



Creative Links Report 2006- 07

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Creative Links is an art based learning programme for people with mental health challenges in Bath & North East Somerset. Experienced professional artists work with participants to support their progression from workshops within the safe environment of a mental healthcare setting, to their active involvement in arts projects and courses within local colleges and arts/community venues.

Through partnerships with Education, Health, Employment, the Voluntary Service and the Arts, the project promotes independence and improves quality of life for the projects participants. Participants have opportunities to learn new skills, giving them confidence, self-esteem, stimulating social interaction, promoting independence and improving the quality of life of the participants. Addressing social exclusion through local community involvement in this supported and structured way can assist in more effectively maintaining participant's independence and promote relapse prevention.

Creative Links project delivery 2006-07:

Ceramics (1 session)

Creative Music Making (11 sessions)

Senior Peoples Dance (9 sessions)

Overall - 21 sessions, 28 enrolments

Outcomes:

- 8 participants show their work in community art exhibition 'Hidden Places', in Midsomer Norton, September 2006
- 16 participants show work at World Mental Health Day exhibition, Riverside, Bath, October 2006
- 26 people attend Creative Links Review day, February 2007
- 1 participant went on to enrol on a ceramics course at Bath City College
- 2 participants enrolled at Norton Radstock College for adult education courses as a direct result of increased confidence from accessing the Creative links groups.
- 2 participants returned to work (one employed and one voluntary)
- For the participants that committed to the arts courses they attended the Creative Links courses contributed to an improvement in their motivation
- DVD of senior peoples dance produced
- CD production of Creative Music Making increasing self esteem and confidence
- Participants learnt new skills and increased their knowledge and understanding of many different art forms
- Many people commented on the opportunities to make new friends and work as part of a team throughout the arts courses
- 100% of students said that that they were satisfied or very satisfied with the Creative Links course

The facilitation of a wider **Creative Links Arts and Health Review** gave the opportunity to consider expanding the remit of the Creative Links Project involving new partners, issues and focus, to include preventative health/health promotion and wellbeing and explore the potential for different approaches.
(See appendix 1. Arts and Health Review Evaluation)

An application to support the BME community with mental health challenges was realised through a partnership with the BME group MOSAIC and Bath & North East Somerset Social and Housing Services Mental Health Team.

MOSAIC project delivery during 2006-07:

21 creative arts sessions, 11 enrolments.

The two art forms were Creative Music Making and Visual Arts covering sculpture, painting, batik and mask making

Review of recommendations from 2005-06 report

- Further arts courses delivered in a variety of areas of Bath and North East Somerset
- Creative Links Review Day for interested partners planned and delivered
- A successful funding bid to Awards for All of £5,000 will enable increased project delivery in 2007-8
- Digital suite fundraising for Creative Links applied for but funding withdrawn
- Participant's referral process reviewed for those outside of the ICPA system
- Continued project development with the Genesis Centre
- Reports kept succinct

Recommendations 2006-07

1. Information Sharing

- Link Creative Links information with local Interagency meetings
- Campaign on a local level – Arts and Health page in a newspaper – advocacy
- Publicise Creative Links on a summary flyer
- Feedback successes of projects to Care Co-ordinators
- Get feedback from Care Co-ordinators about what clients might want.
- Provide Carers arts groups

2. Approach GP's for 'Arts on Prescription'

- Dr. Andrew Smith, Combe Down surgery; Rush Hill Surgery – pilot arts on prescription; Keynsham Surgeries – social prescribing across 3 surgeries. Dr Gillian Rice. GP's can commission
- Look at Trail Blazers, Cornwall – GP's and artists, stretch targets linked to LAA's . Jane Howard, Arts for Health Cornwall (GP in kind, staff, facilities)
- Look at Art Lift–GP toolkit, referral process, arts in healthcare settings
- Look at Knowle West, Young Parents, weekly, crèche & H.V.s

3. Funding

- Longer term consider Basil Wild funding for identified cases and GP's funding for wider community benefit
- Look for funding in other public health issues eg smoking...lifestyle...
- Approach Community Learning Service to support mental health projects

- Aim to make project sustainable
- Explore social enterprise model

4. Develop Arts and Health programme with wider remit.

- CL Steering group could be a local Arts and Health Forum of 6-10 people that meet quarterly, with wider yearly group meeting for other interested parties
- Invite Vicky Morrison AWP; Chris Barker, Norton Radstock College; Bath City College on to steering group; Talk to Lisa Otter Barry about referral system – find out what she would like out of this partnership
- Link aims with B&NES Arts & Health agenda; B&NES policy on well-being and quality of life; Local Area Agreements; Health and Inclusion agenda; Sport & Active Leisure; National Healthy Schools Standards and Integrating arts into Every Child Matters
- Keep abreast of Cultural Partnership development for cultural venue and participatory programme
- Evidence quantitative and qualitative, new current research and long term tracking. Make a link between art and mental health
- Map shared territories of provision

5. Creative Links Project Delivery

- Continue to offer initial engagement/taster sessions which progress onto longer sessions in the community
- Explore new venues: Weston Riverside – green space and arts and culture space; Miles House; Paulton; Timsbury; Baptist Church Keynsham; Hay Hill; Lansdown; High Littleton
- Commission a play

6. Progression routes

- Link Creative Links Progression routes with colleges with the aim of CL courses feeding into colleges. Research what is on offer at Norton Radstock and Bath college
- Research resources to progress people into college courses
- Link projects in to the services

Individual Creative Links Project Reviews

Ceramics – 1 session

Ceramic facilitator – Andrew Eddlestone

The extension of the popular Ceramics course during 2005-06 meant that the previous terms course ran into this year. Participants took pride in the high quality work that they produced and exhibited many pieces of their ceramics at the **‘Hidden Places’** exhibition in Norton Radstock in September 2006

‘A real sense of achievement also a great sense of community.’ participant

Creative Music Making - 11 sessions

Music facilitator – Cathy Jones

This year saw the extension of the popular Creative Music making course delivered over 11 sessions at the Genesis Centre in the heart of Bath. Participants were able to extend skills that they had learnt in the previous year’s taster sessions playing and

singing together, and learning new rhythms including Brazilian, Samba, Calypso, and African.

The project culminated in the production of a CD with the aid of recording expertise by The Foyer, Twerton.

'All participants involved took the project seriously, working hard together to try to produce their best performance. As well as being fun to do, I think this session provided a great opportunity for participants to experience something of the process of recording a piece of music' Cathy Jones, Music facilitator

Senior Peoples Dance – 9 sessions

Dance facilitator – Vivienne Gordon

11 people took part in these successful dance sessions. The group showed particular interest in different dance styles including salsa, Native American dance and musical theatre sequences. New choreography based on participants ideas and experience (e.g. getting up in the morning) and poetry showed the potential of dance to express emotions and feelings and to reminisce. People were able to work independently and in a group and tried improvisation skills within this safe environment. The dance teacher also taught sign language and sign songs. Members reported practising dances at home and sharing songs with grand children and often came back with ideas they had seen on TV. Some took copies of the poetry home to remind them of the sessions. For some people the session was the only social activity of the week, so to have things to remind them of the session was important. Other benefits remarked upon were – 'feeling more steady on my feet', better balance, mixing with other members, confidence, interest, and working in pairs increased confidence and motivation.

The final session was a celebration of all the pieces the group had learnt and culminated in balloons and bubbles blown around the room.

The dance was recorded by a professional photographer and a DVD is in the process of being made.

'I felt a sense of freedom, it was like being free' (participant during poetry exercise)

'I'm glad I came now, I just didn't want to leave my house, I felt so awful' (participant)

'You're the best thing that's ever happened to this group' (after final session)

'Good fun, makes us get up and go!' participant