

LEWISHAM YOUTH THEATRE'S DIRECTOR'S REPORT



2022-2023

* TABLE OF CONTENTS *

01

● Our Story So Far ●

...

...

02

● Achievements & Performance ●

...

...

03

● Our Delivery ●

...

...

04

● Meeting Our Strategic Outcomes ●

...

...

05

● Plans for Future Periods ●

...

...

06

● Financial Review ●

...

...

OUR STORY SO FAR



● Our Mission ●

We bring young people together from across the Lewisham community to create outstanding theatre in an environment of high expectations and collaboration. We work from the core belief that artistic excellence is key to expanding young people's horizons and creating lasting transformation.

● Our Purpose ●

Lewisham Youth Theatre (LYT) nurtures and inspires young people's voices through free participatory theatre activities, helping them to develop enduring and transferable skills that lead to increased life chances and long term well-being.

In 2015, Lewisham Youth Theatre was awarded a Gold Level London Youth Quality Mark, a quality assurance scheme accredited by City and Guilds.

ACHIEVEMENTS AND PERFORMANCE

"LYT is so much more than a youth theatre."

A former participant of Lewisham Youth Theatre once said, **"LYT is so much more than a youth theatre."**

Never has this been truer than in the last year. We have expanded our activity and benefit to the Lewisham community through continued exploration of our Youth-Led Creative Hub model, centring young people's voices across the organisation. Support from major funders, including the **National Lottery Community Fund**, has allowed us to widen our impact: building young creatives through our **facilitator training** and **Hatch** creative incubator programme, empowering young leaders through the **My London Youth Social Action project** and responding to urgent local need through programmes like the **Wildfire! Escape Room** and our **Friday Social Hub sessions**.

We have hosted other arts and community activity, often providing a space where partners and young people can collaborate on issues of importance.

"I also want to send a special appreciation to our lovely, intelligent, confident young people for their active participation and input to some of the agenda item. They were great in articulating and highlighting the lack of provision for young people in the heart of the Town Centre. We are very appreciative of their support. This is a testament of the great work your project offers to young people across the borough and beyond." - Local partner

These developments have shown the difference our programmes can make to both our participants and our wider community, forming the basis of our continued growth of the Creative Hub.

OUR DELIVERY



Juniors



75 aged **8-12** and **5** peer mentors aged **12-16** and **4 Graduate Creatives** aged **18-25** engaged in **78** sessions across **4** session groups. In June, the Acting Company produced ***Space Girl***, a play about a young girl who travels to the moon in search of her missing father. The devising company explored themes around families' relationships, imagination and dreams in a response to *Space Girl*.

40 aged **12-14** and **2 Graduate Creatives** aged **18-25** engaged in **38** sessions across **3** session groups. In December, participants developed ***Wildfire! an immersive escape-room*** style drama exploring an urgent climate emergency in Lewisham in partnership with STEM and arts engagement company SMASHFest UK. In April 2023, LYT helped SMASHFest produce with a digital version of the ***Wildfire!*** experiences for public audiences in the Creative Hub.

In July, the Acting Company produced ***MyLife Now***, a snap shot of LYT member's lives today, inspired by 2008 performance *My Life* and with filmed contributions from the original participants – now professionals.



Seniors



48 aged **14-25** engaged in **82** sessions across **4** session groups. The Acting Company performed ***Confession Challenge*** at LYT, Fuse International Festival in Kingston and The Broadway Studio, Catford. **3** participants led the Acting Company process as paid assistant directors/writers alongside the Artistic Director. One **16-year old** was paid as an assistant technician.

The Devising Company performed ***Tales from the Lewisham Arms*** – their response a new programme of work by young creatives, where they share their own writing and performances.

The Graduate Acting Company led a tour of performance ***Live it Down*** to schools and practitioner events across the borough, including the launch of Engage, a Violence Reduction Unit initiative.

● Technical Theatre ●

34 aged **11-17** engaged in **22** sessions across **3** groups, with **8** young people aged **13-16** going on to assist productions as tech crew.

11 aged **12-16** took part in **13 Bronze Arts Award sessions**, **6** will achieve qualifications.

32 one off-drama & technical theatre Outreach sessions in schools & community settings reaching **700** participants aged **7-14**



● Member's Committee ●

28 aged **11-18** took part in **32** sessions of **Member's Committee**, including planning and running events, and representing Lewisham young people at community events like the Local Area Assembly and Lewisham launch of the Police's A New MET For London strategy.

6 of these have sat on the **My London Youth Steering Group** - a cross-borough youth Board leading social action projects across Lewisham & Greenwich.

● ● ● Graduate Creatives ● ● ●

18 Graduate Creatives aged **16-25** received paid work experience, gaining employability skills through supporting on LYT's youth theatre projects.

In collaboration with the **Albany's A Big Conversation**, **8** of these participants also received dedicated training, mentoring and paid experience on delivering drama for wellbeing with young people affected by poor mental health. Stories of the impact of the arts on their own mental health were showcased in a campaign for more creativity in supporting young people with their mental health: <https://youtu.be/zNuB2MLNISO>

PROGRAMME DEVELOPMENTS



57 CREATIVE HUB MASTERCLASSES AND WORKSHOPS DELIVERED WITH CREATIVE PARTNERS INCLUDING:

Central School of Speech & Drama Actor Trainers; All In Actors; Casting Director Cerri Bedingfield; Collective Acting Studio; London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art (LAMDA); National Youth Theatre; Outside Edge; Theatre Centre; Frantic Assembly; SMASHFest; Trinity Laban; Albion Theatre, Stage Combat specialist Lydia Fitzwilliams; Actors Lucian Msamati; and Patrice Naiambana led acting masterclasses.

In February, we hosted **Celebrate Storytelling** - A storytelling workshop led by Helen Stanley and launch of a storybook, written by **9-year old** LYT member Isis Damali, with Q&A and book signing.

HATCH

A new creative project that gives **Young Creatives** aged **18-25** the opportunity to develop their own creative practice: as writers, performers, directors and producers, through creative development sessions. Young artists showcased their work at a **3-day festival** at LYT's Creative Hub in August.



CREATIVE FUTURES

As an extension of our previous **Opening Doors** programme and in collaboration with London Borough of Culture, we hosted a **Creative Futures** event, featuring **3** masterclasses and a Q&A panel run by our Member's Committee with professional creatives: Oladipo Agboluaje (playwright), Rosie Townshend (producer); Mojisola Elufowoju (director) and Patrick Bullock (designer).

A video of the event can be seen here: <https://youtu.be/jZdWBNxgo9M?si=gihj08NrMQul-XdH>





MEETING OUR STRATEGIC OUTCOMES



STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 1: IMPROVING TRANSFERABLE LIFE SKILLS OF

LEWISHAM YOUNG PEOPLE (YP)

One-off Workshops

312

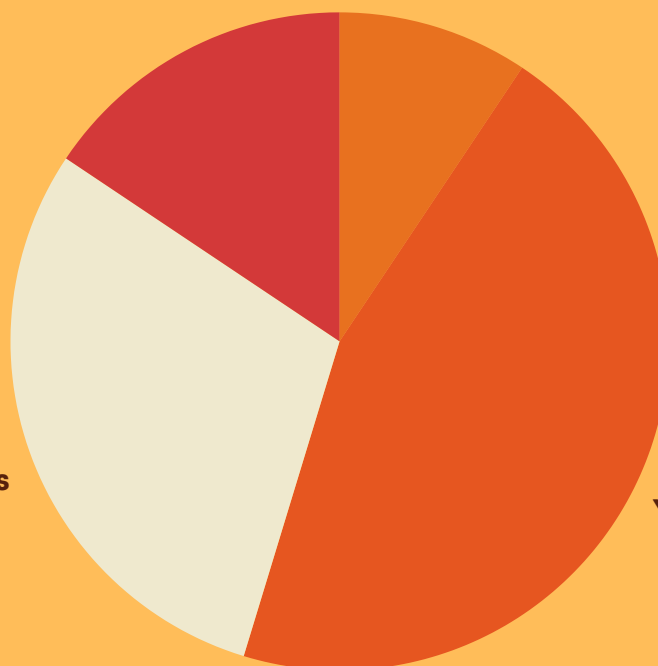
YP in core projects

187

We continue to track key performance indicators as set out in our **Strategic Plan 2017-2022** against each of our Strategic Objectives. A full strategic plan can be downloaded from our website:

<http://www.lewisham-youththeatre.com/publications/>

Audience Members
593



YP in Outreach
906

PARTICIPANT SELF-ASSESSMENT INDICATORS:

- **Social/Emotional Skill: 92%** of all evaluation respondents reported a significant increase in at least one **social/emotional skill** (confidence, teamwork, communication and emotional literacy)
- **Creative Skills: 80%** of all evaluation respondents reported an increase in their **creative skills**

76%

DISCLOSED
SIGNIFICANT
DISADVANTAGE*

98%

YOUNG PEOPLE
HAVE TAKEN
PART IN 3 OR
MORE SESSIONS

80%

YOUNG PEOPLE
HAVE TAKING
PART IN 10 OR
MORE SESSIONS.

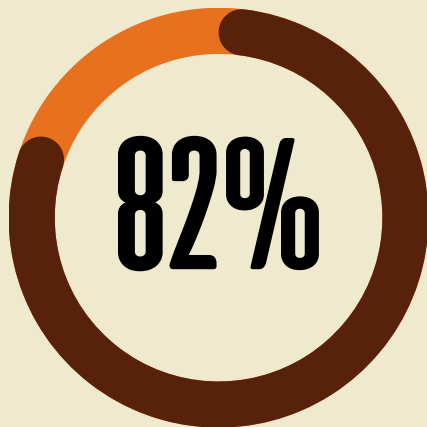
61%

OF 'WORKSHOP'
PROJECT
PARTICIPANTS
WENT ON TO JOIN
A NEXT STEP
PERFORMANCE
PROJECT

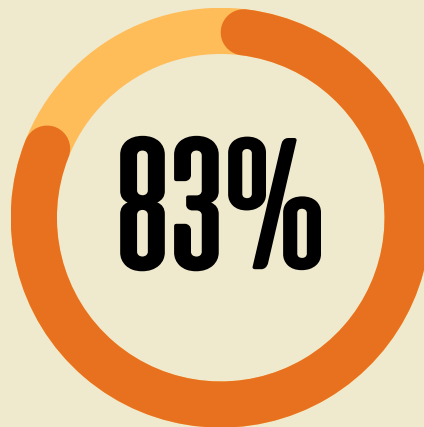
*For more information on how LYT defines disadvantage, please see the introduction section of our Strategic Plan 2017-2022

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 2: INCREASED AMBITION AND ACCESS TO FURTHER OPPORTUNITIES

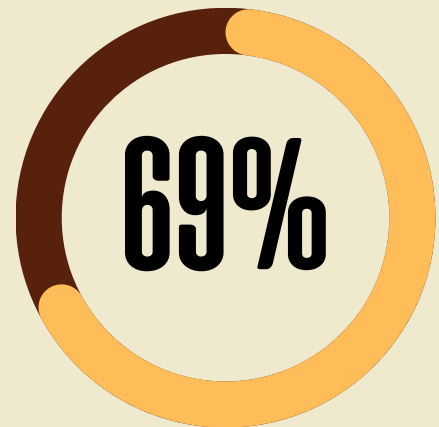
In our evaluations, young people reported...



An increase in resilience



An increase in ambition



An increase in leadership



Participation at LYT

- **214** young people engaged in **54** interactions with professional theatre companies including trips to see theatre, backstage tours, masterclasses and panel discussions with industry professionals
- **408** community members & young people attended **4** performances & events at the Creative Hub
- **6** young people completed the **Bronze Arts Award** qualification and **6** young people received **AQA Unit Award Accreditations**
- This year, **17** volunteers and placement students gave up their time to support on our projects.
- **40** youth theatre members volunteered as part of **Members' Committee**, peer mentors on projects, technical and backstage crew, or took part in work experience.



NEXT STEPS



Our direct support to connect participants to next steps and opportunities around London has meant that 10 Graduate Creatives have received paid work with external arts organisations.



Amiga

A Senior participant performed as part of the Windrush 75 Celebration at the Broadway Theatre



Pierce

A Technical Theatre participant, received paid work as a technician with a visiting company



Callum

A Technical Theatre participant, received an advance payment for the music he composed for Space Girl as part of the play's publication with Nick Hern

"LYT provides opportunities to discover talent and career potential in all areas of creative performance industries to young people who might never otherwise discover they could succeed in them. It widens the pool of expertise in an industry of significant economic importance to London & the UK." – Parent, Junior 12-14s group

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: SHARING OUR EXPERTISE AND WORKING PRACTICE



• • • Training & Exchanges • • •

We have exchanged with partners to highlight our own work, while supporting a wider adoption of quality youth-led practice. Activity under this objective includes:

- | | |
|---|---|
| Creating Work with Young Audiences | ➤ Training delivered with BRIT School Applied Theatre class, culminating in their students performing a piece of children's theatre at LYT for 84 primary school children |
| Impact of Youth-Led Practice | ➤ Training delivered with National Lottery Community Fund and BBC Children in Need |
| Performing for Young Audiences | ➤ Training delivered with All In Actors foundation students |
| Live It Down | ➤ A Forum Theatre play performed by our Graduate Acting Company for Lewisham's Social Work Conference and the launch of Engage, a cross-borough violence reduction initiative |
| The Parched Lands Teacher Pack | ➤ Working with Lewisham Council's Climate Team, we published a teachers pack and delivered a workshop with their Student Climate Network as a legacy of our 2022 production of 'The Parched Lands'. |

◀ Publication of *Space Girl* ▶

We are thrilled that the play *Space Girl* written by Helen Stanley with music by LYT participant Callum Webb and produced by our Junior Acting Company in 2023, will be part of Nick Hern Books' Multiplay Drama Initiative.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: SHARING OUR EXPERTISE AND WORKING PRACTICE

• • • Referral Partners • • •

LYT continues to receive referrals through local partnerships. This year, our partners have included:

Local Primary Schools: Forster Park, Gordonbrock, John Stainer, Kender Primary, Rushey Green, St Marys, St. Saviour's, Launcelot, New Woodlands

Local Secondary Schools: Abbey Mannor, Bonus Pastor, Deptford Green, New Woodlands, Prendergast Ladywell, Sedgell, Sydenham School

Community Referral Partners: AFRIL, Baseline, CAMHS, Early Help Team, Family Thrive, Job Centre, Lewisham Social Care, Redthread, South London & Maudsley NHS, Young Carers Lewisham, Lewisham Virtual Schools

• • • My London Partnership • • •

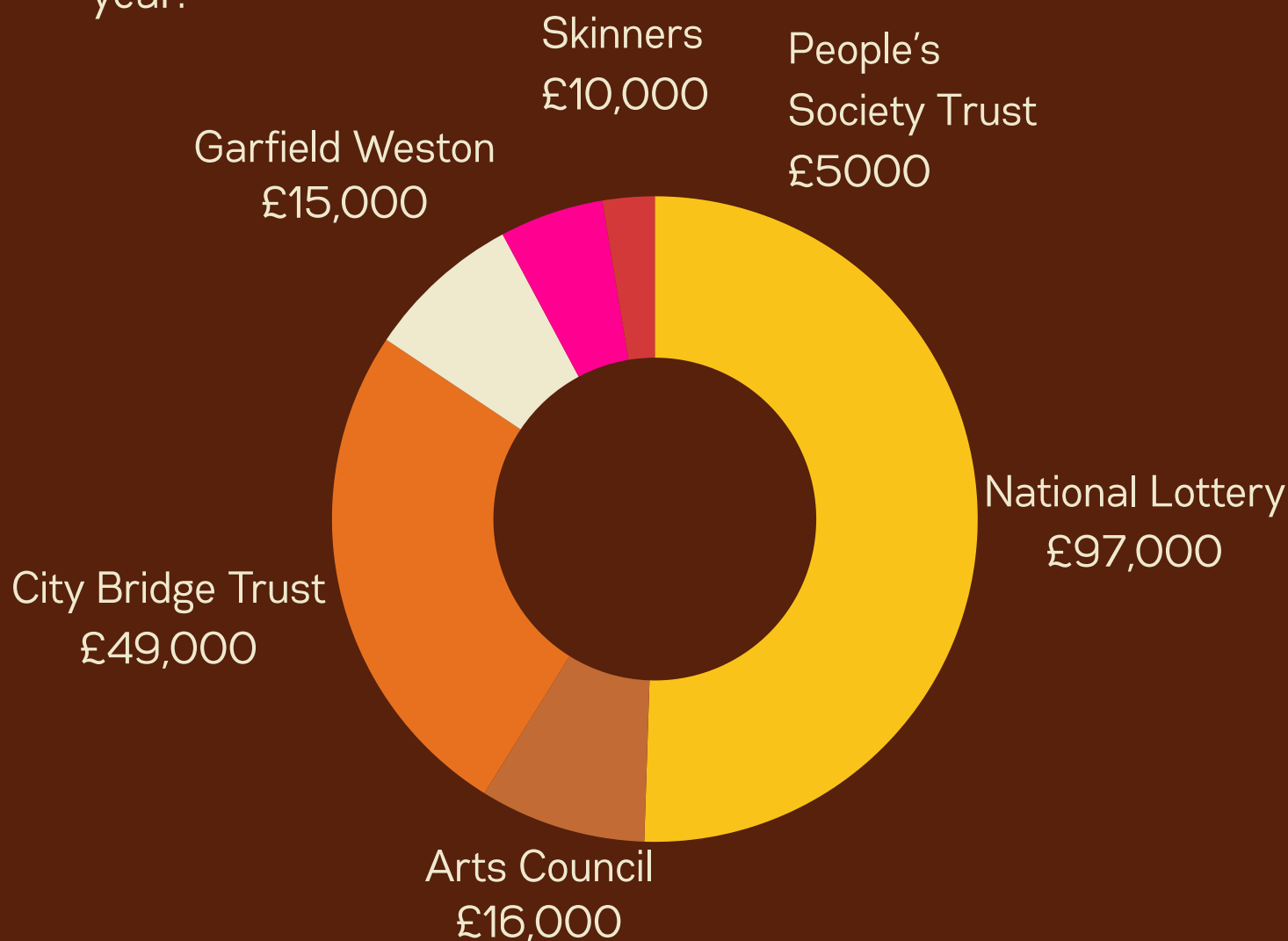
LYT leads this project to seed social action across Lewisham and Greenwich alongside partners Charlton Athletic Community Trust, Metro Charity, Tramshed and Trinity Laban. The Youth Steering Group, made up of participants from 7 partner organisations, produces quarterly youth events to share learning and build stronger youth networks for social action in South East London.

• • • Sharing our Creative Hub • • •

We have also shared the Creative Hub with the following community and arts partners in need of rehearsal and event space: Angel Dust (residency and performance); Climate Action Lewisham, CRIPTic Arts, Lewisham Young Mayor's Team, Lewisham Central LAA, LandSec Design Champions, MET Police, METRO Charity, SMASHFest UK and Teatro Vivo.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE 3: SUSTAINABLE RESOURCES

The organisation remains in a strong financial position moving into the 2023/24 financial year, with strong funding and commissioning partnerships. We are grateful for the support of new and returning donors for the next year:



We particularly want to thank LandSec who have provided the retail unit on Lewisham High Street rent and rates free - an in-kind donation is estimated at a cost of £187,000.

◆ FUTURE OUTLOOK ◆

• • • New Leadership • • •

In December 2023, long-time Artistic Director will leave LYT to pursue a freelance career. We will welcome a new Creative Director, Filiz Ozcan, who will work with our CEO Victoria Shaskan to drive forward the vision for a Creative Hub centring youth voices at all levels.

• • • New Social Action • • •

Our Members' Committee will lead a new social action campaign – the Case for S.P.A.C.E. (Switching Perceptions and Creating Environments). They will bring together a Task Force of local young people and adult change makers to campaign for more youth-led spaces in Lewisham and to switch perceptions of young people in public spaces through a petition and a public performance.

• • • New Programmes • • •

We will expand and embed new training programmes, particularly giving young people more dedicated leadership training and experience as young directors, peer mentors, technicians, producers and writers. Bringing different age groups together, we will start to develop a new series of plays following the same set of characters at different ages as they respond to urgent issues facing young people today.



FINANCIAL REVIEW



LYT has had another positive year, managing to end the year with a surplus of **£13,348**

This year we raised **£403,111** through grants, donations and charitable activities.

On top of the cash income and expenditure, we have secured in-kind support towards our premises estimated at **£187,000**

The charity remains in a good financial position, with **£176,761** of funds carried forward to the next financial year.



THANK YOU



We'd like to thank all those who have supported on LYT projects this year:

Speical thanks to: Cllrs Aliya Sheikh & Edison Huynh; James Lee & Nancy Stridgen (Lewisham Culture Team); Climate Action Lewisham; CRIPTic Arts; Lewisham Young Mayor's Team; Lewisham Central LAA; MET Police; METRO Charity; SMASHFest UK; Teatro Vivo; Charlton Athletic Community Trust; Tramshed; Trinity Laban; The Migration Museum and Landsec.

Referral Partners: AFRIL; Baseline; CAMHS; Early Help Team; Family Thrive; Job Centre; Lewisham Social Care; Redthread; South London & Maudsley NHS; Young Carers Lewisham and Lewisham Virtual Schools.

Local Primary Schools: Forster Park; Gordonbrock; John Stainer; Kender Primary; Rushey Green; St Marys; St. Saviour's, Launcelot and New Woodlands.

Local Secondary Schools: Abbey Mannor; Bonus Pastor; Deptford Green; New Woodlands; Prendergast Ladywell; Sedgell and Sydenham School.

Volunteers and Placements: Many thanks to all 17 volunteers and placements, and 40 youth theatre members who gave up their time to support on our projects. A full list, including Members' Committee, work experience and peer mentors, can be found on our website.

LYT Core Team: Helen Stanley (Artistic Director); Victoria Shaskan (Executive Director); Angus Scott-Miller (Participation Manager); Carys Williams (Outreach Producer); Subira Damali (Progression Coordinator); Monique Day (Workshops Coordinator); Anna Smith (Production Manager); Isla McGregor (Finance & Administration Coordinator); Molly Cox (My London Manager) and Natalie Parsons (Volunteer Coordinator).

Freelancers: Lydia Newman; Tanya Muchanyuka; George Fanzio; Sebastian Constantine; Jennifer Nesbitt; Julia Couto; Cleopatra Falconer; Lakeisha Lynch-Stevens; Anna Yates; Aoife Brennan; Tunde Euba; Galina Rin and Rufus King-Dabbs, Sapphire Joy and Blythe Brett.

Paid Work Experience: Bushra Baig; Eliezer Gore; Emanuel Mendes-Da-Silva; Emma Dawson; Nathan Chetty; Ophelia Zarewicz; Rowan Fornah; Aimie Gilmour; Meriel Ledwith; Dean Coffey; Monique Walker; Rofeda Bougaga, Matthew Moore, Amiga Harewood; Pierce Duncan; Angelina Glory; Kaylan Jeffrey and Sasha Bond.

LYT Council of Management: Genine Whitehorne (Chair); Tom Toomse-Smith (Treasurer); Mairi Hayes (Safeguarding Lead); Edison Huynh; Jamiel Thomas; Ed King; Tyreke Leslie and Frenka Mumford. *We thank Sally Iqbal, who has stepped down from the Council of Management.*

Advisory Board: Jane Wilson (Clinical Psychologist).

Patrons: Lucian Msamati and Phaldut Sharma.



Phone : 020 8318 2508



Email : info@lewishamyouththeatre.com



Website : www.lewishamyouththeatre.com



Address : 436 Lewisham High St, London, SE13 6LJ