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For Immediate Release

Running the London Marathon for Theatre Royal Plymouth

In October this year Theatre Royal Plymouth's Director of Engagement and Learning, Mandy Precious, will be running the London Marathon to raise vital funds for one of their flagship community projects *Our Space*.

About the challenge Mandy said: *"I am not really a runner but since the first lockdown I've been running to stay fit and sane. And I think it's worked! And now I am doing the London Marathon! It's a real privilege to have been given TRP's place in the race, and to be raising money for our creative programme, Our Space, feels very special."*

Our Space is one of TRP's flagship community projects, a creative programme working with adults with multiple and complex needs. Members come from all walks of life and may have faced challenges involving homelessness, mental health issues, re-offending, substance misuse, or they may feel isolated for other reasons. In the last 11 years of *Our Space*, TRP have held over 898 drama workshops and engaged with over 724 adults with multiple and complex needs.

Our Space run community drama workshops in partnership with local services such as Plymouth Mind, weekly drama workshops at TRP's production and learning centre (TR2) and bespoke training sessions for longer standing members to gain further skills that are transferable to everyday life.

Our Space is a project very close to Mandy's heart: *"Of all our projects, Our Space speaks to me of our core mission and values. The ethos of the project, which places the participants' journey front and centre, is belonging – and many group members become part of TRP by taking up roles as creative practitioners, creative enablers, working in other departments or finding a pathway to becoming independent artists."*

Our Space has had a big impact for those involved, as one member explains: *"I was in a really dark place in rehab, but forcing myself to come here has been excellent, it got me through. I don't think I would have gotten through it if it was not for Our Space."* Of



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those involved in the last 11 years, 76% of participants felt that their self-esteem and confidence had improved and their isolation reduced, and 68% of feedback from family and friends suggested participants had better relationships and 'ability to face the world' because of *Our Space*.

During the pandemic TRP knew it was crucial for *Our Space* to continue despite their closure and the numerous lockdowns, so they moved the weekly sessions to virtual meetings on Zoom. During these sessions they worked on creative writing, audio recordings, vocal work and poetry. Just as importantly as the creative output, they gave everyone a place to keep in touch with other members and continue to build their friendships and support systems. *Our Space* members said these sessions "*lifted my mood*", were "*a natural antidepressant*" during lockdown and have been "*making us think differently and getting people like me used to technology*".

Mandy is part-way through a rigorous training schedule and you can support her by making a donation at <https://uk.virginmoneygiving.com/MandyPrecious1> to keep her going through the many miles of training and of course during the marathon itself! TRP are grateful for any support you're able to give, your donation will help to fund *Our Space*, and help reach more people from our local community.

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For further information please contact the Media and Communications team on mediaandcommunications@theatroyal.com / 01752 230439

Theatre Royal Plymouth (TRP) is a registered charity providing art, education and community engagement in Plymouth and across the region. It engages and inspires with the aim of touching lives. Theatre Royal Plymouth presents a year-round programme of world class productions on all scales as the South West's principal centre for performing arts.

Theatre Royal Plymouth works with partners to understand the challenges people face accessing the arts, especially vulnerable and disadvantaged people. It creates pathways that are genuinely accessible to those who might otherwise never get to



engage with the arts. They collaborate to co-create and co-author work that represents the community, creating the space needed for people to tell their story in their own way.

Theatre Royal Plymouth is the UK's largest regional producing theatre. With a focus on embracing the vitality of new talent and supporting emerging and established artists. It collaborates with a range of partners to provide dynamic cultural leadership for the city of Plymouth.



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