

Update Autumn 2021

# Future Arts Centres



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## Welcome to this update from Future Arts Centres.

Over the past 12 months, our membership has grown to more than 115 arts centres from across the UK. Alongside running the National Lottery 25th anniversary project, Here and Now, we've been involved in lobbying for financial support during the pandemic, published a book and launched a new website.

It's been fantastic to see so many arts centres reopen their doors, both temporarily last autumn and again since the restrictions lifted in May. COVID has exacerbated many of the inequalities that we see in our communities, but it has also underlined the importance and value of our work. There is no doubt that we will play a vital role in helping communities rebuild over the next few years.

We hope that Future Arts Centres can help make this work more visible, champion best practice and ensure we support each other through the many challenges ahead.

**Gavin Barlow & Annabel Turpin**  
Co-leads

[futureartscentres.org.uk](https://futureartscentres.org.uk)

[@artscentres](https://twitter.com/artscentres)





## Future Arts Centre membership

Membership of FAC is free and open to any UK arts centre that embraces our **principles**. You can view a full list of our 115 members **here** – if you think anyone is missing, please do encourage them to join.

New members are joining all the time so from now on, we will be welcoming them via social media.

Please help by ensuring your organisation Twitter account is following **@artscentres** and sharing relevant posts.



**In summer 2019, Future Arts Centres secured £750,000 of Arts Council funding to deliver Here and Now, an ambitious programme of work to celebrate the National Lottery's 25th birthday.**

Originally conceived for 2020, the programme has been extended due to COVID and will now finish in the autumn.

**Here and Now** is a national and local celebration of culture within communities. 40 new projects have or are taking place in and around 40 arts centres across the country, led by artists and co-created with local people. Each project tells the story of the place and the people. The programme is supported by five Associate Artists, who are developing a series of films and podcasts to tell the national story of the project, making it available to people across the UK and beyond.

You can read more about the project here.

**[here-and-now.org.uk](https://here-and-now.org.uk)**

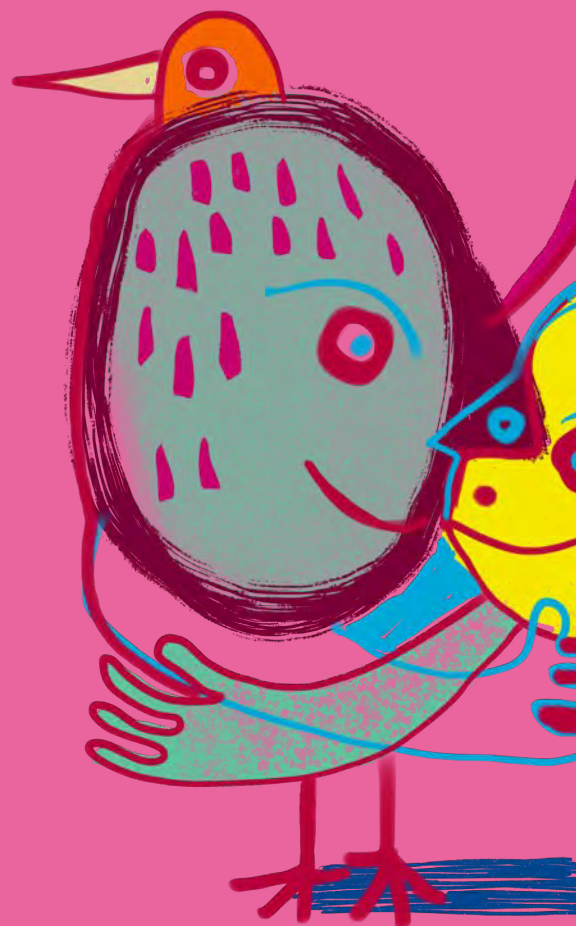






Photo: The Edge Bath, Paul Blakemore



# TACTICS FOR THE TIGHTROPE

## CREATIVE RESILIENCE FOR CREATIVE COMMUNITIES

MARK ROBINSON

### Ever felt like leading an arts centre was like walking a tightrope?

In July, Future Arts Centres published its first book. **Tactics for the Tightrope** is for arts professionals, freelance workers, artists, board members and anyone who would like to learn how best to connect, collaborate and multiply the voices of creative communities.

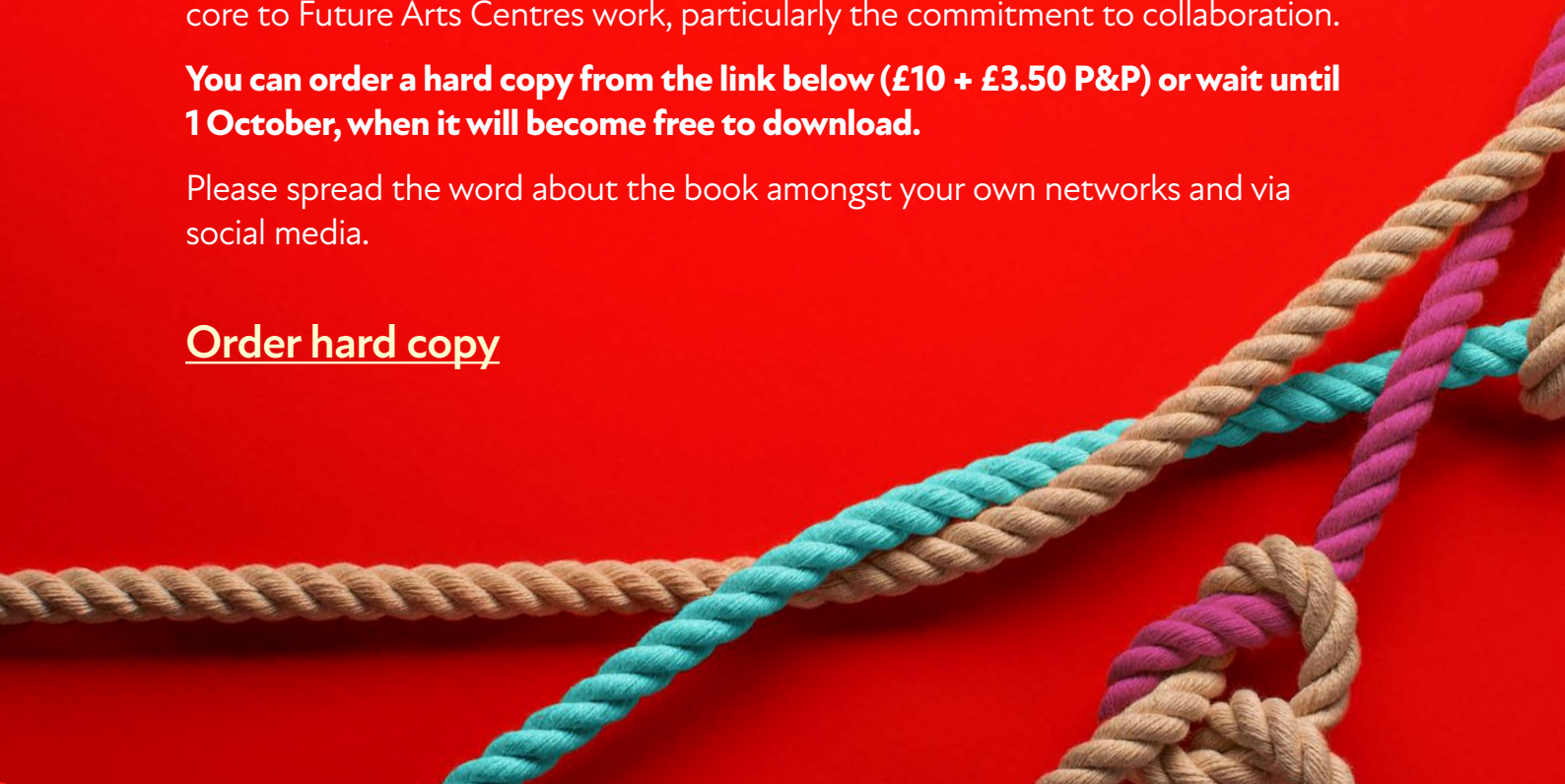
Through Future Arts Centres, we have experienced some of the vitally important developments in arts practice that are occurring around the country. We have seen many leaders stepping up to challenge the status quo and find new and different ways of working. We wanted to amplify these practices, to interrogate and challenge them, and to share them.

With generous support from Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, we have been able to work with **Mark Robinson of Thinking Practice**. Mark's own practice very much aligns with our values, and we are delighted to commission and publish Tactics for the Tightrope. It embraces many of the principles and considerations that are core to Future Arts Centres work, particularly the commitment to collaboration.

**You can order a hard copy from the link below (£10 + £3.50 P&P) or wait until 1 October, when it will become free to download.**

Please spread the word about the book amongst your own networks and via social media.

**Order hard copy**





## Salary benchmarking

In June 2021, Future Arts Centres carried out its third salary benchmarking exercise – one of our activities that we know members really value. The resulting data, compiled from information supplied by 45 arts centres, is available from the Resources page on our [website](#).

Please note this information is confidential and available to FAC members only – a password can be requested via the website.



## Website

With huge thanks to **Tim Jukes Design**, we launched the new Future Arts Centres website in early 2020. As well as information about our work, membership and the latest news, it also houses a number of resources and a direct link to the **Future Arts Centres Forumbee site**.

The Forumbee site is our online peer support network, open to all members (up to three users per organisation). We have seen a huge increase in use over the past 15 months, with many members reaching out for support across a range of topics – more than 50 discussions have taken place. Any member can post a new topic, **[join here](#)**.



## Lobbying for support during COVID-19

We have lobbied during the COVID-19 crisis for recognition of the work of arts centres and for support during the recovery, as well as additional support for the artists and young people we work with. We have contributed to roundtables and committees through Arts Council England, DCMS, local authorities and industry groups, submitted evidence to the DCMS enquiry into COVID-19 impact, and contributed to the Fabian Society's report **Cultured Communities: The Crisis is Local Funding for Arts and Culture**.

Press and media coverage has included articles and interviews in the Daily Telegraph, The Guardian, The Independent, The Stage, The Economist, Sky News Daily Podcast, and an article authored for Prospect magazine.



## Future Plans

During the autumn, we will be reviewing how Future Arts Centres can continue to support members to navigate a fast-changing world as we enter the process of recovery. We will have a particular focus on the changes in the sector in England for those delivering against the Arts Council's new ten-year strategy, **Let's Create**.

Please do get in touch if you have any thoughts or ideas about what Future Arts Centres can do next.



• **Future  
Arts  
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