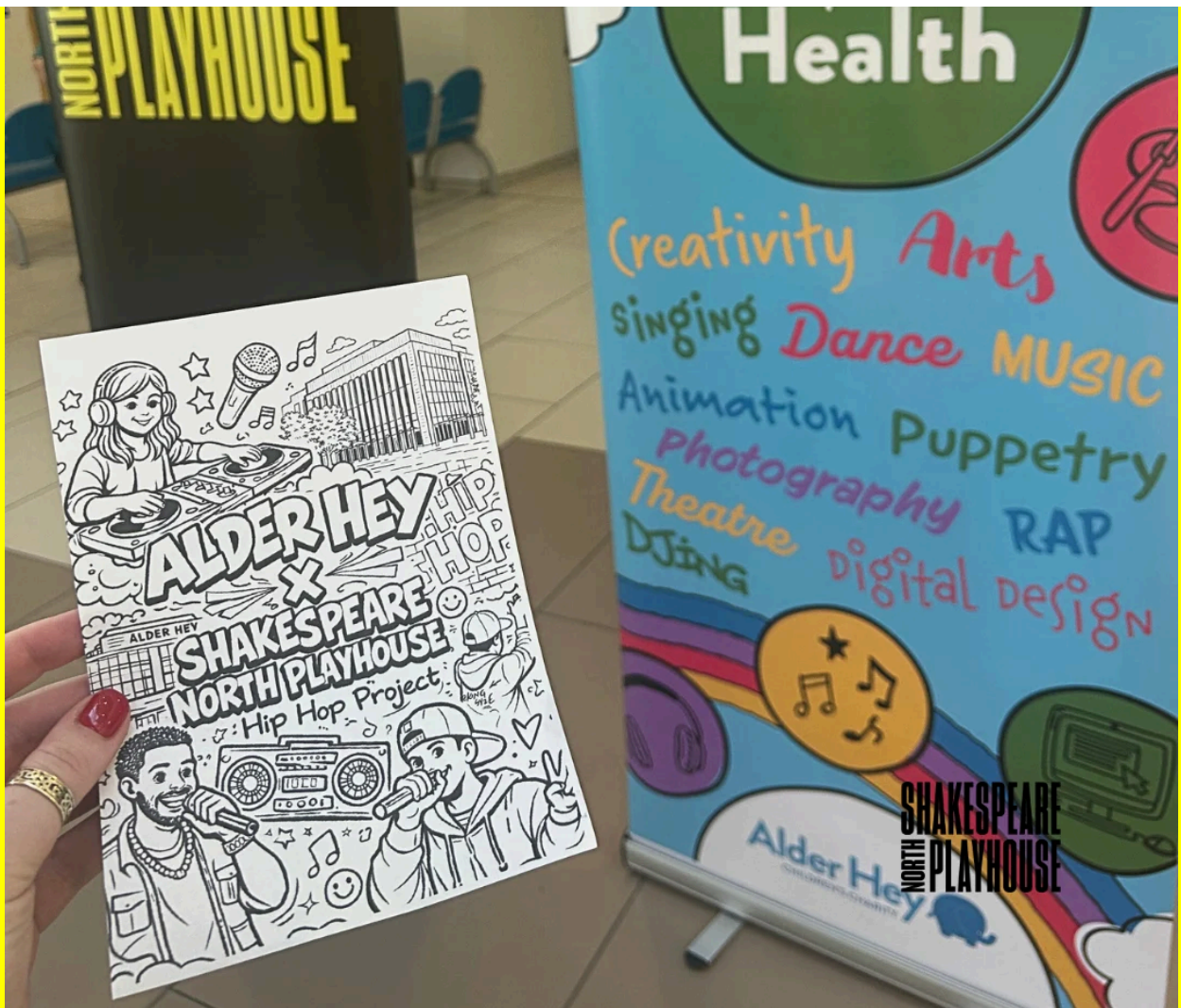
Arts for Health collaborates with Shakespeare North

Children and young people at Alder Hey have been exploring the power of creativity through rap, graffiti, DJing and beatboxing as part of a special six-week programme delivered in partnership with Shakespeare North Playhouse.

This collaboration was mentioned in Lyn Gardner's piece "Operating theatre: how the arts are transforming health care." in *The Stage*, February 2026, which is an important perspective on the role creativity can play in supporting health and wellbeing.

[Read more](#)





“Working with Alder Hey Children's Hospital has been an absolute joy; the whole team is so welcoming and vibrant. Collaborating with people like Vicky feels effortless and inspiring because she is always eager to explore new ways of working together and bringing creativity into clinical spaces. They're a brilliant

partner for us to have."

Morven Currie, Learning & Engagement Project Producer at SHAKESPEARE PLAYHOUSE
Shakespeare North Playhouse x Alder Hey Hip Hop Project, 2025/2026



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