



Ceramics Academy CIC Report 2025-2026

This report provides an overview of Ceramics Academy CIC's activities and impact during April 2025 - March 2026, along with an update covering April - October 2026. It highlights our achievements, community engagement & impact, challenges, and future plans.

Summary of activities

Between April 2025 and March 2026, we successfully delivered 74 subsidised and or free pottery workshops, engaging 294 participants. These included:

- 9 Coffee Pot sessions
- 9 Tea Pot sessions
- 43 young people's sessions
- 1 free 4-week block of classes for young people
- 1 free 4-week block of classes for adults
- 2 outreach sessions
- 2 one-to-one sessions
- 1 community event

A particular focus during this period was providing accessible creative opportunities for young people and people who may experience barriers to accessing creative activities, including neurodivergent participants.

From April to 20th October 2026, we have delivered a further 28 subsidised workshops, engaging 109 participants. These included:

- 1 Coffee Pot sessions
- 12 Tea Pot sessions
- 9 young people's sessions
- 5 one-to-one sessions
- 1 community event

Coffee Pot took a planned pause from March until October 2026 while we focused on supporting the wellbeing and capacity of our small team. The first session following the pause was recently held in our new studio and was a great success. Amy has now taken over the running of Coffee Pot from Jo and is excited to become a member of the CIC team.

Community Engagement & Impact

Our work continues to demonstrate the value of providing affordable, welcoming and inclusive opportunities for people to experience pottery and creativity. Our sessions provide more than an opportunity to learn a practical skill: they create spaces where people can build confidence, meet others, develop friendships, reduce isolation and support their wellbeing.

Key highlights April 2025-March 2026:

In June 2025, we offered our first free four-week pottery course for 10 young people. Feedback showed that 88% of participants reported that their confidence improved either 'quite a bit' or 'loads'. Participants particularly highlighted improvements in meeting new people, travelling independently and trying new activities. Individual feedback also demonstrated the social benefits of making new friendships and the positive impact of creative engagement on mood and wellbeing.

In March 2026, we offered our first free four-week adult course, Grounded, for people experiencing mild to moderate mental health challenges. Places were accessed through referrals from Social Prescribers and Health & Wellbeing Link Workers.

Six people took part, with five completing our feedback questionnaire. All five rated the course 'Excellent' and all five said they would recommend it to others. Four participants reported that their wellbeing had improved 'a lot', with the remaining participant reporting that it had improved 'a little'.

The feedback showed a range of positive outcomes:

- All five participants said the course helped them feel calmer or less stressed and learn new skills.
- Four said it helped them meet new people and try something new.
- Three said they felt less isolated, more confident and were getting out of the house more.

Participants particularly valued the calm environment, small group, supportive teaching and sense of camaraderie. One participant described the studio as a "peaceful and healing space", while another said they "could have stayed all day."

The feedback also demonstrated an appetite for longer courses. Overall, the responses reinforce the value of accessible pottery opportunities that support both creativity and health and wellbeing.

Up to March 2026, our Coffee Pot sessions also continued to provide an informal and welcoming space for people to meet others, helping to reduce loneliness and isolation and strengthen community connections.

Key highlights April-October 2026:

In August 2026, we carried out a Community Questionnaire to understand what participants value about the CIC, the impact of our activities, and what types of workshops and activities they would like us to offer in the future. We received 20 responses.

The findings demonstrate that the CIC provides an accessible, welcoming and inclusive creative space where people can learn pottery skills, express their creativity and build confidence without pressure or judgement.

Key findings included:

- Participants particularly valued supportive tuition, creativity and learning, improved mental wellbeing, social connection, and the confidence and inclusion created by our friendly and informal atmosphere.
- 84.2% rated their experience as excellent and 15.8% as very good.
- 100% said they would recommend the CIC to others.
- 16 anonymous testimonials provided further evidence of improved wellbeing, confidence and inclusion, as well as reduced isolation.
- While the majority of respondents felt no improvements were needed, three people suggested areas for development. These included offering more Coffee Pot sessions, running courses more regularly, increasing publicity to reach a wider audience, and making project completion timescales less pressured for participants. making finishing timescales less stressful.

Overall, the questionnaire demonstrates that the CIC is successfully combining professional tuition and facilities with an affordable, relaxed and community-focused environment. Our activities provide clear public benefit by supporting wellbeing, reducing isolation, developing skills, encouraging creativity and strengthening connections within the local community.

On 23 April 2026, Taz and Sarah attended WayMakers Northern Devon PINN Forum's *Breaking Barriers* training, which explored everyday communication and small changes in language and approach can make a meaningful difference to how safe someone feels, how able they are to engage and how accessible support becomes. These principles are informing the CIC's approach, helping to strengthen inclusion and ensure that support for the team and community is understanding, responsive and accessible.

Achievements

Fundraising

During April 2025-March 2026, we raised funds through a range of activities, including:

- 24-Hour Throwdown – our most successful fundraising event to date, raising £6,166.38, which was shared between the CIC and the charity we supported, ChemoHero. The CIC received £2,951.06, with ChemoHero receiving the larger share due to Gift Aid.
- South Molton Eco Fair – £110.09.
- Online auction – £1,927.71

Total CIC fundraising income: **£4,988.68.**

From April to October 2026, we have raised a further £231.50 through the South Molton Eco Fair.

Grants

April 2025-March 2026:

- We were successful in securing a £1,000 Locality Budget Grant from Councillor Ed Tyldesley, which enabled us to run our first free four-week pottery course for adults, Grounded.

In October, we were successful and secured £400 from the Community Councillor Grants.

Challenges

As a small team, one of our main challenges has been balancing the demand for our activities with staff capacity and wellbeing. This resulted in us pausing Coffee Pot for several months. We have addressed this by welcoming a new member of the team and introducing a booking system for Coffee Pot, giving us a clear capacity for each session and helping us manage the workload more effectively.

Another significant challenge has been getting our new unit up and running during the summer. Ceramics Academy has subsidised a significant proportion of the costs associated with preparing and equipping the space.

Volunteers

We are proud of our dedicated volunteers. Their energy, time, and commitment have been vital in running workshops, supporting events, setting up the new studio and helping our CIC thrive. We formally thank all our volunteers for their invaluable contributions.

Hopes and plans for the future

Looking ahead, our priorities include:

- strengthening financial sustainability through grant applications and fundraising.
- exploring the development of an apprenticeship programme, creating opportunities for young people.
- holding our exhibition in the Community Gallery at Barnstaple Museum in January 2027
- expanding participation across different age groups, genders, and abilities.
- strengthening our partnerships with local healthcare professionals, social prescribers and other community organisations.
- continuing to develop our new studio and increase the capacity and range of CIC activities we can offer, including building on the positive feedback from our four-week courses.

Overall, the past year has seen the CIC continue to grow and demonstrate the positive impact that accessible pottery and creativity can have on confidence, wellbeing, skills development and community connection. We look forward to building on this progress over the coming year.