



Make cic

2025-26
Annual Report

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Welcome to Make CIC’s Annual Report for 2025/26. This gives you a snapshot of our work across the last year: the progress we’ve made, the partnerships we’ve built and the places we’ve helped shape.

2025 was a year of steady progress, with stronger partnerships and a continued focus on creativity shaping places and communities. High occupancy at Make North Docks and Make Hamilton, plus growth at Make Huyton Village, shows just how rooted we are in high streets, neighbourhoods and creative spaces.

It hasn’t always been easy. Rising costs and funding pressures have hit the whole cultural and community sector this year, which makes our resilience and continued impact all the more worth celebrating.

It’s also been a year with real national reach. Arts Council England investment will help grow Knowsley’s creative community, Art After Dark returned to Birkenhead with our Leftbank partners, and we hosted our first ever grassroots regeneration conference, FLIPIM, drawing people from across the country and giving us a voice in national policy.

These are the stories of the people and projects that bring all of this work together.

Welcome



2025 has been a year of steady progress, stronger partnerships, and a continued focus on creativity shaping places and communities. Across our sites, Make CIC has strengthened its position as a delivery-led organisation rooted in high streets, neighbourhoods and creative production spaces, with high occupancy at Make North Docks and Make Hamilton, and continued growth at Make Huyton Village.

This progress has not come without challenge. Like many organisations across the cultural and community sector, Make has been operating within a difficult trading environment throughout 2025/26, shaped by rising costs, ongoing economic uncertainty and increasing pressure on public and charitable funding. In that context, the organisation’s resilience, adaptability and ability to continue delivering meaningful impact across communities is particularly significant.

Our place-based work has expanded across boroughs. In Huyton Village, This Place This Stage and Made in Huyton have supported local creatives, while in Birkenhead, work with the Leftbank Collective and Argyle Independent Quarter has developed collaborative approaches to regeneration and cultural programming. Through our partnership with Kindred and Street and a Half, we have extended our reach into St Helens, while Art After Dark and FLIPIM have connected communities across the region and wider.

We have also strengthened organisational capacity, welcoming four new team members this year.

As I step down as Chair, I do so with pride in what has been achieved and confidence in Make’s future. My thanks go to the Board, staff team, residents, artists, and partners whose commitment and collaboration continue to shape the organisation and its impact.

Rafael Willisch
Chair of the Board,
Make CIC



2025/26 has been a challenging year for the cultural and creative sector, with rising operational costs, continued funding pressures, and increasing demand for affordable creative space and support. In this environment, maintaining stability while continuing to deliver meaningful opportunities across our communities has been a significant achievement.

Despite these challenges, Make has continued to support creatives, residents and partners through our spaces, commissions, and place-based programmes across the region. Our commissions programme has remained central to this work, creating paid opportunities for artists, makers and freelancers while delivering projects that strengthen local connection and animate public spaces.

What continues to define Make is the commitment of the people behind it, our team, members, residents, freelancers and partner organisations whose collaboration and resilience continue to shape the organisation’s future.

Kirsten Little
COO & Artistic Director,
Make CIC



In this report we reflect on the past year with a humble gratitude to all the people and organisations who supported Make CIC to deliver its mission. We navigated a very tricky operating environment, both globally and locally. We worked with our community of interest to deliver incredible projects and commissioned work right across the region. But most importantly, we were focused on our mission and supported hundreds of people to turn their passions into prosperity.

This report covers an extended 14 month financial year as we decided to make some practical adjustments to the way we conduct business. Aligning our financial year with the tax year is just one of many small but important changes that we made that help underpin the brilliant high profile and exciting work that features in this report.

Despite the challenges this year of stubborn inflation and extraordinarily high energy costs, we managed to end the year with a slightly larger surplus (EBITDA) than last year. Higher everyday costs also impacted Make’s community of interest and I’m proud that we prioritised supporting people, financially and conscientiously, wherever we could.

This year was a story of significant place-based work and strong partnerships. We delivered a number of high profile and impactful activities across the region. The Place Partnership in Knowsley has resulted in an investment from Arts Council England, which will help to grow the creative community throughout the borough. With our Leftbank partners in Birkenhead, we delivered another well attended Art After Dark evening of exploring different venues. But most significantly, Make worked with a number of sponsors and partners to host our first ever grassroots regeneration conference. FLIPIM saw people right across the country descend on Birkenhead for a convention of conversation and collaboration. This has set us up for an even more ambitious event in 2026.

Make’s place-based work has had a national profile this year. Working with Power To Change on the Community-led High Street Innovators programme supported growth in the team and gave us influence on national policy such as Pride in Place and Local Innovation Partnerships.

In our buildings the community grew with Blooming Skulls opening a café in Make Hamilton following a resident-led decision process. Current residents Pyromacy Productions grew their operation to open a shop in Make Huyton Village, selling locally made products and creating something different for the town centre retail offer. But just as importantly, this year was another reliable one for Caffè Riccardo at Make North Docks, still serving (in my opinion) Liverpool’s best coffee.

I hope you enjoy reading more in this report about the work of Make’s community and the projects that have created the impact that defines who we are.

Liam Kelly
Chief Executive Officer, Make CIC

A bit of info about Make

Make is a purpose-driven socially-trading organisation with three vibrant spaces of our own and one that we manage for a partner. We unite and enrich communities across the Liverpool City Region through creativity, art and culture.

Who we are

Make CIC is a profit-for-purpose social enterprise and creative organisation.

Everything we earn is reinvested into our spaces, programmes and communities – supporting artists, makers and local people to grow, experiment and succeed.

Through creativity, enterprise, and collaboration, we strengthen communities, regenerate places and open up opportunities for people to shape their own futures.

Our Mission

Make CIC’s mission is to help people turn their passion into prosperity.

Make provides services; supports people; facilitates resources and networks in order that people can live happy, healthy and prosperous lives.



Our Vision 2030

Make CIC is a thriving, sustainable social enterprise that empowers people and communities to create, collaborate, and prosper within our hubs and beyond.

We see a future where...

We envision a future where:
People take part and belong
Open, inclusive spaces where creativity brings people together.

We are sustainable and resilient
Balancing social impact with strong, responsible trading.

Our work creates real impact
Accessible spaces, resources and networks that unlock potential.

We lead with social value
Recognised for meaningful social, economic and positive environmental impact.

Creative spaces thrive
Affordable, welcoming places for grassroots creativity and enterprise.

We are well governed
Transparent, accountable and community-led.



The Team

Founded in 2012 by Kirsten Little and Liam Kelly, our growing team and supportive board work closely to support Make’s creative community.



Liam Kelly
Chief Executive Officer



Kirsten Little
Chief Operations Officer
Credit: Wesley Storey



Rosie O’Sullivan
Impact & Funding Manager
Credit: Wesley Storey



Amy Higham
Marketing & Communications Manager
Credit: Amy Heycock



Alison Ashton
Community Manager



Joel Murray
Programme Manager



Eddy Kelly
Maintenance & Repairs



NEW

Dan Chan
Community & Project Co-ordinator



NEW

Louise Cross
Partnership & Regeneration Coordinator



NEW

Maria Popezuk
Facilities Manager



NEW

Lily Jones
Operations & Finance Co-ordinator

Board members



Chair of the Board
Rafael Willisich



Jane Leah



Sally-Anne Watkiss

Fond farewells



Mike Turner
Board Member

Mike Turner has been a valued member of the Make Board, supporting our estates and capital work, including the refurbishment of Make Hamilton.

His expertise and insight have strengthened how we develop and manage our spaces, playing an important role in shaping our organisational growth. We are very grateful for his time, support and commitment to Make, and wish him all the very best for the future.

We also say goodbye to two of our resident representatives, Claire Hesketh and Kamilah France, as they leave to grow into bigger spaces and develop their practices.



Mia Tagg
Community Manager

This year we bid a fond farewell to Mia, our Make Huyton Village Community Manager and Project Lead for Street and a Half. Mia is moving on to pursue new community-based projects in a freelance capacity.

Her work has played an important role in the growth of Make over the past three years, particularly in shaping and delivering place-based community activity. We are hugely grateful for her commitment, energy, and care, and wish her every success in her next chapter.

“Make CIC has grown significantly over the past three years. It has been a privilege to contribute to that growth and to work alongside such a committed and capable team,” she says.

This year we recruited seven Resident Representatives, who have played an important role in supporting our creative communities across Make Huyton Village, Make Hamilton Square and Make North Docks.

- Claire Hesketh, Artist
- Maria Shuttleworth, Artist
- Kamilah France, Ceramicist at Studio K Pottery
- Pamela Hanlon, Cloverlea Crystals
- Aimee Sandilands, Silversmith at Silver Thistle Workshop
- Olivia McIntosh, Artist
- Tom Hyland-Wilson, Artist + Maker

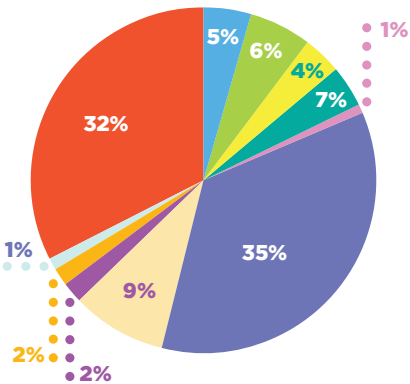


Tatjana, LJMU Marketing Intern

“Interning at Make was a professional gain and personally rewarding. Being able to learn from such a tight group of talented and experienced individuals taught me practical skills but, more importantly, what a healthy workplace looks like. The team cares about residents, members, partners and community, which is reflected in the space, work ethic and service. They offer care and support to everyone through opportunities, contributions and safe environments.”

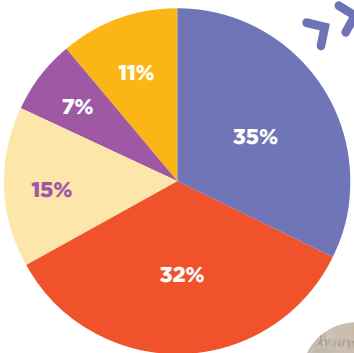
Our Community of Interest

What we know about our residents...



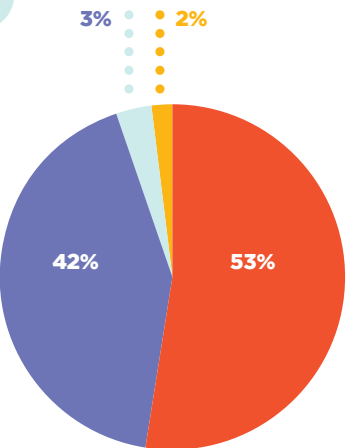
Type of resident

- Business
- CIC/Charity & social enterprise
- Craft
- IT, Software, Computer Services & Video Games
- Design, Fashion & Textiles
- Visual Arts, Music, & Performance Arts
- Maker
- Media, film, TV, Radio & Photography
- Publishing
- Other
- No data



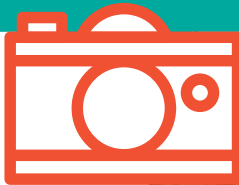
Age

- Under 25
- 25-34
- 35-49
- 50-64
- 65+



Gender

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary
- Prefer not to say

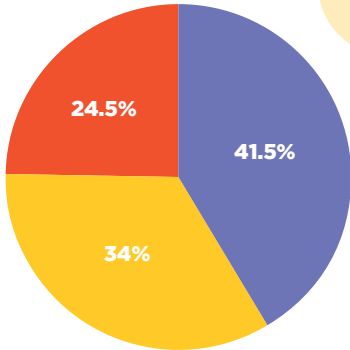


What our residents say about being at Make

Annual Report 2025-26

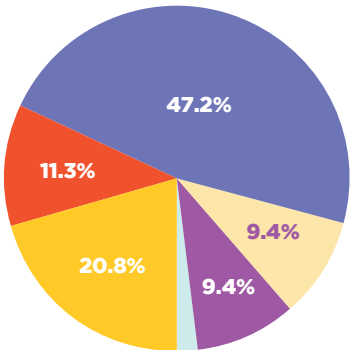
How much of your income do you generate from what you do at Make?

- All or most of it
- Some of it
- None



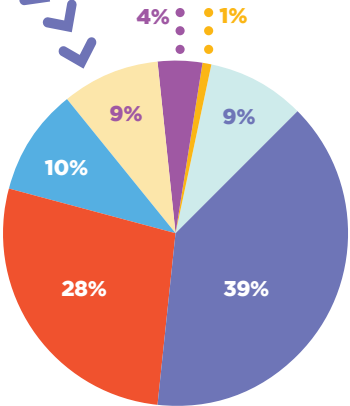
What best describes you or your organisation?

- Self employed or freelance
- Hobbyist
- Company (e.g. private ltd or public plc)
- Student
- Charity, CIC, Co-operative
- Other



Borough

- Liverpool
- Wirral
- Knowsley
- St Helens
- Sefton
- Halton
- Outside LCR



More impact

Across our larger resident businesses (with more than two employees), hiring activity far exceeded team turnover, resulting in a clear net positive employment trend of approximately 39%. This reflects continued business expansion and growing capacity within our creative enterprise community.

- 81% of our residents said that "being at Make has helped them to stabilise their business or practise"
- 75% of our residents said that they feel "part of a creative community at Make"
- More than 50% of our residents have collaborated with other Make residents on projects this year

2025-2026 in Numbers

1 Won **award**

4 creative hubs
across the Liverpool City Region
housing **264** artists, makers
and socially-trading businesses.

60 new residents joined in
6 new members in the workshop

We had **250+** enquiries
for studio spaces

We delivered
8 Made by
Make
Commissions

We are home
to **85** independent
businesses

We delivered
12 fully-funded
workshops
with **130** attendees

Supported
385 local creatives through
affordable studio spaces,
organisational support and
community engagement activities

Hosted **26** open days
with **130** people visiting our spaces

8 bee hives made
245 pots of
Hamilton honey

£65K
of work was passed
on to our residents

Make's **oldest** beneficiary
was **81** and **youngest** **18**

We supported
5 students
through paid
creative internships

4 new team members
joined us

85%
average occupancy
across our 3 sites

- North Docks **96%**
- Hamilton **93%**
- Huyton Village **70%**
- Street and a Half **77%**

2K+ people
attended our public events

We delivered
8 large public events
Recruited **7** resident reps

16 residents had
major success stories
and moved on to bigger things!

Made by Make

Our commissioning and production arm, Made by Make, connects clients with a diverse creative community to deliver ambitious, high-quality projects that generate lasting social, economic and environmental value.

Made by Make is the commissioning and production arm of Make – a way to bring together the skills, creativity and expertise of our community to deliver ambitious commissions, across the Liverpool City Region and beyond.

We specialise in collaborative commissions that combine creative excellence with practical delivery, offering clients access to a diverse range of skills, from design development and fabrication to installation and project management. Our model enables us to assemble the right team for each brief, drawing on the expertise of our wider creative community.

What sets Made by Make apart is the way we deliver projects. Every commission creates opportunities for independent creatives to develop their practice, share knowledge and build sustainable careers. By investing in local talent and creative infrastructure, client commissions generate lasting social and economic value alongside high-quality outcomes.

This year's commissions continued our commitment to sustainable production, circular design principles and local sourcing, ensuring that environmental responsibility remains embedded throughout our delivery process.

At its heart, Made by Make demonstrates the value of commissioning through a creative community. By connecting clients with skilled creative practitioners, we deliver impactful projects while creating opportunities for people, places and creative businesses to thrive.

Kirsten Little
Artistic Director, Made by Make



Roadshow Revamp

An interactive, sustainable design for community roadshows exploring the energy transition. Built using modular, flat-pack construction and responsibly sourced materials, the work created durable displays that encourage engagement and experiential learning with energy, innovation and sustainability.

“Visually impactful, brilliantly practical, and genuinely comfortable to sit on.”

– SP Energy Networks
Client: SP Energy



Scan to visit
Made by Make



Art Jam

A live creative takeover of Birkenhead Market, bringing together ten local artists to produce murals and installations on site. Part of a larger event, the public were invited to participate in the Art Jam through workshops, by putting their own creative mark on the market. The event supported youth engagement and championed local talent, demonstrating how cultural programming can activate underused spaces and support regeneration.

Client: Wirral Council
(Wirral Borough of Culture)



Subterranean Elevator

An immersive installation by Di Mainstone at Williamson Art Gallery, developed with Make residents Xyleia. The project combined fabrication and specialist making to create a multi-sensory environment, reusing materials from previous commissions as part of a circular production approach. As part of the legacy of Wirral Borough of Culture 2024, the commission demonstrated how ambitious artistic vision, reuse and collaborative making can come together to create deeply immersive cultural experiences rooted in place, craft, and regeneration.

Client: Williamson Art Gallery

Planters

A series of branded planters designed and fabricated using sustainable materials sourced locally. Built for long-term use, the work combined functionality with low-impact production.

Client: Ecotricity



Festive Post Box

A festive installation featuring a timber-built winter scene and interactive post box activation. Designed and fabricated at North Docks, it combined set-building and props to create a seasonal, high-footfall public experience.

Client: Landsec





Magazine Photo Booth

An interactive installation offering a Vogue-style cover experience for visitors. Later adapted for multiple campaigns including British Fashion Council, Mental Health Month, and Liverpool ONE Beauty Weekend, extending its lifespan through reuse and reactivation.

Client: Landsec

£39K generated for makers through commissions



30 creatives involved across projects



Liverpool City Council Awards

Design and fabrication of bespoke engraved awards for Liverpool City Council. Made from cost-effective, sustainable materials, the design balanced civic identity with efficient, repeatable production.

Client: Liverpool City Council

"Made By Make is a brilliant example of Make's values in action, bringing together independent makers, craftspeople and creatives to deliver work that simply would not happen otherwise. What stands out is not just the quality of the commissions, but the way the team creates opportunities for collaboration across the community, enabling talented people to work together on ambitious projects they may never have accessed individually. The strength of the project management behind the scenes allows creativity, craft and local talent to thrive at a genuinely impressive level."

Jane Leah,
Non-Executive Director, Make CIC

Name: Purple Patch (for Radio 1 Big Weekend)

Purple Patch was a landmark large-scale installation delivered for Radio 1's Big Weekend at Sefton Park, Liverpool, designed with circular economy principles, reuse and low-impact production at its core. A vibrant, interactive space, it celebrated creativity, community and sustainability, demonstrating how temporary festival infrastructure can be designed for long-term value.

67% of materials were reused or repurposed, with a further 28% selected for future reuse.

Materials including timber, bamboo, tyres and textiles were recovered through local suppliers and reuse

networks, diverting over 660kg of material from landfill. More than 90% of materials were sourced within five miles of the park, reducing transport impact by an estimated 250+ miles.

The installation featured interactive wireless charging stations, with thousands of visitors relaxing and recharging while learning about the impact of everyday waste. Energy use was monitored, with an estimated 1,200 kWh consumed and ~264 kg CO₂e, offset through reuse and local sourcing.

Following the festival, Purple Patch was rebuilt and reinstalled for Liverpool Waterfront's 'Last Days of Summer' event, extending its lifespan and impact.

Client: Liverpool City Council
Purple Patch for Radio 1 Big Weekend



Our Spaces

Get to know our spaces across the city region...

Make Hamilton, Wirral

Make Hamilton is a key creative and regeneration asset in Birkenhead, contributing to the town centre’s revitalisation through flexible workspace for artists, makers and creative businesses. Across multiple floors, it supports a growing resident community with a diverse mix of creative practice and enterprise. Occupancy has been consistently above 90% this year, significantly strengthening the local creative economy and increasing activity in the town centre.

Alongside our growing resident community, the building offers flexible hire and meeting spaces for workshops, training, conferences and events which has enabled a healthy and growing programme with annual events such as Art After Dark and FLIPIM.

This year the ground floor has become home to Blooming Skull Coffee, which opened in July 2025. The cafe and shop, which sells resident and local artists’ work, adds a social anchor and strengthens Make Hamilton as a welcoming destination within Birkenhead’s regeneration.



Make North Docks, Liverpool

Make North Docks is Liverpool’s largest creative and maker community, providing workspace across disciplines including woodworking, ceramics, fabrication and digital production. It continues to support established and growing businesses, with consistently high demand for studio space.

Occupancy remains strong at 96%, making it the most in-demand Make CIC site. This reflects both the strength of the resident community and ongoing demand for affordable, flexible making space.

Described as Liverpool’s ‘Cultural Workshop’, it brings together making, production and large-scale fabrication. A key base for Made by Make commissions, the space supports complex projects with artists, organisations and partners.

The site also includes a flexible event space for cultural activity and external hire. It remains a key production hub within Liverpool’s creative and industrial landscape and continues to benefit from its location in the evolving Ten Streets area.



Make Huyton Village, Knowsley

Make Huyton Village is a community-focused creative hub supporting regeneration in Huyton Village through accessible workspace, local enterprise, and creative participation. This year, occupancy levels have steadily increased, with the year ending at over 90% occupancy. The space provides affordable studios for artists and makers, supporting grassroots practice and retaining creative value locally.

Our innovation lab is equipped with 3D printers, laser cutters, CNC machinery, sewing machines and a dedicated workshop area for larger-scale making and fabrication projects. The site also includes Make on the Corner, a flexible, bookable space designed for workshops, meetings, events and community activity.

Anchoring the high street, Made in Huyton forms the retail heart of the site. Run by Make residents, it showcases and sells locally-made products, directly supporting makers and local independent businesses.



Street and a Half, St Helens

Street and a Half is a Kindred-led project managed by Make CIC, providing workspace and shared facilities for socially-trading organisations, artists and creative practitioners in St Helens town centre. It brings together a diverse resident community focused on social impact, creativity and enterprise.

Occupancy has reached 100%, reflecting strong demand for affordable, flexible workspace for mission-led organisations and independent creatives.

Alongside studios, the site offers flexible bookable spaces for meetings, workshops and community activity, extending its reach beyond residents and enabling a wider programme of engagement throughout the year.

Beyond our buildings

Make CIC is committed not only to supporting makers, creators and businesses within our buildings, but also to contributing to the wider communities in which we operate. Through programmes, partnerships and projects Make CIC delivers its mission beyond its buildings.

Birkenhead

At Make Hamilton, regeneration activity has focused on supporting high street innovation in Birkenhead town centre. Working with partners including Power to Change on the Community-led High Street Innovators programme, we have strengthened collaboration with Wirral Council and local businesses, testing new approaches to community-led regeneration.

We established the Argyle Independent Quarter Business Support Network, creating a platform for businesses to share opportunities, resources and collaborate.



We are also part of the Leftbank Collective, a partnership of cultural and community organisations supporting Birkenhead on the Mersey's left bank.

The Collective has delivered projects including place branding for the Argyle Independent Quarter and events such as Art After Dark. It also contributes to Birkenhead's Cultural Partnership and Wirral Council's Culture Strategy, supporting the ambition for Birkenhead to become the UK's first Town of Culture.

Liverpool's North Docks

Make North Docks sits within Liverpool's Ten Streets area, an evolving district for independent creative production and cultural activity. Alongside organisations such as Invisible Wind Factory and Vulcan Street Studios, Make CIC contributes to its identity as a hub for making, fabrication and cultural production.

The area supports exhibitions, artist development and city-wide programmes like River of Light and the Taylor Town Trail. Make North Docks continues to operate within this ecosystem, providing space for production-led practice and Made by Make commissions.

As the area evolves, there is increasing focus on balancing long-standing creative infrastructure with new development, ensuring Ten Streets remains an active base for Liverpool's creative economy.

Huyton Village, Knowsley

Since taking on our space in Huyton, Make CIC's work in the borough has grown significantly. As Knowsley became one of Arts Council England Priority Places, we joined forces with local arts organisations and Knowsley Council to deliver 'This Place, This Stage'. The programme supports young people into the creative industries and strengthens pathways into cultural careers across the borough. Alongside this partnership work, Make Huyton Village has continued to develop as a creative and community hub within Huyton town centre.

Building on this momentum, our strategic project 'The Ranch Reimagined' explores the long-term future of our Huyton building and the role it can play in the wider regeneration of the town centre. Most recently a Boots store, the site was originally the Mayfair Cinema – known locally as 'The Ranch'.



The project takes its name from this history and sets out an ambition to secure a Community Asset Transfer of the building to Make CIC, enabling a transition from meanwhile use to a permanent home for our community.

Through 'The Ranch Reimagined', we are testing ideas for expanded workspace, cultural activity and flexible public uses that support both community life and enterprise.

Alongside programmes like This Place, This Stage, the project strengthens Make Huyton Village's role as a cultural anchor in Knowsley, demonstrating how existing town centre buildings can be adapted for long-term cultural, social and economic benefit.



Programme

Events & Projects

100% of attendees would attend again

95% of attendees made new contacts at FLIPIM

FLIPIM

Our inaugural grassroots regeneration conference, FLIPIM 2025 was held in Make Hamilton and Future Yard, bringing together cultural leaders, practitioners and developers to explore solutions across place, housing and regeneration. The event was a strong success, with the majority of attendees rating their experience as 'excellent' and highlighting the relevance and practical value of the sessions to their work.

Speakers including Jayne Casey, Ruth Rundle, Grace Harrison and Melissa Mean were frequently referenced in feedback for offering a strong balance of strategic insight and grounded, real-world experience. The Nation of Housebuilders panel was also identified as a standout moment within the programme.

Networking was a key outcome of the day, with attendees forming valuable new connections to support collaboration, shared working and future opportunities. There was particular enthusiasm for strengthening links between Liverpool, Wirral and Greater Manchester, with momentum already building for continued dialogue and future gatherings. Building on this success, FLIPIM will now continue as an annual event, with strong early demand and a growing network of nationally recognised speakers already confirmed for the next edition.

“Thank you for creating space for such important conversations – especially with people that aren’t often invited to be part of the conversation”

– FLIPIM attendee, 2025



Power to Change

Community-led Highstreet Innovators

Make CIC was proud to take part in Community-Led High Street Innovators, a national programme led by funder and think tank Power to Change, bringing together five organisations that are reimagining the future of high streets and town centres across England. The programme centred on shared learning, collaboration and study visits designed to explore how community-led models can drive meaningful and sustainable regeneration.

As part of the programme, we undertook a series of study visits to each partner organisation, including Make CIC in Birkenhead, Artspace Lifespace in Bristol, Southmead Development Trust in Bristol, MadLab in Stockport and the Arcade in Dewsbury. Each visit offered an opportunity to share practice, explore different approaches to community asset ownership and activation, and reflect on the role of local organisations in shaping high street futures. In Birkenhead, the visit focused on the work of the Leftbank Collective and the Argyle Creative Quarter, highlighting how grassroots collaboration is helping to reimagine the town centre.

The programme demonstrated the strength and diversity of community-led high street innovation across the country, while also surfacing shared challenges and opportunities around vacant spaces, cultural placemaking and long-term sustainability. It reinforced the importance of locally rooted organisations in leading regeneration from the ground up, with communities actively shaping the spaces they live and work in.

[Read the playbook here](#)

Art After Dark

Following the success of its inaugural year, Art After Dark returned in March 2026 as an expanded town-wide celebration of Birkenhead's creative community. Growing from 11 venues in its first year to 19 participating venues in 2026, the programme brought together exhibitions, workshops, talks, and live creative activity across the town centre, attracting more than 400 attendees throughout the evening.

The event continues to grow as a collaborative cultural programme that increases visibility for local artists, encourages public engagement with creativity, and contributes to Birkenhead's developing cultural identity. As Jade from participating venue, Green Jam Creatives, reflected, **"It was just so nice to see the community coming together. It was a lovely opportunity for us to meet people who maybe didn't know we were even here."**



This Place, This Stage

This Place, This Stage is a partnership project focused on increasing arts participation for young people in Knowsley, funded by Arts Council England and delivered alongside partners including Heart of Glass, Knowsley Council, Adlib, Shakespeare North Playhouse and Make CIC. As part of the programme, the first artist residency cohort launched at Make Huyton Village, welcoming artists Jasmine Lockett, Emily Edwards and Faye Wilson into dedicated studio spaces supported through mentoring, workshops, masterclasses and development opportunities. Through the residency, artists are exploring themes including heritage, identity, community and architectural history, while developing their creative practice within Huyton Village. Each round of residencies will conclude with a showcase to highlight the work they have created over the course of the residency.



Make Huyton Village Showcase

In May 2025, Make hosted the Make Huyton Village Showcase: A Celebration of local Community and Creativity, an exhibition at Make on the Corner celebrating the work of resident artists and makers. The event featured over 20 artists and makers and brought together a wide range of creative practice from across the Huyton community, including art, design and craft, providing a public-facing platform for residents to share and sell their work within the town centre.



Winter Workshops

Make CIC delivered a Winter Workshop series funded by Knowsley Council through the Knowsley Community Grant Fund, offering ten free creative workshops for residents of Knowsley and surrounding areas, including lunch and access to accessible, welcoming creative spaces. Participants highlighted the positive impact on wellbeing and atmosphere, with comments including: **"I could feel a real change in my energy which became very positive"** and **"Amazing, lovely chilled vibes/atmosphere and go above and beyond. Very accommodating, warm and welcoming. The whole experience has been amazing."**

Resident Stories

Make’s flexible and supportive approach creates space to try ideas, grow a business and develop skills.

Make graduate Offkutt Designs takes on a shop front on Argyle Street to create Argyle Street Studios

Offkutt Designs, founded by Aine Naylor, is a sustainable accessories brand creating handmade bags and jewellery from reclaimed leather offcuts. The business began in 2020 when Aine repurposed her dad’s old Chesterfield sofa into a bag, before later creating earrings and bracelets from the remaining leather – an approach that continues to shape the brand’s commitment to sustainability and low-waste making.

Aine first started in a small maker space on the Isle of Wight, working from a tiny shared desk space as she developed the business. After moving to Birkenhead, she discovered Make CIC through a newspaper article and soon joined the Make Hamilton community, gradually expanding into larger studio spaces as Offkutt Designs grew.

This year, Aine took the next step by securing her own shop front on Argyle Street, launching Argyle Street Studios, a shared maker space now home to five independent creatives. The new space will soon host workshops teaching slow, manual making processes and sustainable craft techniques.

Reflecting on her journey, Aine described the Make community as an “**absolutely amazing community**,” highlighting the support she received throughout her growth.

“**When I make sales, I spend my money here in Birkenhead – it’s become a real creative quarter.**”



Credit: @Kristianacts



Made in Huyton

This year, Make Huyton Village launched Made in Huyton, in partnership with Make Huyton Village residents Pyromancy Productions CIC. During its pilot phase, the shop supported 23 independent local creators, with many trading publicly for the first time through low-risk access to high street retail. Over the trial period, 472 handmade items were sold, demonstrating strong demand for locally-produced goods in Huyton town centre. The shop has since continued beyond its pilot phase and is growing steadily. Alongside sales, Made in Huyton developed into a shared community space, supporting peer learning, informal mentoring and increased confidence among makers. Its volunteer-led model has encouraged a strong sense of ownership while acting as a gateway into wider Make Huyton Village activity.



From intern to full-time team member: Lily Jones

Lily Jones joined Make CIC through the Liverpool John Moores University Discovery Internship programme, quickly becoming a valued part of the team. She demonstrated strong capability, reliability and a clear understanding of the organisation.

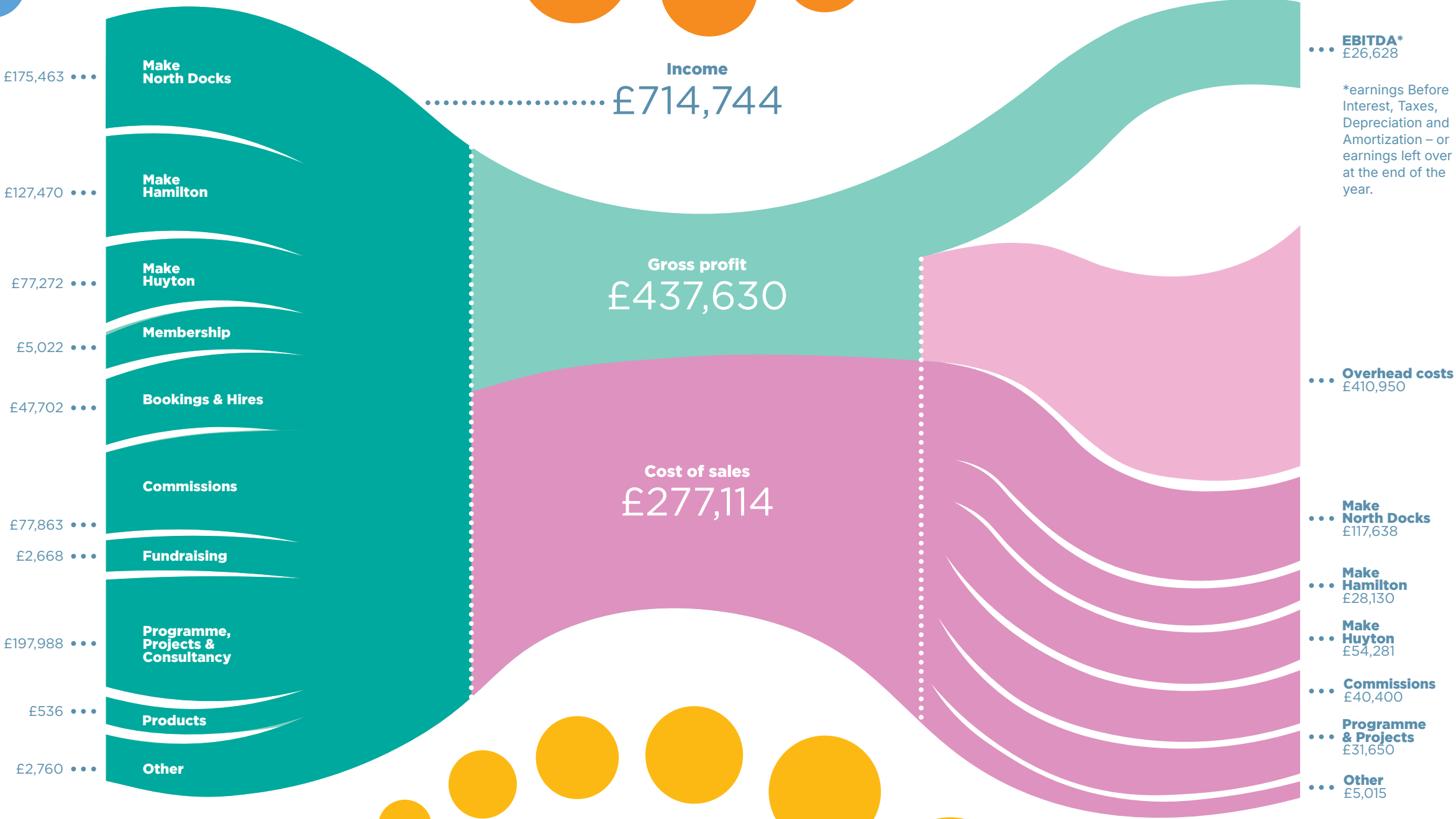
Following her internship, Lily was offered a permanent role as Operations and Finance Coordinator. Her progression reflects both her commitment and the importance of creating pathways into meaningful employment within Make.

Blooming Skull Coffee

In July 2025, Blooming Skull Coffee opened a second site at Make Hamilton, becoming a busy social hub for residents, visitors and locals. The café supports local employment and contributes to the wider Make community by catering events and hosting a makers’ shop, showcasing and selling work by residents and local artists.



Income & Expenditure



Looking Ahead

Looking ahead, our strategic work is taking us beyond our physical spaces into conversations about regeneration, place and support – but our creative communities will always remain at the heart of what we do.

Made by Make:

Next year our focus is on strengthening our work across the Liverpool City Region while continuing to develop a more strategic reach beyond it. At a time when creative work is increasingly positioned as secondary, we remain committed to the belief that creativity is fundamental to wellbeing, confidence and connection. A key part of our work is about visibility – if you can see it, you can be it – and ensuring that people can recognise themselves within creative spaces, processes and outcomes. Made by Make will continue to explore this through play, experimentation and collaboration, working with communities and partners who are also responding to these conditions in their own ways. Alongside this, we will continue to grow a more intentional offer, building on our existing reach and previous national projects, to ensure our work is sustainable, visible and rooted in meaningful relationships.

Programme:

Across all of our sites, our programme will continue to focus on creating visible, accessible opportunities for people to engage with creativity, culture and community-led regeneration, whether as participants, audiences, makers or future creative professionals. Over the next year we will deliver a series of public showcases and events celebrating our residents, local artists and makers, and grassroots action. Next year will include the return of annual events such as Art After Dark in Birkenhead and the Make Huyton Showcase. There will also be opportunities through This Place, This Stage for our artist residencies to showcase their work, plus a Make North Docks showcase event highlighting the Ten Streets area and a further opportunity for our residents to exhibit their work.

Alongside this, we will continue to develop FLIPIM – “The Grassroots Regeneration Conference” – bringing together communities, organisers, policymakers and cultural practitioners to explore new approaches to regeneration, ownership and the future of high streets and neighbourhoods. Hosted in Birkenhead, FLIPIM positions the Liverpool City Region as a leading voice in community-led regeneration and reflects Make CIC’s growing role within national conversations around culture, place and participation.



[FLIPIM 2026 conference tickets here](#)

Make North Docks

As Make North Docks moves into its tenth year in the Ten Streets area, our focus is on sustaining and securing its long-term future. Building on consistently high demand for making space, we will continue to explore how the site can better support growing businesses, while maintaining its role as a centre for production, collaboration and large-scale creative output. Alongside this, we will continue to strengthen its position as Liverpool’s Cultural Workshop, ensuring that the needs of existing creative communities are reflected as the wider regeneration of the Ten Streets area progresses.



Make Hamilton

In Wirral, we will continue our active role in the regeneration of Birkenhead through the Leftbank Collective and Birkenhead’s Cultural Partnership, building on the momentum of the Argyle Independent Quarter as a growing creative cluster. Following the successful establishment of the building, including the addition of Blooming Skull Coffee and expanded programme, the focus now shifts to deepening activity, increasing public engagement, strengthening partnerships and embedding the space as a long-term high street anchor for creativity, enterprise and community use. As part of contributing to the local regeneration of the area Make CIC is delivering a research and feasibility project with the community to explore potential end uses for the now vacant Birkenhead Town hall, funded by the Architectural Heritage Fund.

A key priority for the year ahead will be the development of the building’s third floor, creating additional workspace and studio provision to meet demand and support further growth within the creative community.

Make Huyton Village

In Huyton, we will continue to build on our commitment to the regeneration of the town centre in partnership with Knowsley Council. This includes strengthening Make Huyton Village as a creative and cultural anchor through ongoing programmes, resident activity and high street-facing initiatives such as Made in Huyton. At the same time, we will continue to explore the long-term future of the site, with ambitions for permanence and the potential redevelopment of the Ranch Reimagined project, ensuring that future plans are shaped by local need and sustainable growth.

Street and a Half

While the long-term direction of the space continues to develop in partnership with Kindred, Street and a Half represents an important test case for Make’s wider approach to community-led space. It demonstrates how models of shared ownership, collaboration and social enterprise can create sustainable, locally rooted workspaces, with the potential to inform and support other organisations and places looking to adopt similar approaches.

The story doesn’t end here:

makecic.org/contact-us/
hello@makecic.org



Thanks

Like any community, we rely on the people and organisations who share our goals and help us pursue them. Thank you to everyone who supported our work this year, including:

Adlib
Arts Council England
Birkenhead Market
Britannia IT
British Property Federation
Charity Bank
Culture Liverpool
Ecotricity
Floral Pavilion
Global Giving
Groundswell
Heart of Glass
Invisible Wind Factory
John Lucy (our fabulous beekeeper)
Key Fund
Kindred
Knowsley Community Fund
Knowsley Council
Landsec
Leftbank Collective
Liverpool Biennial

Liverpool City Council
Liverpool City Region Combined Authority
Liverpool John Moores University
Liverpool Street Scene
Livv Housing
Magenta Living
Make it Happen
MRWA
Power to Change
Regenda
Roberts Recycling
Rotary Birkenhead
Shakespeare North Playhouse
SP Energy
Starship
St Helens Council
Williamson Art Gallery
Wirral Council
Wirral Met College
Wordscape
Zap Graffiti

