

Evaluation of a community art,
active ageing, volunteer
development project, engaging
frailer, older, vulnerable people
in ceramic painting and mural
making, delivered by
Espression Arts CIC and
Kent Arts and Wellbeing
with project partners
Age UK Canterbury and
Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable

Our Work of Art 2018

PROJECT EVALUATION
APPENDICES

Fay Blair

SEPTEMBER 2019

APPENDIX 1

Those involved in the project

STEERING GROUP MEMBERS – Our Work of Art

- Dr Neil Brown, Chief Officer Age UK Canterbury
- Janet Eales, Deputy Chief Officer, Age UK Canterbury
- Teresa Chamberlain, Centre Co-ordinator, Age UK Canterbury
- Sue Cliffe, Chief Officer, Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable
- Brenda Kemp, Admin, Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable
- Dr Pat Chung, Senior Lecturer, Occupational Therapy, Canterbury Christ Church University
- Catherine Arnell, Director and Creative Lead, Expression Arts CIC
- Gerry Atkinson, Kent Arts and Wellbeing
- Fay Blair, Kent Arts and Wellbeing
- Ken Scott, Kent Arts and Wellbeing

PROJECT TEAM MEMBERS

- Catherine Arnell, Creative Lead, Expression Arts CIC
- Gerry Atkinson, Project Team, Kent Arts and Wellbeing
- Fay Blair, Project Manager, Kent Arts and Wellbeing
- Ken Scott, Project Team, Kent Arts and Wellbeing

PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE SUPPORT

- Dr Pat Chung, Senior Lecturer in Occupational Therapy, Canterbury Christ Church University
- Gayle Shearwood, Expression Arts Café Manager / Studio Technical Support
- Imogen Noble. Therapeutic Potter and Creative Mentor
- Gillian Farrell. Pottery Tutor and Creative Mentor
- Judy Ayris. Dementia Outreach Manager, Age UK Canterbury
- Theresa Chamberlain, Customer Services Manager, Age UK Canterbury
- Nikki Parish, Day Services Manager. Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable
- Carole Thompson, Cogs Club Facilitator, Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable
- Paula Spencer, CEO, Thanington Neighbourhood Resource Centre
- Reverent Phil Greig, All Saints, Northgate, Canterbury

PROJECT VOLUNTEERS

Our Work of Art 2018

Wafaa Amin	Doruntina Ahmeti
Farah Aziz	Rachel Aldridge
Christine Barber	Sally Bernard
Millie Brierley	Beverly Dalton
Maureen Carr	Sue Farris
Gill Eaglestone	Jill Fell
Sue Horne	Valerie Heasman
Tessa Ivory	Joan Hobson
Anna Leavermore	Maggie Honey
Yvonne Leibenschutz-Jones	Olie Jobe
John Mailliaborg	Chris Jones
Jacqueline Nicholson	Maria Kemp
Heather Roblin	Beatriz Lamb
Erica Trinity-Rose	Julia Pattison
Pat Sargeant	Karen Smart
Margot Sawyer	Becky Smith
Janet Scott	Pamela Toomey
Gayle Shearwood	Leonie van Lonkhuyzen
Ailie Jonston Sterry	Sarah Verstage
Rosie Strellis	Marian Walter
Mandy Guy-Verlander	Barbara Wharton
Mary Wills	

Remembering also Pauline Weeks, Rest in Peace.

APPENDIX 2

Delivery timetable of creative sessions

PROGRAMME SUMMARY : DEVLERY OF VOLUNTEER SUPPORTED CREATIVE WORKSHOPS JULY 2018 – MARCH 2019								
Canterbury Age UK				Herne Bay and Whitstable Age UK				
COGS Tuesday 10 – 12 noon	DAY CENTRE Tuesday 1 – 3pm	THANINGTON Dementia Cafe Monday 10 - 12 MONTHLY	NORTHGATE All Saints Church Thursday 10 – 12pm	COGS Thursday 1 – 3pm	DAY CENTRE Thursday 10 – 12pm	DAY CENTRE Wednesday 10 – 12pm	COGS Longfield Swalecliffe Wednesday 1 – 3pm	COGS Age UK Herne Bay Friday 1 – 3pm
1 Mugs Paint 17/7/18	1 Mugs Paint 17/7/18			1 Mugs Paint 26/7/18	1 Mugs Paint 26/7/18			
2 Mugs Paint 31/7/18	2 Mugs Paint 31/7/18			2 Mugs Paint 2/8/18	2 Mugs Paint 2/8/18	1 21/11/18 Mugs		19/10 - Mugs
3 Clay/Evaluation 14/8/18	3 Clay/Evaluation 14/8/18			3 Clay/Evaluation 6/9/18	3 Clay/Evaluation 6/9/18	2 5/12/18 Clay Work		2/11 - Design
4 Clay Paint 11/9/18	4 Clay Paint 11/9/18			4 Clay Paint 20/9/18	4 Clay Paint 20/9/18	3 9/1/19 Colour Work		9/11 Tiles
5 Laminate Pictures 25/9/18	5 Laminate Pictures 25/9/18			5 Laminate Pictures 4/10/18	5 Laminate Pictures 4/10/18	4 23/1/19 Clay flowers	31/10 - Mugs	23/11 Tiles
6 Design a Tiles 9/10/18	6 Design a Tiles 9/10/18	1 Mugs Paint 1/10/18	1 Mugs Paint 10/1/19	6 Design a Tiles 18/10/18	6 Design a Tiles 18/10/18	5 6/2/19 Clay flowers	28/11 - Design	7/12 Tiles
7 Paint Tiles 6/11/18	7 Paint Tiles 6/11/18	2 Design a tile 5/11/18	2 Design a tile 17/1/19	7 Paint Tiles 1/11/18	7 Paint Tiles 1/11/18	6 13/2/19 Clay flowers – colours FINAL SESSION	9/1 Tiles	18/1/19 extra session
*8 Paint 20/11/18	8 Paint 20/11/18	3 Painting 3/12/18	3 Painting 24/1/19	8 Paint 15/11/18	8 Paint 15/11/18		23/1 Tiles	Evaluation and review, launch 1/3/19
9 Paint 4/12/18	9 Paint 4/12/18	4 Painting 3/1/19	4 Painting 31/1/19	9 Paint (cancelled) 29/11/18 didn't happen due to party	9 Paint 29/11/18		30/1 Tiles	
10 Paint Final 8/1/19	10 Paint Final 8/1/19	5 Painting 4/2/19	5 Painting 7/2/19	9 extra painting session 3/1/19			Evaluation and Review 27/2/19	
		6 4/3/19 Mini exhibition and evaluation 4/3/19	6 14/2/19 last painting session	10 24/1/19 Mini exhibition and evaluation session				

APPENDIX 3

METHODS: CREATIVE CONFIDENCE PROCESS (for decorative ceramic mural-making) By Catherine Arnell, Expression Arts CIC

Workshops were designed and delivered by Catherine Arnell, Expression Arts CIC to achieve a collective purpose whilst learning new skills and developing ideas. It was also about reaching smaller milestones of achievement, leading to increased involvement and feelings of usefulness and reduced feelings of loneliness. Some workshops were delivered over shorter periods of, time 5-6 weeks, and others were spread out over 12 weeks of delivery but each follow the main key phases. The 'Creative Quality Progression Matrix' developed by Fay Blair, Kent Arts & Wellbeing with Catherine Arnell (*Appendix 9*) informed this process.

INCREASED CREATIVE CONFIDENCE		PHASE	ACTIVITY	OUTCOMES
	1	Introduction and assessing level of confidence	Decorative mug making as a tool to get to know you! -Design -Paint -Decorate -Detail, finish and glaze YOURS TO KEEP	-Getting to know you, activity. -Measure of creative and social confidence starting point. -consider approach to working for each, individual - learning - Fun – quick feeling of achievement
	2	Building skills, exploring and raising levels of confidence	Skills building activities -Learning new ways of working -Laminated designs -Creative Clay -Community Discussions and development of ideas	-Everyone has experienced all the skills to progress into the main creating phase -Increased confidence to participate
	3	Creating – using all the skills learnt to make your creative contribution.	Decorative Ceramic Process -Draw or trace your image -Paint your image -Outline and detail your image	-Consideration for the bigger picture -Collaborative task -Increased creative confidence -Reduced isolation - Working in a team
	4	Celebration and Marked end of the project	Exhibition and display of work -Glazed, finished and mounted -Project Book	-Collective pride/goal reached -Achievement -Completion -Memories

Case Study: Reflecting on the 'Creative Confidence Process of Working'

A participant named 'D' from the COGS (Dementia support) group at Age UK Herne Bay and Whitstable

- **Phase 1**

Meeting 'D', who was younger than many of the other COGS group participants and living with dementia. He was a confident man, eager to take part and happy to see a different project which he could be part of. We observed that 'D' took time to decision make and at the end of the first mug painting – decorative ceramic, painting he hadn't made a mark on his mug.

- 'D' loves music and is a musician and composer which he loves. He makes lots of reference to music in his analysis of our project and how much he enjoys it. His mug once complete was very technical with black spots, marked out very precisely in a grid formation with a sponge.
- 'D' worked in a clean way always writing music in his note book at the same time. Once glazed 'D' was very proud of his mug which was so professional;. We assumed it was a session coffee mug and it ended up in the dishwasher which did make him laugh!

- **Phase 2**

'D' found his issues with making a decision (because of his dementia) made selecting and choosing images for his design difficult; it didn't really happen. He had too much going on in his mind, too many ideas, and couldn't select from the pile he had made which I think frustrated him.

- **Phase 3**

'D' took a drawing of the Herne Bay Pier which he drew in huge detail and with a high level of competence (in relation to his mug). Painting was also carried out in a very specific way. His piece was placed in the middle of the collaborative mural.

- In relation to the creative project he wrote "because it has that out of the box feeling, inspiring, makes you go home and do things!"

- **Phase 4**

At the mini-exhibition stage, the great unveiling of the Herne Bay COGS mural, 'D' talked about the project as:

"More meaningful than meaningful (opposite of superfluous), a collaboration station"

- In relation to the project he wrote "[It] Made me think differently, collaboration is a good thing. Like working with groups and collaborating with music".
- 'D' really identified with the Our Work of Art Project and travelled to Canterbury to attend the final exhibition in Garage Coffee, with a huge sense of pride!

APPENDIX 4

MENTORING APPROACH:

by Ken Scott, Kent Arts and Wellbeing

Introduction

An earlier project (LAPWING), a partnership led by Age UK Canterbury, identified the need for both mentoring but also the desirability to reduce the amount of formal mentoring. This was achieved by integrating mentoring values and practices within the training and project delivery processes. During Our Work of Art, the project team sought to reduce the need for formal mentoring by implementing the following:

- A joint approach between the mentoring professional, and the lead creative artist, with both attending sessions and providing mutual support;
- Listening to the needs of the volunteers and responding flexibly;
- Matching volunteer capabilities with tasks to be undertaken.

The project involved 41 volunteers who attended one of two training programmes. Of these 36 volunteers went on to support 70 creative sessions involving 169 (unique) older and vulnerable adults in 9 locations. A total of 1,603 volunteer hours were recorded but it is believed that the actual hours dedicated is nearer to 1,700 hours.

Our Work of Art team mentoring approach

The project approach to mentoring was to:

- Initially assess individual strength and weaknesses through review of application information and observation on the training programme;
- Use that assessment to identify both suitable volunteering tasks and volunteer partners that could provide mutual support;
- Discuss, agree and explain tasks before each delivery session, and respond to any concerns that may arise;
- Observe performance during delivery and provide informal, feedback to each volunteer after each event, giving advice if needed and agreeing any follow up activity needed;
- Photographically record sessions. This not only provides a visual record, but establishes that the volunteer activity matters, and therefore provides additional motivation;
- Provide personal sessions for any volunteer who missed any element of the training. This was particularly important for the safeguarding element. Two people were covered with this approach before they were able to volunteer;

- Offer one-to-one sessions for any individual who wanted the opportunity to discuss any issues of concern. Leaving the initiative with individuals is important as it puts them in control of initiating any self-development activity. This increases the prospect of success of any subsequent mentoring activity;
- Respond to the volunteers request to create a volunteer network. This was supported by Catherine and Gerry. This provided a means for volunteers to provide mutual self-help, receive further informal mentoring support, and for them to explore what further contributions they could make.

Volunteer Feedback

As part of the project assessment process, volunteers were asked to complete a questionnaire, elements of which were relevant to their overall project experience and in particular to mentoring. Their responses have been very useful, providing personalised insights. The key messages and observations are as follows:

70% of volunteers completed a demanding questionnaire. This is a strong indication of their commitment to, belief in and support of the project.

The most frequent responses to the question on the identifying the vital key ingredients of successfully working with volunteers included:

- Support and encouragement;
- Training to develop skills;
- Well organised, with good leadership, and clear guidelines and goals;
- Two way communications.

These responses are very relevant both in terms of the team's planned approach and the changes made in response to volunteers' requests.

The question on identifying 5 words to express how they felt about the project elicited 113 responses, of which one volunteer was mildly critical. In their words, they reported that they:

Found the project inspiring, challenging, fulfilling and worthwhile;
 Felt proud, joyful and happy;
 Gained confidence, found new friends and develop creatively.

The question on identifying the importance of mentoring to the project success identified that it was vital, or very important, and that it developed a shared understanding of what had to be done; developed enthusiasm and confidence, and a sense of being appreciated.

The question on what the volunteers found most useful in terms of guidance and support elicited the most consistent responses. They included:

- The importance of the attitudes and practice of the team - Catherine, Fay and Gerry; this was a very strong theme and was associated with:
 - Support and encouragement;
 - Motivation to go the extra step.
- The importance of mutual support from fellow volunteers.

The volunteer network meetings were set up to meet requests from volunteers, so their responses to the question about the importance of the network is really interesting.

- Around 80% thought it was either excellent or contributed a lot, and identified the key benefits as:
 - Getting to know each other and developing friendships;
 - Providing mutual support;
 - Providing feedback and a wider information flow.
- A significant minority (4) however, felt that there was not enough focus on social activities and that it was too project focused. This presents a learning point for future development.

Conclusions

The feedback from volunteers about their project experience is incredibly positive. From the small number (2) of volunteers requesting formal mentoring sessions, it is clear that the approach to integrate mentoring within training and delivery processes worked well. This could not have happened without those involved - Catherine and Gerry working together - and they deserve great credit for this.

Not only have the volunteers benefitted from the approach, but they have, in turn, been active promoters of the project, making significant contributions to the project beyond their initial delivery remit. Perhaps the most compelling conclusion is the quote from one of the volunteers:

"Certainly in comparison to my experience volunteering with other organisations this far outweighed my expectations; to feel appreciated, competent, trained and supported throughout.

I would recommend this project experience to other people who are thinking of

becoming a volunteer as I think they would be surprised by the diversity amongst volunteers and participants. They would enjoy the development of, or the use of their creative skills to bring joy to them; and it would give them a wonderful fuzzy feeling inside, seeing that your time well spent and productive, whilst making others happier, gives you."

APPENDIX 5

VOLUNTEER CASE STUDIES

Volunteer Case Study 1

CHRISTINE BARBER

5 words that sum up Christine's overall experience of the project:

Joy | Optimism | Positivity
Sociability | Satisfaction

About Christine

Christine lives in Canterbury and thinks it is a great idea making art available for the elderly. She loves volunteering and finds it a rewarding experience. Before retiring she worked in London for a housing association. She didn't have time then for handicrafts, painting or hobbies. After retiring became a volunteer with Age UK Canterbury, five years ago.



Read Christine's personal insights on the project:

➤ My biggest overall personal achievement

- Years ago I did painting of china plates, tiles and wall plaques for people as well as painting door numbers.
- It was only when I volunteered for the 'Our Work of Art' project I was inspired to want do some painting for myself, which I intend to carry on doing now.
- I became more outgoing and confident after the training sessions.
- After the creative sessions with participants I made new friends.
- Encouraging the participants to help paint the murals, was one of my biggest challenges but I overcame this.

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- Bringing people together and working towards the finished exhibits.
- Two men in the group on the table I was working with at Age UK Canterbury day centre were very keen to start with. But, they were distracted by the other men who just sat around the table making remarks and laughing amongst themselves.
- I mentioned this to a staff member who remarked that some of this group often refused to join in any activities.
- With the help of Pat another volunteer, who joined me, by sitting around the table and chatting to these men, we encouraged the 'reluctant' ones.
- They did a bit of colouring and we got them to join in and design and then paint tiles for the mural.
- Pat was a great help as she has a natural way with people. A lot of men can put on a 'bravado act' to hide all their insecurities.
- I also attended, contributed to and supported all the photobook group meetings in Whitstable. I enjoyed and learnt a lot in the process about layout and design.

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- The participants were given the attention they deserve as older people and all had their own unique style with the tile painting.
- The men who were reluctant to join in at first thoroughly enjoyed their sessions.
- I enjoyed helping other older people to be more outgoing and join in the groups.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- All the mentoring team were very patient and supportive with the volunteers and participants.
- I am really looking forward to working on the next art project in the summer [Our Work of Art Rural Outreach 2019] and am very happy that things are continuing.

Volunteer Case Study 2

MILLIE BRIERLEY

5 words that sum up Millie's overall experience of the project:

Fun | Friendship |
Wellbeing
Teamwork | Creativity.

About Millie

Millie is from Whitstable and signed up to be a volunteer initially because she enjoys working with people older than her. She goes to pottery classes which she loves, enjoys volunteering and is a member of Soroptimist International Canterbury.



Read Millie's personal insights on the project:

➤ My biggest overall personal achievement

- My biggest challenge was starting the sessions with confidence. Starting a new session or any other project, I always feel a certain amount of uncertainty.
- I overcame all of these challenges and noticed my wellbeing improved a lot.
- I enjoyed being part of a team and working on specific projects which were implemented within a tight time frame.
- Taking on, and committing to, such a huge project; I am very busy and there were always time constraints. I am very happy that I never missed a session although I still had to manage my diary.
- It was wonderful to start a session with a group of clients when there was nothing on the table, and, to end the creative session with beautiful pieces of art and shared feelings of fun, happiness, friendship and joy.
- Every session was hugely rewarding and satisfying for everyone involved.

- I believe art and creativity are important for the wellbeing of everyone; for the elderly and vulnerable people and for children especially.

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- Seeing the final outcomes and the response from participants.
- I already had experience of working with older people and was aware of their resilience and long-life experiences. But, I did not appreciate that with encouragement everyone can be creative and gain lots of confidence and enhance their wellbeing.
- In supporting the older people in the creative sessions, I noticed, over the course of weeks, that they became more open and friendlier, they were ready to 'get to work' and could work independently.
- So many participants said they couldn't paint or do art, but, it often transpired, they had loved art when they were young, but they had forgotten. I worked with lots of participants but I particularly remember three lovely people [clients] I supported (below)

CLIENT 1:

I met 'J' at Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable. She told me she couldn't draw or do art, but with encouragement she decorated a mug with pretty flowers. The paints we use look quite pale before they are fired and so it is difficult to imagine how they will look when they are finished.

So, when I presented 'J' with her fired mug, she was totally amazed and thrilled to see the bright colours and her beautiful design. She looked at me and said 'this has made me happier than I have been for a long time!' I was stunned.

CLIENT 2

'E' from Age UK Herne Bay & Whitstable was very reluctant to join in, but with gentle persuasion engaged with the project. I worked with her for several weeks and I could see that she became increasingly confident with painting a mug and creating beautiful ceramic flowers. We talked and laughed a lot and she told me she was 99!

'E' also told me that she had worked for the London Fire Service during WW2, responsible for looking after 300 firemen and ensuring they were fed and had somewhere to sleep. She received the British Empire Medal from the Queen for her services. You would never know about her exciting life by seeing a little old lady sitting in a chair in a care home'.

CLIENT 3

Another client I really enjoyed working with was 'C' from the COGS group in Swalecliffe. 'C' has dementia, and I think, Parkinson's disease. He is a lovely man. I learnt he is only a few years older than me. His motor skills were quite shaky, but with support he produced four amazing tiles for the COGS mural.

'C' never gave up and always wanted to carry on. He remembered we both had twin grandchildren, which we talked about.

I will never forget him. His big smile, determination and willingness to work with me and try hard. I felt truly humbled.'

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- This project enabled participants to either re-engage with art and creativity or in some cases to discover that they could do it.
- I definitely saw a huge change in the people who participated in this project. They became friendlier, more confident and independent and were 'ready to work' when we arrived.
- Since becoming a creative volunteer my own practice has become more creative and the project increased my creative confidence a lot.
- I will miss my weekly sessions with all the wonderful people I met.
- I feel very privileged to have been a volunteer and we are all so proud of the participant's achievements.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- Right from the start of this ground-breaking project I felt engaged with the aims of supporting elderly people through creativity and art.
- The three training sessions for volunteers were very professional and enabled us to work together as a collaborative project team. We knew what we needed to do. The leaders of Our Work of Art were all highly committed and worked tirelessly to make the project happen.
- I felt a great sense of commitment to the project, the participants, to Catherine and Gerry, who I worked with, and to the other volunteers.
- We all felt passionate about what we were doing. Everyone was extremely helpful and professional.

- This was a massive project and Catherine, Gerry and Fay (and others) gave their full commitment.
- Facebook [the private creative volunteer group] was a great communications tool. We all knew what was going on and felt that she was being kept 'in the loop'.
- For me the project increased my creative confidence, capabilities, skills and wellbeing. I really enjoyed Gillian Farrell's studio practice pottery sessions, which were offered to a group of volunteers.
- The project made everyone happy. I hope very much similar projects can continue with the support of our band of dedicated volunteers.

Volunteer Case Study 3

SUSAN FARRIS

5 words that sum up Sue's overall experience of the project:

Fulfilling | Enjoyable
instructive | Creative |
Humbling

About Susan

Sue lives in Chartham with her retired husband and two grown up children. She works part time for charity and enjoys helping people to get the best out of themselves. In the past she has spent time creating handcrafted items but since having children, has never made time for herself to do this. Sue felt that this project seemed like a good opportunity to meet new people, to do some crafting and help older people be creative.



Read Sue's personal insights on the project:

➤ My biggest overall personal achievement

- It was with some trepidation that I joined a room full of fifty plus aged women to start the training. I needn't have worried as everyone was in the same boat and Catherine, Fay and Gerry soon put everyone at ease.
- The team was very professional whilst being cheerfully positive. I soon relaxed and enjoyed the training sessions which were enjoyable and informative.
- One of the volunteers recognised me [at the training] and we worked out that we knew each other because our daughters were in the same class at Chartham Primary School about 10 years ago; and so our friendship began.

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- The 'piece de resistance' was the final display of the murals and photographs at the Our Work of Art 2019 exhibition at Garage Coffee. Wow!!
- The tiles looked amazing set together in their frames; what a great end to an enjoyable project.
- The best thing for me was seeing the look on the faces of the tile creators when they came to visit the exhibition.
- The surprise at how their paintings had literally come to life, in the murals, and the pride at their achievements, was such a lovely sight to see. I was nearly brought to tears!
- Another highlight was that I was fortunate enough to be one of the 13 project volunteers to be mentored by the ceramics teacher Gillian Farrell.
- Apart from learning a new craft this was great opportunity to get to know the other volunteers better.
- Joining in these sessions offered a chance to be creative for our own sakes.
- The quality and diversity of all the items produced I felt was amazing considering we had only 6 weeks tutoring.
- Credit was in no small part due to Gillian who gently guided us using "slab clay", "leather clay" and the art of "scraffito"; words that I had never encountered before, let alone the processes.
- I enjoyed assisting in two sessions helping the Canterbury Christ Church University Occupational Therapy students in creating a 'Memory Book' for their coursework, which can be used with people with dementia.

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- Learning to let go and relaxing was one of the changes I noticed in myself.
- I overcame all of these challenges and gained more confidence.
- I allowed myself the luxury of doing something just for my own benefit and is also making time for myself at home.
- I felt valued as a volunteer and part of a team.
- I think that I still have to work on my time management.
- The men who were reluctant to join in at first thoroughly enjoyed their sessions.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- I attended the social media sessions and found the whole process of producing a social record and promoting the exhibition very interesting as I hadn't encountered anything like this before.

- I learnt a lot from Fay, Catherine, and Gerry and from Karen and Erica on the social media side of things and would like to thank all of them for enabling the project and their help with it.
- Gerry and Catherine were very encouraging and supportive and encouraged my personal projects.
- Seeing older people gaining in confidence and having a go at things they would not have done before. People became more creative.
- The project brought a group of people from different backgrounds together to help older people find their creative inner self.
- I am pretty sure like myself the volunteers are saying "what's next? We can't wait!
- This has been such a wonderful experience for me that I hope funding can be found to continue these great projects; it's so worthwhile.

Volunteer Case Study 4

CHRIS JONES

5 words that sum up Chris's overall experience of the project:

Stimulated | Inspired |
Achievement | Confidence |
Involvement

About Chris

Chris lives in Herne Bay. She has been involved with Age UK for over two years after relocating from Somerset to live closer to her daughter and six grandchildren. She started volunteering to help make new friends. She is aware of how easy it is to become lonely and isolated. As a befriender, Chris met some amazing ladies whom she still visits for a coffee and a chat as friends. Chris was excited and interested in the 'Our Work of Art' project opportunity.



Read Chris's personal insights on the project:

➤ **My biggest overall personal achievement**

- Over the course of the Our Work of Art I felt stimulated, inspired and challenged as I didn't think I could draw or paint myself.
- I am proud that I was able to achieve the work that I did;
- My general wellbeing improved a lot and my self-esteem has soared. I am no longer withdrawn and depressed.
- I have learnt new skills in pottery, ceramics and glazing techniques. My confidence improved and I now feel that that I can achieve new creative things.

- I am proud that I was able to connect with the participants, encouraging them to produce such amazing artwork. I believe their taking part has improved their wellbeing.
- I 'had a go' and this journey channelled my 'inner artistic self' and helped overcome my shyness and in other ways.
- My excitement about the project helped me to have a go. I was able to do this and suddenly my brain connected and I had all these ideas. I didn't know if they would work, but I tried anyway.
- I still have to manage building on the skills that I have learnt. It has been a great opportunity to contribute.

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- Seeing older people gaining in confidence and 'having a go' at things they would not have done before and seeing the final outcomes and their responses.
- Over the weeks, I noticed that they became more open and friendlier; they were ready to 'get to work' and could work independently.
- Many participants said they couldn't paint or do art. Often it transpired, they had loved art when they were young, but they had forgotten. Others may have been reluctant to take part due to their various disabilities.
- Watching participants evolve with gentle coaching and guidance. Their talent was 'mind blowing' even those who said they 'can't draw or paint'.
- Participants challenged themselves and looked forward to the next session so they 'could have another go'.
- Their work on the murals was creative, inspired by memories, and is amazing.
- Assisting the [Canterbury Christ Church, Occupational Therapy] university students in their 'Memory Book' coursework enabled me to learn a lot about myself. It was thought-provoking and cathartic.
- The opportunity to learn about pottery and glazing.

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- I already had experience of working with older people and was aware of their resilience and long-life experiences.
- Since becoming a creative volunteer, the main difference is that I am more confident, more positive and willing to take part. I feel energised and inspired.
- This project enabled participants to either re-engage with art and creativity or in some cases to discover that they could do it.
- I did not appreciate that with encouragement everyone can be creative and gain lots of confidence and enhance their wellbeing.
- I definitely saw a huge change in the people who participated in this project.

- They became friendlier, more confident and independent and were 'ready to work' when we arrived.
- Participants enjoyed taking part; they were amazed and proud of their achievements, especially with their own personal mugs: "I can use this".
- I feel very privileged to have been a volunteer and we are all so proud of the participant's achievements.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- I believe art and creativity are important for the wellbeing of everyone and for the elderly especially.
- It showed that with just a smallest amount of effort, you can connect with people and fuel their hidden creativity.
- Despite having no experience I wanted to 'have a go' and I learnt a lot in making the photo book.
- The project brought a group of people from different backgrounds together to help older people find their creative inner self.
- I feel I have learnt so much from you all and from the very beginning, you all managed to excite me.
- You were all extremely helpful to me. Your endless energy inspired me. It has been a privilege to work with you all.
- I will miss my weekly sessions with all the wonderful people I met.
- I hope very much similar projects can continue with the support of our band of dedicated volunteers.

Volunteer Case Study 5

MARIA KEMP

5 words that sum up Maria's overall experience of the project:

Wonderful | Exciting |
Fulfilling | Enjoyable |
Uplifting

About Maria

Maria lives in Canterbury. Whilst visiting the mental health charity, Take-off, a support worker (Fay) noticed that Maria was a 'people person' and put her in touch with Catherine at Espression Arts about this project. Maria decided to become a volunteer for Our Work of Art because she loves helping people, making them smile and she feels has so much to give.



Read Maria's personal insights on the project:

➤ My biggest overall personal achievement

- I had been having a bad time at work, after giving 12 years devoted to the work place.
- After finishing my job, for six months I felt I had no self-worth. I was depressed and was able to go out but only as far as my back garden.
- This project helped me overcome my life difficulties. I now feel more settled in my mind.
- Working with older people and seeing the pleasure on their faces, says it all. I love bringing the spark back to the older people at Age UK.
- With just some encouragement and guidance they made some great art.
- I am becoming more experienced at crafts too which is important to me.

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- Giving a little time brings a smile and makes people happy.
- I developed more understanding about clay and also gained more friends.
- I also believe that the Our Work of Art project succeeded in bringing joy to others as well as to me.
- I was proud of making a clay vase, painted like a stick of rock.

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- Being part of the project gave me the confidence to come out into the public. It proved a real buzz for me.
- I had always previously thought children were 'my life' but this project experience proved otherwise,
- I am a confident crafter and I find crafting easy.
- I see myself as a very caring person. I feel I gave much to others over the project helping them to become more confident in their craft.
- Catherine always gave me compliments that made me feel wonderful. I am grateful for her letting me be involved in this wonderful project.
- I have helped others to learn how to crochet and sew.
- I have made new friends.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- Catherine, at Espression Arts, helped to build my confidence. This was through offering me opportunities to help in the studio shop, sometimes working on preparation for the creative sessions and at other times supporting the toddler groups.
- Catherine, throughout the project, gave me a lift to all the creative sessions at the Age UK centres.
- I met many volunteers throughout the project some of who have kept in touch.
- Given I am not on email or on facebook, the volunteer network meetings at Espression Arts have been fantastic for keeping me in the loop, and catching up with the team for a chat.
- Even though I see some of the volunteers outside of the network meetings, I feel these meetings have brought us all closer together.

Volunteer Case Study 6

ROSIE STRELLIS

5 words that sum up Rosie's overall experience of the project:

Joy | Valued | Educational
Friendship | Inclusive

About Rosie

Rosie lives in Whitstable. She signed up to become a creative volunteer because she believed this project would provide a positive and enjoyable experience, helping to make it the best experience possible for them. Rosie enjoys arts and crafts but lacks confidence. She believed this project would also build her own confidence, to have a go at more things that she enjoys. Rosie wanted to be a better volunteer and build her skills in supporting projects.



Read Rosie's personal insights on the project:

➤ My biggest overall personal achievement

- For me this was building the trust of some of the people attending the day centre, to the point where they were happy to come across and participate, even if it was just doing a few hand prints.
- My skills and experiences and social/volunteer networks have been expanded as a natural part of the process. (I have since become a Dementia Friends Champion, participating in Dementia Action Alliance Canterbury & Ashford).
- I have made friends with people that I would not have normally met in my everyday life. This has fulfilled me, in a way I didn't believe possible, since moving here.

- This has encouraged me to take up other activities with volunteers; such as dance and dancercise classes, and learning to use a sewing machine to make small items.
- I have gained the confidence creatively to sign up for a seasonal 'course' which has encouraged me to make candles, wax melts and balms, using natural fragrance oils and dyes.
- The experience has encouraged me to get back into cooking and baking too, as I have been feeling so much more positive about myself and my abilities.
- I have even ordered some transportable watercolours to take with me on holiday so I can get back in to drawing and painting.
- I feel the biggest challenges for me on this project were arriving at the training on my own and not knowing anyone. (I am nowhere near as confident as people think I am. With nerves I can be over-enthusiastic at times and annoy people).
- It was then about me finding my place amongst the volunteers at the beginning, until I felt more confident.
- The project leaders and the openness of the other volunteers, whom I discovered had similar fears and challenges to my own, helped me.

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- The most rewarding highlights were always, and every time, seeing the happiness the project brought to all the participants including those that volunteer at COGS [dementia support group] clubs.
- This experience has changed my life in so many more ways rather than just having fun with others to make a lovely piece of art.
- I have made wonderful friends and had an outlet for my skills and experience. It was a total honour of meeting the most wonderful participants and hearing their life stories.
- My general wellbeing improved a lot as I was meeting and mixing with like-minded people. I felt valued and encouraged both by all the organisers and participants and I felt I had a positive outlet for my life/work experiences.
- It was fun to stay connected to the group outside of the actual volunteer sessions and it also gave me the confidence to share my "work" on social media.
- I helped "advertise" for more volunteers and promote the project in a positive light across all social media.
- I learnt that it isn't always about the activity for participants and there are many ways to achieve results.
- I gained all the wonderful experiences and life stories that participants shared with me and I gained a greater understanding of how the aging process - with or without forms of dementia - affects people's lives.

- I grew in personal confidence. Since moving here, I left behind a career and a fantastic volunteering project; I was struggling to find my place in my new world which had made me quite insular & lonely.
- Since becoming a creative volunteer, the main differences, I notice in me, are things I am doing now, that I didn't do before. I am now confident to have a go at things I have not experienced before; I am less critical of myself if I try things that do not work out or go to plan.
- I have a greater understanding of people living with dementia. And have more patience in general.
- More importantly my husband has noticed that I am happier, calmer and much more positive in general (as well as driving him 'nuts', talking about this project all the time!).

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- The project has increased my creative confidence a lot and encouraged me to try new things, plus re-discover previous activities.
- It has increased my creative capability and skills a lot by giving me an opportunity in a safe environment to have a go at drawing, tracing, painting and producing pottery.
- I have been blessed and honoured to meet such a wide variety of older people and have learnt from my interactions with both participants, volunteers and professionals.
- In supporting the older people in the creative sessions, I noticed over the course of weeks that they enjoyed interacting with a variety of people.
- They valued having people who listened to them, and who encouraged them to talk about their experiences, skills and lives.
- The participants gained in confidence to learn new skills and re-visit skills that had laid dormant.
- They gained creative confidence when they saw they were not "useless" or "rubbish at arts & crafts" and enjoyed seeing the results of their work over the weeks culminating in seeing the finished products.
- They made new friends by sitting with different people rather than the people they always sat next to for instance in the Day Centres.
- They felt valued and amazed at the attention they were receiving from people who did not know them or have to work with them. They started to look forward to seeing the volunteers and to participating.
- Some were frustrated as their physical abilities had deteriorated during the course of the project and they were not necessarily able to complete their work.

- They were so proud of what they had produced and looked forward to seeing the progress each week in particular how much the work changed once it was fired.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- I feel the project process and approach has been worthwhile and effective with the training and support.
- The time taken initially to train the volunteers ensured that everyone knew what was expected of them.
- The support from all of the organisers was available at all times. Everyone who volunteered felt valued & their contribution was welcomed and appreciated.
- Catherine was very supportive during every session and outside of it, recognising when I was putting on a positive front for participants when I wasn't feeling at my best.
- She was inspiring to watch, leading each session and encouraging all the participants. (She always gives advice and encourages you in a way that makes you feel that you are growing and improving rather than having done something wrong).
- Fay included and encouraged me in my wider involvement in the project and was also very supportive during some difficult situations I faced during the project. (She is so full of enthusiasm and drives the project forward consistently throughout the duration of it too).
- I knew Gerry was at the end of the phone or by email if I needed her and that she was working on other areas of the project I was not involved in.
- Certainly, in comparison to my experiences volunteering with other organisations this [project] far outweighed my expectations to feel appreciated, competent, trained and supported throughout.
- I would recommend this project experience to other people who are thinking of becoming a creative volunteer.
- I think they would be surprised by the diversity amongst volunteers and participants.
- They would enjoy the development of, or the use of, their creative skills to bring joy to the participants.
- Being involved would give them the wonderful fuzzy feeling inside, seeing how your time well spent and productive, makes others happier and this makes you happy too.

Volunteer Case Study 7

MARY WILLS

5 words that sum up Mary's overall experience of the project:

Engaging | Satisfying |
Expanding | Community
Friendship

About Mary

Mary lives in Whitstable and signed up to become a creative volunteer because she believed it would enrich her own life as she loves being with people. She enjoys art as a hobby and recognises its therapeutic value. She feels very fortunate and wants 'to put something back' which is what this project facilitated.



Read Mary's personal insights on the project:

➤ **My biggest overall personal achievement**

- I learnt so much more about the community in which I live.
- I enjoyed the company of people who live here, and through the chats with our clients and other volunteers, I learnt about its [the community's] history.
- My life has been enriched by the relationships developed with the clients and other volunteers.
- Among our clients there have been retired teachers, men who have travelled the world and those who fought in the war.
- There have been artists/artisans who have revisited art for the first time in years, and those who haven't picked up a paintbrush since their school days.
- My volunteer colleagues have been an interesting bunch; kind, thoughtful, exotic and very talented.
- The biggest overall personal achievement for me was becoming more patient generally (I think).

- I feel the biggest challenges for me on this project were being on time, being adaptable and coping with inadequate feelings when you learn new skills.
- I managed to overcome some of these challenges; I still rush to be on time!

➤ My most rewarding highlights

- The most rewarding highlights were the wonderful and engaging client-friends I met and the fabulous artwork that they produced.
- The best outcome for us all was sharing of the pleasure on our client-friend's faces when their finished work was unveiled.
- My love of Art has been fed by learning about materials and how best to use them.
- Seeing the transformation of pottery from before 'firing', to the stunning collaboration of colours that results, has been awesome.
- In supporting the older people in the creative sessions, I noticed over the course of weeks, that they became chattier and more confident.
- As time passed their countenance changed when they saw us.
- The smiles were automatic as was the 'rush' to secure their seat at the table.
- Initially they had been reticent to join in, afraid to give up their armchairs and/or to miss the bingo numbers.

➤ Changes I noticed: impact & outcomes

- I feel I have gained a greater understanding of how stimulation at any age is truly enriching, and that it is never too late to try something different.
- Being with - and taking more time to listen to - other people, is truly rewarding.
- Being involved in this project has changed my view of older people a little because I always thought that getting old was a natural decline ahead.
- Now I can see that a 'can do' and 'I'll try' attitude to life will make my old age as fulfilled as my younger years. 'You've got to be in it to win it'. I think I'm more adaptable most of the time.
- I'm more relaxed about learning new skills; you don't have to be an expert at everything to get good results
- Unbeknown to us, one of the ladies I worked beside had been a true artist who hadn't painted for decades. This project reignited a real hunger to paint and she really loved the reactions to her work.
- A gentleman I worked with was very poorly sighted and didn't think he could paint or work with the clay. He was persuaded to join in. He gently felt the material and shapes of the tools. With a little guidance he produced pieces to give to his daughter.

➤ How the project helped me: the legacy

- I feel the project process and approach has been very worthwhile.
- It has been particularly effective because those involved with running the project were truly committed to the enrichment and development of all participants, our clients and us volunteers.
- The trio of Catherine, Fay and Gerry has been professional, caring, articulate and great company.
- Catherine has been the person that I have spent most of my time with and so must put her first on my 'most effective' list. She is a super communicator, articulate, thoughtful and skilful.
- Fay is a powerhouse, idealist, driven and enthusiastic. In her company you cannot fail to be charmed and impressed by her ambitions to make a difference.
- Dear Gerry, tirelessly worked away in the background. She is consistent in her passion to ensure that the project is visible to the outside world.
- Gerry is truly professional and talented in choosing the right shots. Without Gerry we wouldn't have been able to ogle the beautiful images that are our indelible memories of this wonderful enterprise.
- I found it reassuring and very helpful to have their support and friendship.
- They had quality and ethics at the centre of everything they undertook. They worked tirelessly to make 'Our Work of Art' successful.
- In truth I don't think I have come across a harder working and dedicated group before.
- I would definitely recommend this project experience to other people who are thinking of becoming a creative volunteer.

APPENDIX 6

PHOTO GALLERY LINKS

The Our Work of Art group creative sessions were as much about the process, 'being in the moment', socialisation and celebrating everyone's contribution, no matter how varied or small, valuing passive and active engagement.

Below are links to the various photo gallery pages:

Espression Arts in the Community

<https://www.espression.co.uk/in-the-community>

Gerry Atkinson put together the Kent Arts and Wellbeing photo galleries below. Most of the photographs are those she took to record project story. Many were selected by volunteers for the exhibition and for project photobook 'Our Work of Art 2018 - With these hands'.

The public visitors to the project exhibition at Garage Coffee, Jewry Lane, Canterbury, (where Gerry had exhibited her work there privately as a photojournalist) were moved by the photographs and found them interesting and highly informative.


[The Our Work of Art Creative Volunteer training](#)

[The Our Work of Art - HOPE' – Helping Older People Engage through Art: The photo story](#)

The Photobook

[Our Work of Art 2018- With These Hands:](#)

A social documentary photography record of the 'Our Work of Art Project'. This photobook was developed by a team of volunteers led by Gerry Atkinson.

A quote is presented within a dark purple speech bubble graphic that is set against a light pink rectangular background. The text inside the bubble is white and reads: "The project team 's energy and enthusiasm is what drives us on, to want to do more, to make a difference" (July 2018, Our Work of Art Volunteer).

"The project team 's energy and enthusiasm is what drives us on, to want to do more, to make a difference" (July 2018, Our Work of Art Volunteer).

APPENDIX 7

STUDIO PRACTICE – MENTORING OF VOLUNTEERS

Evaluation of studio pottery volunteer sessions by Gillian Farrell

"I really enjoyed teaching the sessions and working with such a lovely group of volunteers. I'd value the opportunity to do another session with the group and build on what they have learned or to be involved with future projects!" "The group were so brilliant at just having a go" by Gillian Farrell

BACKGROUND

The tutor, Gillian Farrell, graduated in Fine Art in 1995 from Winchester School of Art. Following this she worked in arts development and on community art projects in Belfast. After completing a post graduate certificate in education at Goldsmiths, University of London she taught art in London and was Head of Art at The Grey Coat Hospital in Westminster before moving to Ramsgate in 2015.

Gillian has been making her own ceramic work for 20 years. She throws pots on the wheel and has a painterly approach to ceramic work focusing on decoration and form. Gillian has taught ceramics to adults and children at Clayspace studios in Margate since 2016 and worked as a visiting ceramic artist in various settings. She has recently set up a studio in Ramsgate, where she offers classes and makes her own work.

Overall aims and objectives of the volunteer studio practice mentoring

An introductory ceramics class at Expression Arts Cafe in Canterbury was held on Monday 14th January 2019 and ran for six weeks.

- A key aim of the course was to show appreciation for the volunteer's work on the 'Our work of Art' project.
- Catherine Arnell, owner of Expression Arts, explained that the main aim would be in line with those of the volunteer programme, to improve their health and wellbeing and gain confidence in their communication skills.
- The objectives of the mentoring studio practice course would be to improve their technical ability using clay, gain skills they could use in future volunteer projects and build friendships within the group.

- Volunteers would produce a final piece that they would display as part of the Our Work of Art exhibition at Garage Coffee exhibition space in March.

Profile of the group

The group was made up of volunteers who had varied levels of experience in ceramics:

- Millie Brierley had started ceramics classes a year ago, having taken classes with ceramicist Carol Foster in her studio in Whitstable.
- Christine Barber had been a teaching assistant in a school and had used clay in lessons.
- Joan Hobson had completed a BA in Fine Art and had done ceramics as part of her University course.
- Ailie Jonston-Sterry was a beginner who had some experience of clay at school.
- Beverly Dalton had also some experience of clay, having done a class with Carol Foster too.
- Karen Hazel is a glass artist who had some experience of working with clay
- Sally Bernard studied art and had done pottery as part of her training to be an art teacher in schools many years ago
- Wafaa Louis had some experience of working with clay
- Gill Eaglestone hadn't done any clay since school
- Maria Kemp, Rachel Aldridge, Chris Jones, Sue Farris were all beginners although they all seemed to have experience in craft based activities

Attendance

Attendance on the course was excellent. Three volunteers missed one lesson: Sue due to a funeral, Jill because she was on holiday and Christine due to other reasons.

Course Outline and times

Gillian met with the Volunteers to introduce the course and her work. She explained that they would be taken through a 'journey' of ceramic hand-building and decorating techniques to include slab building, use of press moulds, coiling and decorating by adding texture to the clay and the use of brush on glazes, under glazes and decorating slips. They would attend every Monday between 10 and 2 with the main teaching part taking place between 10 and 12. Volunteers would be able to stay on to finish off work if they liked or pop into the studio during the week to work on their pieces.

WEEKLY PLAN

The sessions were planned as follows. This was shared with the group by discussion at the start of each session and via a PowerPoint on an iPad. Gillian showed them examples of each of the techniques by creating a Pinterest board of ceramic work.

WEEK 1 Aim: To introduce the group and our previous experience of working with clay. To build confidence in using clay and understand its different qualities.

Objectives: Exploring clay and its various states: plastic, cheese, leather hard and bone dry. This was explained while making a pinch pot. Discussion about how the clay feels different as it dries, and how it changes in colour. Participants were shown how to roll out a slab to an even thickness and cut out a tile either square or round shaped.

The group explored adding texture to clay using clay stamps Gillian had brought and they were encouraged to make their own. They rolled fabric onto their clay tiles to create interesting textures and they indented their tiles using found objects in the studio. Some left their tiles to become leather hard so they could carve and incise them and add under glaze colours.

Outcome: One pinch pot, 3-4 tiles which were impressed/indented or carved and a personal clay stamp. Plenary session to discuss successes and challenges. They were encouraged to make notes so they would remember which techniques and any colours they used so they could replicate their experiments on their final pieces.

WEEK 2 Aim: To gain confidence in their ability to work with clay to create a tile they were proud of.

Objectives: An exploration of decorating their sample tiles fired from the previous week. Working on their pinch pots that had been wrapped to maintain them either as plastic or leather hard so they began to understand when they could apply certain techniques. The use of brush on glazes, under glazes, wax resist, washes, sgraffito was demonstrated. They were shown how to create larger slabbed work either by using formers, press moulds or by wrapping slabs around a support. They had time to use their own clay stamps made the previous week to press into the pinch pot they made the previous week.

Outcome: A set of glazed tiles and either a cylinder slab built pot or plate plus their finished pinch pots/

Week 3 Aim: To gain further confidence in working with clay on a larger scale. To select a final method to use for their final piece.

Objectives: They were shown how to create a larger coil pot using a method adopted by Kenyan-born British ceramic artist Magdalene Odundo. Some chose to try this and some chose to continue to make using slab built methods.

Outcome: To start to make their final piece selecting a method they enjoyed or which worked best for them.

WEEK 4, 5 & 6 Aim: To build on their experience to create a final piece.

Objectives: With support from each other and Gillian they used their experimentation and discussion of ideas to select a way of building, adding texture, decorating and refining their final piece.

Outcome: A final piece to put into the exhibition.

PROGRESS OF THE GROUP

All volunteers made progress and learnt new skills. Volunteers (like Millie and Beverly) who had previously completed courses in ceramics really enjoyed learning a new way of making coil pots that they hadn't used before. Rachel, a complete beginner, said she enjoyed having the time and space to experiment and be less focused on a final piece. Volunteers filled out the 'Creative Quality Progression Matrix' against the follow criteria and the findings are highlighted below.

- *Technique* All stated they had 'improved a lot'.
- *Originality* Almost all stated that they had 'improved a lot'; two said they had 'improved somewhat.'
- *Ambition* Almost all stated that they had 'improved a lot'; two said they had 'improved somewhat'.
- *Connection* Almost all stated that they had 'connected a lot'; one said she had 'connected somewhat'.
- *Magic* Almost all felt that what they had had felt 'a strong lasting reaction' with the exception of two volunteers. The same person, Gill, who had felt she had been 'improved somewhat' in terms of originality said she had 'some lasting reaction'. Gill seemed to lack confidence a bit and would have benefitted from some notes and images to supplement her learning and ideas. Something to consider for the future.

The volunteers were asked to fill in an additional written evaluation form.

Overall feedback from the volunteers - during the course and in written feedback - showed that they learned a lot from the course, including those who had done pottery before, e.g. Millie who had worked with clay before said she had learnt a new coiling technique.

It was clear from the weekly conversations and the way that the group worked and supported each other, that they enjoyed the sessions and had built relationships with each other. In particular Rachel thrived on the opportunity to explore and she had so many ideas for making and decorating her work.

Comments recorded during sessions

- Rachel: "Six weeks isn't long enough. I was up this morning at 5 am anxious and worried about what I was going to make and do today but I am leaving so much happier than when I arrived".
- Sally Bernard: "Everyone is so positive about things we have made. You are a very good teacher because everything is individual and different, we haven't all made the same thing. Perhaps the prior experience of working in the groups helped. To encourage others gives you confidence to do your own work and to encourage other people around us. Because we have all been helping each other."
- Chris Jones: "It has boosted my confidence it has been amazing, would love to do more!! A wonderful session and lovely pieces produced. Loved it!"
- Joan: "I've learned so much, such a lot."
- Maria: "It has boosted my confidence".

Photographs of the volunteers work were posted (by Gillian) on the Our Work of Art Facebook page after each session and many made positive comments such as:

- Sue Farris: "I enjoyed this immensely! I was a bit slow to get started but once I was away there was no stopping me! Can't wait until the next session."
- Millie Brierley: "Wonderful course, wonderful teacher, wonderful experience."
- Christine Barber: "It's been great! Thank you!"
- Sally: "Such fun, thank you!"

- Chris Jones: "An amazing experience. Thank you so much. I have enjoyed every minute."
- Wafaa Louis: "Interesting course...I enjoyed it. Thank you."
- Rachel: "I was really enjoying the process of making the coil pot."
- Karen: "I really love this - it shows such individuality, all pots are so different."

OVERALL REVIEW

What went well? What seemed to be most popular?

- The volunteers were comfortable decorating their pots, presumably because they already had experience of helping the groups with painting their tiles.
- They approached the practice with enthusiasm and were very experimental trying out different techniques like using wax resist and sgraffito. They particularly liked using the specialist brush on glazes and velvet under glazes.
- The group had ample space to spread out but also build a cohesive group where people felt part of things. A rough seating plan was kept with photos.
- The volunteers seemed content to move amongst the group. The atmosphere was very inclusive. Several volunteers mentioned that they enjoyed 'getting out and meeting other people, who were interested in crafts' they said they had gained "new skills and new friends" and "It was relaxing and fun".
- Several volunteers mentioned the fact that it would help them with their volunteer work with 'understanding, problem solving and how to help others to approach a new skill'

Volunteers' enjoyment and sense of satisfaction

It was clear they enjoyed the sessions from comments and discussion and from the feedback. At times some of them found making with clay challenging but the supportive atmosphere of the group was such that they overcame these barriers with support and encouragement from the group and group tutor.

The volunteers were very reflective about their progress and felt comfortable to speak about their progress and any difficulties they had during the plenaries.

One volunteer seemed a bit disappointed in her final piece (expressed at the exhibition). It was felt by some that only having 6 weeks for the sessions wasn't long enough to refine the work thoroughly. Having taught beginners ceramics for many years, the tutor felt the volunteers were hugely successful and that this member of the group was being hard on herself.

Challenges for the tutor

The tutor was used to working with beginners and differentiating to accommodate different abilities and didn't feel any particular challenges in terms of the teaching side. "It was great seeing the participants gaining confidence in the wide variety of techniques learned." It was felt this approach would allow for more open-ended outcomes.

All but one volunteer valued the opportunity to try these different ways of working. She stated that she found it stressful doing different things and would like to have focused on one piece. She also gave the feedback that she thought too much had covered in the sessions.

The tutor wanted to ensure that there was a wide range of skills taught so that they could use one that suited them the most and wasn't too hard to do for older people who may have struggled with fine motor skills.

Challenges for the volunteers

A few of the group felt nervous at times about trying something new. One volunteer said she felt disappointed in her final piece even though it was clear how well she had done - it was hard for her to realise that learning about clay is a long process and it takes time.

The tutor tried to slow down, break down the learning and demonstrate things really clearly and emphasise how well they had done and how many different things there are to learn about using clay and it's an ongoing process.

A few volunteers mentioned in their feedback that the encouragement of the group and the support given to them helped them to overcome the inevitable challenges that some faced learning new processes.

Preparation for the mentoring

The main aims and objectives in terms of delivering a ceramics course were agreed that it would enhance the volunteers' wellbeing, build on their confidence and cater for their varying abilities.

Evidence was gathered through photographs, weekly notes and anecdotal evidence from conversations and evaluation forms (created by the tutor) which helped Catherine to understand what volunteers got out of it and what they would like to do more of. (These were not quantifiable like the Creative Quality Progression Matrix).

A meeting was planned before the mentoring began to discuss the evaluation process. This did not take place at the start but at the end of the volunteering studio practice programme. The 'Creative Quality Progression Matrix' was completed by the volunteers separately outside of the mentoring.

Significant achievements

Many volunteers mentioned that they enjoyed being part of a group, with a purpose each week. They were surprised that they could make such lovely things and achieve what they wanted in making their pieces. They obviously felt a lot of pride at exhibiting their work in the exhibition.

One volunteer in particular, Rachel, said she had "found a new passion". It was lovely to see her confidence and excitement about making during the sessions. She produced many experimental pieces and there was a real sense that this was the beginning of her journey in making ceramics.

Project impact and outcomes

Many mentioned an improvement in their wellbeing in their feedback. Millie said "Being creative in a safe, friendly environment enhanced my confidence and wellbeing. I felt happy". Christine said "I feel so much better about myself and have more confidence in my abilities". Sally, a former art teacher, said "Thank you for reawakening my love of clay."

Creative and technical ability and skill

This was evidenced in their outcomes and in their feedback.

Joan said she had "increased motivation" "I feel I have much greater understanding of the material and its potential, so I feel more comfortable working with clay".

Jill said she now had "more resilience to continue when I didn't feel my work was going well and I wasn't happy with the results. The support from the group was good."

Creative confidence and being better prepared to help others

Some volunteers mentioned in their feedback - and in conversation - that they felt more able to empathise with the members of the groups they had worked with. Joan said she would be more able as a volunteer to "encourage others to experiment and "have a go".

Jill, who had struggled a bit said that she would be more able to help those who are struggling and who are not artistic to be motivated to take part and be proud of their work. She also said that she had "..a greater understanding of the journey of less able participants and the struggles they may face with confidence and being reluctant to participate."

Learning for the future: planning studio practice sessions for next time

Catherine and Gillian met several times to discuss planning and this was really helpful, learning about the aims and objectives of the project but also in a practical sense, getting to know the studio and problem-solving anything that might come up.

'Wish list' for future sessions:

- Two of the group mentioned afterwards that they would like some form of hand-out or notes to reinforce learning;
- A meeting and explanation of the Creative Quality Progression Matrix, in advance of the studio practice workshops, to inform my evaluation;
- More than six sessions, to allow for development of ideas, making and refinement of final piece;
- A way of quickly evaluating progress on a weekly basis, e.g. putting a tick on a 'chart marked 1-5 to gauge enjoyment/learning, or a 'comments' box for people to suggest things as the weeks went and commenting on the pace and content;
- A list of names and photos of participants in advance of the course and reasons why they wanted to take part;
- A follow up course for the same group to build on new skills.

Practicalities

Catherine was great in putting together a lot of equipment already available at Expression Arts café/shop. However the following need to be considered for future sessions:

- A budget for extra materials like tools, brush on glazes and a wider range of under glazes. Catherine was great about ordering some items but it would have been easier for her if the tutor had been able to choose and order these.
- There was pressure to fire the tiled pieces for the Our Work of Art murals; this meant that Gillian had to take the final pieces made in the studio sessions back to Ramsgate to fire in her own kiln. In future a budget to cover this would need to be included.
- The work made by the volunteers was really something to be proud of considering the short space of time and the steep learning curve most were on. They looked great when on display. However it would have been good to see the final pieces being exhibited with labels and a blurb about their ideas and comments about the course.
- An opportunity for volunteers to try the potter's wheel.

APPENDIX 8

STUDIO PRACTICE MENTORING OF ESPRESSION ARTS TEAM

Espression Arts Team Studio Practice mentoring report by Imogen Taylor-Noble

Aims

The mentoring was delivered by Imogen Taylor-Noble. This set out to:

- A. Increase Espression Arts CIC's (EACIC) ceramic quality and technical vocabulary;**
- B. Take EACIC out of their comfort zone with regard to their current ceramics practice;**
- C. Explore production of hand built tiles for outdoor settings;**
- D. Explore a range of ceramic decorative techniques;**
- E. Support EACIC to expand their knowledge and apply new techniques to the Arts & Wellbeing project.**

Background

The mentoring process took place between October 2018 and January 2019 during which time Catherine and the Espression Arts team were also engaged in a very busy period of Arts and Wellbeing workshop activity, across a range of venues and with a range of people.

Catherine made time for the unstructured mentoring process and made use of the learning is evidenced in the ways that her workshop content took on elements of the activities that were explored within the mentoring sessions.

The fact that the timing of the sessions was within such a busy period also provided challenges; it forced and compressed a naturally unfolding process into 4 sessions. The focus of the content of the sessions was constantly re-evaluated with regard to the needs of the project activity and the advancing (project) exhibition deadline.

The focus of continually appraising the process of supporting the wider community to encounter ceramics will be ongoing and the broader impact of these mentoring sessions will be seen over the wider offer of Espression Arts Ltd and Espression Arts CIC as the business continues to grow and develop.

Approach

The mentoring sessions were designed to challenge Catherine Arnell and Gayle Shearwood of Espression Arts CIC to go beyond their current ceramics practice and to open up for them an understanding of the broader ceramics context within which their business sits. The sessions were discursive and invited an experimental approach to the hands on experience of working with ceramic techniques that were new to Catherine and Gayle.

The structure of the mentoring process was designed to support and feed into the ongoing Arts & Wellbeing project timeline.

Venue & frequency

The mentoring sessions took place in Imogen's ceramics studio in Whitstable, where there is access to the full range of ceramic materials and offers processes which are relevant to Expression Arts.

The sessions were timed to take place at 1 month intervals, to allow time for the learning to be effective and for it to be applied within the Our Work of Art project timeline.

Mentoring session dates were:

- Session 1. 16th October 2018
- Session 2. 14th November 2018
- Session 3. 19th December 2018
- Session 4. 16th January 2019

Methods

The content of the mentoring sessions focused on areas which Catherine had already said that she wanted and needed to develop within the Expression Arts team. This was done in a hands on way by trying out new techniques in clay and then examining how they can be applied in the context of the Our Work of Art project and in the Expression Arts shop setting.

A clear framework for used for delivering the sessions using a reflective tool to capture session by session learning. Catherine used this to take notes during the session and completed after the sessions. This enabled the impact of these sessions to be measured, observing Catherine's creative confidence and her increased capacity as the mentoring sessions ran their course. The framework was used to also review any areas that needed further reinforcement.

Outcomes and evidence

The table of Mentoring Aims, Practice Outcomes and Evidence summarises the process (separate Appendix).

The mentoring sessions were used to cover the following specific areas:

- **Decals and decorative surface:** How to enhance and develop tiles in use already to incorporate layers and collage. How to involve older people's work through writing, photographs etc. Technical support for how to use decals and transfers and ways in which they can be incorporated into the Expression Art's offer. Printing onto clays with coloured slips and velvet underglazes and ways in which these processes can be used.

- **Lustres and glazes:** To provide the stretch to move from 'ready-made' pottery into understanding how other glazes and finishes can work to enhance the work Catherine and Gayle are doing with elderly people and in Expression Arts.
- **Clay for outside areas:** To enhance the potential to make tiles and within Age UK settings; To develop a technical understanding of which clays to use, and which will be frost proof and suitable for outdoor applications and installation; To understand which kiln temperatures to use and to learn about the technicalities of firing tiles; To learn about which ceramic materials are suitable to use for colour in outdoor settings.
- **Creative pottery techniques:** Exploring techniques that can be used to enhance the offer of therapeutic art-for-wellbeing work with older people. We focussed on the use of hand building techniques with which to create sculptural flowers.
- **Kiln firing:** To train Catherine and Gayle in the broader concepts of clays and heat work to enable them both to have a grounded understanding of how to fire the kiln in a safe and appropriate manner at higher temperatures.

Evaluating process and outcomes session by session

Evaluation of the effectiveness of the mentoring sessions was part of the regular reflective practice process which ran as a thread through the mentoring period.

Evaluation of the mentoring sessions at the end of the project was done in the weeks following the end of the Arts & wellbeing project activity. This involved conversations with Catherine and with Fay Blair, project evaluator, with reference to mentoring sessions notes as well as Catherine's completed feedback notes against the 'Creative Quality Progression Matrix.

The Creative Matrix invites commentary from participants on 8 specific areas:

1. Gained new skills
2. Gained a wider understanding
3. More confident in abilities
4. Made participants more productive
5. Feel more creative
6. Forming ideas
7. Not afraid to explore new areas of creativity
8. It provided a challenging opportunity

Findings

Catherine and Gayle have shown that they have taken the learning from these sessions into their work by using familiar materials in new ways and firing them and the kiln to new temperatures. New public workshops are in the planning stage, which utilise the techniques

covered in new ways and which increase the offer of hands-on sessions available at Espression Arts.

In discussion and in note form, Catherine commented on the areas above. She:

1. had gained lots of new skills and enjoyed practicing her new found techniques, especially using the following: Wax Resist, Water Etching, Layering surface pattern using these techniques, Using Decals and layering onto clay to create depth and using clay for out-door settings.
2. "...worked out how to make the ceramics processes fit our timeline, speed drying, making large numbers of flowers, and making the activity suitable for a range of people with access issues, such as age, illness, poor sight, arthritis etc. We took the learning and applied it to the ethos of Espression Arts CIC which then makes every technique into a very accessible thing to the wider community."
3. is now no longer frightened to fix ceramics pieces in their pre-fired state using clay slip or to use the method of using clay slips for construction. Catherine was very happy with the first kiln firing at the Stoneware temperature of 1200C.
4. feels more creative in relation to the courses which can now be run at Espression Arts Ltd, and in how she can make even more exciting workshops which others might pay to take part in.
5. feels that the mentoring sessions had helped her to develop ideas which feed into the business and which will suit the higher spend customer on her customer matrix.
6. feels the mentoring session focusing on items for outdoor use has created opportunity for increased productivity as she delivered 5 workshops to older people using the flower making activity that we explored in session 2. She also ran workshops for staff and volunteers using the flower making activity.
7. Is " ...less afraid of using pottery, and understand that practice is important. Having a go yourself to see the materials working, exploring the areas which don't work, and then delivering the activity to clients. Anything is possible."
8. faced challenges of using the new materials providing a timescale shift which ran counter to her usual pottery shop activities. The challenge of firing the kiln to new temperatures safely and with confidence had to be met. The mentoring session on Health and Safety has helped Catherine to see the practice of the pottery shop in a different way and has enabled her to use safer protocols with regards to glaze materials, cleaning and kiln firing.

AIMS A.B.C.D.E.	SESSIONS 1.2.3.4.	OUTCOME	Self-reported evidence by Catherine Arnell	Observed evidence by Imogen Tayor-Noble
A. Increased ceramics quality & technical ‘vocabulary’.	1. Slip applied as a surface decoration to create layers of interest & contrast	Applying slip and creating texture. Printing with Slip Printing with underglaze transfers.	I feel that Expression is becoming more confident to make and explore more clay work moving forward.	Catherine discussed using these printing techniques with the products that she offers in the shop.
B. Challenge and extend current ceramics practice.	1. Slip applied as a surface decoration to create layers of interest & contrast	Applying slip and creating texture. Printing with Slip Printing with underglaze transfers.	We can now offer a wider range of clay activities moving forward with Art Club.	Catherine has made enquiries about using a range of new ceramic products including velvet Underglazes.
D. Explore range of ceramic and decorative techniques.	1. Slip applied as a surface decoration to create layers of interest & contrast	Applying slip and creating texture. Printing with Slip Printing with underglaze transfers.	We now have an increased range of materials and pottery kit for both mobile and in the shop.	We created a tile panel within the mentoring session to explore the different ways of applying slips and to look at the issues of working with flat ware.
A. Increased ceramics quality & technical ‘vocabulary’.	2. Clay for outside Flowers on sticks	Making a range of flower shapes using decorative stamps. Making individual stamps.	Considering techniques with our paints and products at the shop, eg. Printing with our paints	After consideration of the technical issues involved in making tiles for outdoor settings Catherine decided to focus instead on making flowers with Age UK in Herne Bay.
C. Explore production of outdoor tiles.	2. Tiles for outdoors	Exploring appropriate materials and techniques for outdoor features. Reviewing the tile panel from the previous session enabled greater awareness of the issues.		Making hand-built tiles got put to one side as Catherine developed a deeper understanding of the technical issues and realised that she did not have capacity to use them within the Arts & Wellbeing project.

Aims A.B.C.D.E.	Sessions 1.2.3.4.	Outcome	Self-reported evidence by Catherine Arnell	Observed evidence by Imogen Tayor-Noble
A. Increased ceramics quality & technical ‘vocabulary’.	3. Colours, Layers and Textures.	Using wax resist with velvet underglazes and creating colour washes.	I feel that we are feeling more confident in the whole process, practicing in real time really helped.	Catherine used velvet underglazes with her volunteers to decorate flowers made with Age UK Herne Bay.
B. Challenge and extend current ceramics practice.	3. Colours, Layers and Textures.	Discussion of kiln settings and Stoneware temperatures. Health and Safety in relation to Expression Arts kiln programming.		Catherine has incorporated higher firing temperature into the work that has been made for the Arts & Wellbeing project.
C. Explore a range of ceramic decorative techniques.	3. Colours, Layers and Textures.	Exploring the decorative techniques of water etching with porcelain & stoneware clays. Using wax resist with velvet underglazes and creating colour washes.	Totally increased confidence. Consideration as to using wax resist with residents and how it can fit into the 5 week delivery of the Arts & Wellbeing project.	Catherine posted photographs on social media showing the flowers that had been made with texture and stamps and decorated with velvet underglazes.
E. Support EACIC to expand knowledge, apply new techniques to the project	3. Colours, Layers and Textures.	Exploring the decorative techniques of water etching with porcelain and stoneware clays.	Love the results! I can see us using these techniques with a school group, or applying this in the future.	Catherine has begun to plan some seasonal workshops to run before Christmas using some of the techniques we covered.
A. Increased ceramics quality & technical ‘vocabulary’	4. Working with Stoneware.	Health & Safety in the pottery studio. Safe use of kiln at high temperatures.	We plan to fire all of the flowers to stoneware and are confident that this can be done at the end of the project	Catherine worked within tight time constraints to get the flowers made, dried, fired, decorated and glazed.
E. Support EACIC to expand knowledge, and apply new techniques to the project	4. Working with Stoneware.	Health & Safety in the pottery studio. Safe use of kiln at high temperatures.	Lots of consideration in relation to timing of firings to fit around shop practice. Carried out a practice run in real time to understand speed drying and firing of work ready to decorate the following week. Using skills learnt and fitting them into the pottery shop.	The family had a firing sleepover to ensure the kiln could be monitored while it fired to the new high firing temperature required for the pieces made in the Arts & Wellbeing project for outdoor use.

'Our Work of Art' Creative Quality Progression Matrix Feedback on your creative journey:

NAME of VOLUNTEER or PARTICIPANT **Date:**.....**LOCATION:**

We'd like you to reflect on the creative activities you've have engaged in over the creative sessions. Please circle the most appropriate answer (below) and tell us about what changed and what you feel YOU achieved through doing the creative activities Q.s (1) to (7)

- a. **Technique:** technical competence or sophistication
It didn't improve / improved somewhat / improved a lot
- b. **Originality:** newness of content, mode of expression
It didn't improve / improved somewhat / improved a lot
- c. **Ambition:** how the art challenged the you, doing the creative activity, how did it extend yourself.
It didn't challenge / challenged somewhat / challenged a lot
- d. **Connection:** relevance to the audience
It didn't connect / connected somewhat / connected a lot
- e. **Magic:** Ability to provide non-rational responses, inexplicable and inexpressible reactions that stay with the audience [in a 'community art' context]
no lasting reaction / some lasting reaction / strong lasting reaction

- (1) Gained new skills (tools, skills and approaches)?:
- (2) Gained a wider understanding of the creative process (individual and collective group art-pieces)?:
- (3) More confident in abilities (surprised yourself)?:
- (4) Feel more creative (much more imaginative)?:
- (5) Forming ideas (your own ideas)?:
- (6) Made you more productive (have made more work since the sessions)?:
- (7) Not afraid to explore new areas of creativity? :
- (8) It provided a challenging environment/opportunity (the things you did helped to see things, appreciate perhaps in a different, deeper way)? :

Other comments about your/ or the participant's creative journey 'technical competence', 'creative confidence', mood change, challenges, achievements

Please say how many creative sessions you have completed to date of creative sessions.

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