

Arts and Minds Y2

Young Arts for Change Project

**Cardiff and Vale UHB Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team,
Cardiff & Vale Health Charity
Melanie Wotton**

Following our evaluation and feedback from Year 1 of Arts and Minds funding, we identified a strong need for the support of Young people and Young Adults (YPYA) experiencing increased mental health problems through the pandemic, and to deliver this support through wider community social prescribing and arts on prescription initiatives.

Our aim for Y2 was to support the mental health and wellbeing of Young People through collaborative working with 4 partners. The project has developed a support network for vulnerable young adults from 3 beginning points, bringing these together towards the end of the project to share learning, and to pilot a Grange Town Youth Festival at the Grange Bowls Pavilion in June.

The project explores what might happen when you bring communities together in this way, encourages cross-fertilisation of arts, ideas, personal stories, self-expression between young people from differing communities.

Our 4 partners:

- 4 Winds Mental Health Resource (in partnership with local GP Practices, Community Mental Health Teams), and artist Louise Jensen
- Ali Abdi (Cardiff University Community Gateways Partnership Manager), Director of the Grange Garden Pavilion, Cardiff, and the Youth Forum in collaboration with artists Louise Jensen, Sian Burns and Joe Kelly, Clear the Fog
- The Yourspace Wellbeing Service at Dusty Forge, in partnership with the Cardiff South West Primary Care Cluster, and liaising with The Children and Young People's Family Health Service, CAVUHB and artist Nicola Parsons and wellbeing volunteers
- The Eating Disorder Service, SHED -Service for High Risk Eating Disorders partnership with Occupational Therapist Abigail Appollonio and Katja Stiller, Breathe Creative

All 4 elements are interconnected, sharing under one mental health wellbeing support banner and the opportunity exists to bring young people out of their fixed communities through the arts.

Our Year 2 project, **Young Arts for Change** extended the reach and impact of the Arts and Minds initiative beyond Year 1, and set in place a region specific, solid framework for building connections, access and pathways in support of Young Adults Mental Health Wellbeing together with opportunities for growth and development beyond Year 2.

Evaluation Feedback from 4 Partners

1. Grange Bowls Pavilion- Youth Forum Artists, Louise Jensen and Sian Burns

An Arts project engaging members of the Youth Forum in Grange Pavilion based in Grangetown, Cardiff.

In 2022 towards the end of Y1 project, the CAV Arts Coordinator and Louise Jensen met with Ali Abdi, the Cardiff University Community Gateways Partnership Manager. Ali has strong links with the community of Grangetown, and is pivotal in organising many of the community events in the Grange Bowls Pavilion. Early discussions touched on the idea of an arts project in connection with the Youth Forum for mental health and wellbeing, and how best to maximise accessibility and inclusivity if such an initiative were able to go ahead.

A period of research and design and consultation with the Youth Forum, CAVUHB and 3 lead artists Louise Jensen, Sian Burns, and Joe Kelly, took place Oct-Dec 2022.

The aim was to engage Young People and Young Adults attending the Grange Bowls Pavilion in arts workshops, as well as weekly drop-in sessions, and through a variety of media including painting, experimental photography and filmmaking, batik and other arts activities. The work was designed to prompt discussion and an exploration of what the young people were interested in and what they might be keen to explore with the guiding brief of Young Arts for Change.

The aim was to promote the well-being of those involved through the provision of a sustained arts activity presence. This presence offers a regular space in which young people can express their ideas, thoughts, and feelings about the issues that are important to them without the sessions feeling prescribed.

Project Partners:

- Grange Gardens Pavilion, Ali Abdi; Community Gateway Partnership Manager, working for Cardiff University, within the Grange Pavilion, and the Youth Forum members, Nirushan and Amira
- Creative Practitioners - Louise Jensen, Sian Burns, and Joe Kelly, Clear the Fog
- Arts in Health and Wellbeing Coordinator, CAVUHB

Participants

Young people aged between 9 and 25 members of the Youth Forum, which consists of various peer groups who attend at different times in the evening, either regularly or on an ad hoc basis.

Outputs

Design and Planning, Oct 22-Jan 23

Outputs from Feb – June 2023:

6 Arts Workshop Sessions:

- Mask-making
- Experimental Photography
- Batik x 2
- Film Making
- Collage

15 drop-in creative sessions in the café area of the Grange Gardens Bowls pavilion, which included:

- creative writing and discussion,
- Introduction of welsh Haiku, Englyn, Englynion
- painting with acrylics and watercolour,
- story making,
- developing ideas for a forthcoming photography exhibition and a creative film based on the work and ideas of the young people.

There was an attendance of 101 young people engaging in sessions, averaging at 9 people per session. The number in each session has been variable, sometimes as low as 2, sometimes as high as 20.

There are two mentors within the Youth Forum itself who attend the sessions weekly and encourage others to participate and attend the sessions. They also lead by example and use their own social media outlets to inform the rest of the group about what is happening. The group mainly communicate through the Youth Forum WhatsApp, and we set up a platform to post artworks:

<https://www.instagram.com/explore/tags/youngartsforchange/>

June 9th 2023- The Youth Arts Festival

Initial meetings early in the project helped to work towards this event. Young people were keen to show their individual communities their achievements.

The event was organised for the Friday evening, when the Youth Forum usually meet. The evenings activities included:

Tee shirt printing workshop (Print Haus)

A collage activity (Sian Burns and Nic Parsons)

African Drumming – (Nimba African Dance and Music)

An animation workshop- Katja Stiller

At 6.45pm there was a premiere screening of the collaborative Youth Forum film called 'Unify', filmed and directed by Joe Kelly.

Outcomes

Research and Design- November to January

Relationships were built between the creative practitioners and the Youth Forum, and the project further scoped in terms of delivery and arts outcomes.

By February, a provisional date was set for a Youth Takeover event, June 9th, Between January and June, workshops were delivered by three creative practitioners with the aim of working towards a festival, which would include work created, including a photography exhibition, and film of the project engagement, created by the participants.

The role of the practitioners and the Youth Forum was to co-create and co-produce, and to advise/nurture creative ideas emanating from the group.

"The best thing about taking part in the sessions is being able to bring out my artistic side and have fun"

Participant

Examples of the Monthly Workshops **February - Mask making**

We began the project with an introductory workshop, participants each made a mask and filmed themselves trying them on. The idea was raised that we might work towards an installation involving figures which might become characters in a film.



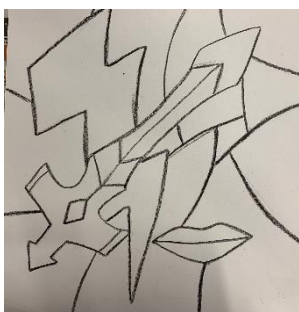
March– Night Shoot- Experimental Photography and filming

The second workshop was led by Sian and Joe and involved experimental photography, with the notion of digital manipulation and subsequent filming of the images. These would be developed throughout the project, experimenting with different techniques to include in the making of the film



April -Batik -

Visuals of previous artworks related to the characters were developed and batik pieces were created as flags for the characters, while filming continued alongside this activity.



Weekly Drop In sessions



In addition to the main workshops, drop-in sessions were held weekly, offering gentle arts activities such as 3D mask making, creative writing, building characters through acrylics, celebrating Ramadan, and designing flags using watercolours.

This work was aimed at boosting wellbeing, creating a calm, discursive atmosphere in the café area where members of the Youth Forum gather, to be creative together or simply sit, chat and observe.

These sessions provided continuity for the Young Arts for Change project week after week. Different peer groups within the Youth Forum were involved at different times. Throughout the months, there was an increasing anticipation of being able to join in "something" on Wednesday nights, yet without any pressure to do so. This has been essential, as the participants attend school or college all day and some are simply there to socialize and enjoy their time together.

Others are pleased to have the focus and to 'get into the zone'. Throughout these sessions there are often comments about how relaxing they find the painting, and they responded so positively to the Batik workshop that we responded to their request and decided to repeat it to allow other absent members to try it out.



Over the weeks, as discussions and ideas developed both for the photography exhibition and story making for the film, certain themes came to the surface. In particular the question of identity and what does it mean to be creative;



- **What makes you, 'You';**
- **'Celebrating Difference'**
- **'What connects us'**
- **'If we were to make new art today, what would it look like?'**
- **'What makes us different to AI'**

The writing for the Characters - a connecting factor

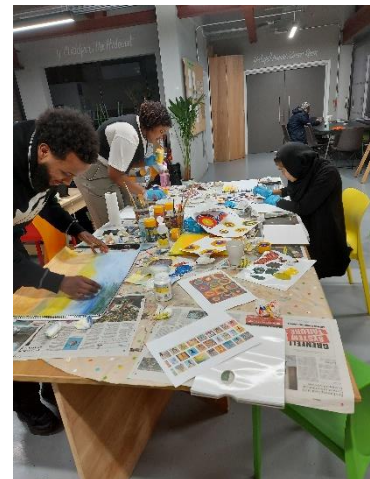
During the conversation about AI and creativity, Babz, a youth forum member very clearly expressed how creativity has to involve struggle and passion. As a response to this Louise a creative writing session called **Passions, struggles, hopes and dreams** in which the group made up characters based on those ideas.

The creative writing was used to form a loose narrative for the film., a distillation of the words was used as audio for each of the characters portrayed.

<p><u>The Stargazer</u></p> <p>I have a big smile</p> <p>I live between two places, in the ocean, free and flexible</p> <p>...on the land, rigid and boring</p> <p>A night life</p> <p>...a day life</p> <p>I just want to live a life free from disguise</p> <p>I want to explore the dazzling of the stars</p> <p>Be myself</p> <p>and tell everyone who I really am</p> <p>Sure, we're all different</p> <p>Let's celebrate together</p>	<p><u>The Quiet Warrior</u></p> <p>I don't show my struggles easily,</p> <p>My negative thoughts</p> <p>you wouldn't notice</p> <p>I don't let them take over</p> <p>I hate injustice</p> <p>I dream about having lots of power,</p> <p>and I would use that power</p> <p>to help others</p> <p>I dream about that often</p> <p>I might be different to you</p> <p>But let's celebrate together</p>
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Joe Kelly attended the drop-in sessions to gather material for the film, identifying images, soundtracks, and music to further bring the characters to life.



Arts Activities were easy access, co-created and co-produced with the participants. 'Doodle painting' as a drop-in fall-back activity gave an opportunity for discussion. 'Kandinsky circles' and fabric painting were popular with participants – one participant re-styling his own jeans – see above. Batik was also a popular workshop :

“I enjoyed the batik as it was a new experience which I enjoyed and painting as it was fun and relaxing” youth forum member

The Summer Arts Festival event

In mid-April the practitioners involved in the three elements of the Young Arts for Change Project met to plan the pilot Youth Arts Festival event alongside the Youth Forum. The aim was to bring different young communities together through the creative arts.

The event was therefore co-produced and co-delivered and brought together a wealth of ideas and learning for all.

The event was advertised with posters in Grangetown and the Pavilion as well as through the social media channels set up by the Youth Forum mentors and the artist facilitators. The Arts and Wellbeing Team supported on their social platforms, and the Youth Board at CAVUHB was invited to the event. The event had exposure at executive level. We were grateful for the support of the Arts Council of Wales on the evening, Sally Lewis attended the event



The evenings activities included:

- Tee shirt printing workshop (Print Haus)
- A collage workshop (Sian Burns and Nic Parsons)
- African Drumming – (Nimba African Dance and Music)
- An animation workshop- Katja Stiller
- A premiere screening of the collaborative Youth Forum film, 'Unify', produced by Joe Kelly.
- Refreshments were also served throughout the evening



Event Evaluation

Dr. Amy Sander, Aberystwyth University, gathered evidence at the event and conducted audio interviews

Approximately 110 people attended, and responses recorded via Dot Target Survey and an Emoji survey the answer to the following questions was overwhelmingly positive.

- Are you enjoying this evening?
- Would you like more art/more of this?
- Did you learn something new?
- Did it make you think?



'It's been really amazing to get involved, and just think about art and how that helps with your wellbeing, and actually how it can bring people together. I think the film shows the work that we've been on, and the journey we've had over the last five months, and just how different ages, different backgrounds come together to work on a really powerful piece and I think that's quite emotional for them. It brings together all our different identities and just shows what Grangetown is all about.'

'Nirushan-Youth Forum '

Please visit our webpage to view the film *Unify* and listen to our audio interviews at the arts festival event

A selection of Audio Interviews can be heard via the website link, together with the Film, *Unity*, created by the Youth Forum :

<https://cardiffandvale.art/arts-and-minds/>
<https://cardiffandvale.art/2023/09/01/young-arts-for-change-summer-arts-festival/>

<https://vimeo.com/843122611?share=copy> Password: CTFunity23*

Project Challenges

The biggest challenge of the project was the uncertainty of attendance, and establishing a regular core group.

Attendance ranged from 30 young people in and out of the café and green room in the Pavilion, to two. The Pavilion is a well-used venue with regular and last-minute events, the youth forum is an active group. A strategy to still maintain regular drop-in sessions however built trust and a regular safe space for young people to attend and express themselves.

The filming of projected photographs and videos and creative filming was particularly enjoyed by many of the participants.

It was through discussion and reflective practice that the mentors and practitioners sought to connect the sessions together towards the outcome of the festival and this kept the project on track through times of irregular attendance.

Another factor influencing attendance was the time of year, - winter months over December and January are quiet in the Pavilion Youth Forum, it was only really in late February / early March that it began to get busier, leading up to Ramadan at the end of March into April and this provided cultural learning for the project

Summary of Achievements, Louise Jensen and Sian Burns

- Establishing an arts activities presence most weeks at the Youth forum, attracting a growing number of diverse groups of young people to participate in them.
- The commitment and engagement from members of the Youth Forum to host and help organise a pilot Youth Festival in the Grange Pavilion.
- The production of a collaborative film.
- Forging connections between the Grange Pavilion Youth Forum, the Dusty Forge Arts Group and the online group from SHED.
- Establishing an ongoing dialogue around creativity, wellbeing and what it is to be human with our passions, struggles and dreams.

Potential for the project

The Youth Festival:

This was a resounding success for the project, helping to engage the young people of the area, but also enabling us to bring different communities together from across the project.

Establishing an Arts Drop In group that could be run by members of the group Forum on Wednesday nights has also been a success, and there is interest in maintaining this for Year 3, with Youth Forum members taking the initiative.

We recognised the value of a gentle approach, encouraging young people to take the initiative over a longer period, whilst also supporting co-created arts, and this is learning for the Arts Team

New Artists and new participants

We identified an interest in unique art forms for young people, and this will be explored through new artists' practices – the Youth Forum members are adventurous creatively, and enjoy taking an arts initiative.

There is also the Boys and Girls Club nearby in Grangetown, which works mostly with younger children, with the possibility that the Youth Forum could link its arts activities to this and other local groups.

Summary of Outcomes

Outcomes:

- Establishing an arts activities presence in the forum and attracting a growing diverse group of young participants
- 'Finding the key', learning in how to access groups – via a tailored, but open/relaxed approach.
- Obtaining the commitment and "buy in" from the Youth Forum to host and help organize a pilot Youth Festival in the Grange Pavilion.
- Making a creative film for the project through co-creation.
- Improving access for diverse communities
- Photography exhibition of the young people's work which developed connections between the Grange Pavilion Youth Forum, the Dusty Forge Arts group and the online group from SHED.
- Establishing an ongoing dialogue and learning in terms of how to work with young people from marginalised, diverse backgrounds
- Learning in terms of how gentle, gradual relationship-building establishes longer-term trust and longer-term partnerships
- Increased cultural competence ; observing religious practice for participants and tailoring sessions
- Dr. Amy Sander conducted evaluation at the summer event, **audio interviews** are available on our website

“Art comes in many forms and even a person with very little experience can make art”

youth forum member.

2. 4 Winds Mental Health Resource Centre Artist Louise Jensen

An Arts project engaging participants in gently focussed artmaking activities aiming to promote the wellbeing of those involved through meaningful connection, and the exploration of mask making, acrylics and watercolour processes in an inclusive and welcoming environment. This project continued from Year1 and built on the relationships and referral pathways to the project

Project Partners:

4Winds Mental Health Resource Centre

4 Winds Mental Health Support Worker

Louise Jensen - Creative Practitioner for Wellbeing

The Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team, Cardiff & Vale Health Charity

Participants:

Young adults with mental health issues and many also with long term health conditions.

People have been contacted through the 4Winds Mental Health Resource which includes long-term clients of the service, as well as those who have recently been referred, either through GP surgeries, The Hamadryad Hospital, or Community Mental Health Teams

Outputs:

12 sessions (Feb to May 2023).

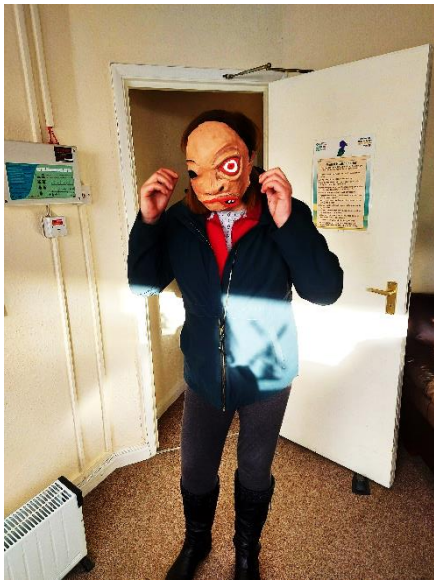
Sharing event and exhibition held at 4 winds Mental Health Resource, June

An average of 6 people per workshop, 84% attendance rate.

Making Masks, Telling Stories

In the first two sets we made masks, working initially with clay, then with papier mache, and then lastly with acrylics and mixed media to paint and decorate the masks





For some it was the first time they had ever done anything like it and both groups enjoyed the playfulness of the work, as well as the camaraderie that accompanied the work done in the group.



The colours of Spring:



For the second two sets of workshops, we explored 'The Colours of Spring' using watercolour to play with colour and different techniques ranging from wet on wet, details with wet on dry and textural effects. The work will also extend to collage and a collaborative group picture. Some of the comments people have made, reflect the part the project is playing, both for their wellbeing and for their enjoyment of the creative process.



'I have not done art for many years so it was an interesting change'
'It was lovely being part of the group, being creative'

Partnership with 4Winds

Attendance - Booking onto the workshops

The partnership with 4Winds has continued to work well. Nina, the support worker, attended all of the sessions and her presence has been an added reassurance to the participants and the connection to the 4Winds service. Susan, the 4Winds Project Manager, managed the bookings process in discussion with her team of support workers.

This enabled regular attendance and the development of a safe creative space within the 4 winds venue.

The artist practitioner also receives support form the centre if required.

As a result, the sessions have been fully booked up in advance of the sessions, and the staff have also been able to accommodate any last minute switches and changes.

We chose the format of 3 x 3 sessions per block, as we felt that it was enough to complete a series of work that could be built on over a number of weeks, without requiring too much of a commitment in advance. This judgement has been borne out by the high 84% attendance rate. It has also given the chance for new referrals as they happen every week to be offered a place on the workshops, with some places being kept back for this purpose.

The Space

Another factor which has had an effect on attendance and the quality of the sessions has been the decision to hold the sessions in the 4Winds Centre itself. Since the COVID restrictions the house has opened up for one-to-ones with the support workers, but the large Dining Room space is now only opened up to groups on a Tuesday afternoon. The arts workshops on the Wednesday afternoon therefore offers an opportunity to try out something creative and also be in a group setting.

The space itself is relatively small, and the capacity for each session has been 8 participants. Although this seems restrictive, it in fact proved to be one of the reasons why we have such a steady uptake and a high retention of participants. Participants said they preferred the smaller space, and that in a bigger group it was harder to talk in the 'incidental' way that was possible around one large table, whilst for those who wanted to stay quiet, they could still feel part of things because of the proximity of everyone else.

The combination of the high attendance rate and the safe setting has itself had an impact. Each of the groups formed an organic bond as an outcome of sitting and working quietly together. For many this has been important, and the words of this participant echo those of others who have enjoyed the peaceful and relatively intimate interaction.

'It had a calming effect and I talked about some personal stuff'

What went well at the sessions ?

'I managed to attend all three sessions'

'Having fun with other service users'

'It is often a challenge for people struggling with their mental health, to even get out of the house. It was notable, that even though the weather was very bad during the first few weeks of sessions, there was still a high attendance rate. This is testament to how much the sessions were valued by the participants and much needed at a time when the cold and dark weather can be particularly difficult.'

Louise Jensen

Project Summary

- The format of the 3 weekly sessions, offered on a block by block basis, worked well for participants
- With the development of the 4Winds Dining Room as a venue for holding the art sessions we developed a 'creative corner' for both long-standing service users at 4Winds and those coming through the doors for the first time.
- The workshops were a great way for people struggling with their mental health to engage with others in a none intimidating way.
- The sessions were absorbing and relaxing, whilst also bringing with them a sense of possibility, achievement, meaningful discussion and companionship.
- The support of 4 Winds staff provided reassurance for all taking part
- 4 Winds recruited participants
- A safe space was created which allowed young adults to express themselves creatively

3. Young Arts for Change 2022-2023

Action in Caerau and Ely, Dusty Forge and Fitzalan High School

Partners :

**Nicola Parsons, Creative Practitioner
Action in Caerau and Ely
Youth Wellbeing Service
Children and Young People's Family Health Service
Fitzalan High School
Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team, CAVUHB**

This pilot project explored how we could provide arts and wellbeing sessions for groups of young people from a socio-economically challenged area of Cardiff, and how we might bring these young people together with other communities. Our aim was to build arts and wellbeing signposting and referral pathways through the Youth Wellbeing Team and other support services, local GP practices, Youth Wellbeing Connectors and the community already supported by adult sessions at ACE/Dusty Forge.

We trialled 3 series of youth workshops Jan-June 23:

1. Arts Sessions at Fitzalan High School

ACE have a strong relationship through arts delivery with Fitzalan High School Cardiff, and I initially set-up a group on a Tuesday which was delivered for the Spring Term, Jan - April. These sessions were supported by our ACE Youth Team. Having the support from our ACE (Action in Caerau & Ely) youth team proved really valuable in terms of helping with the young people's emotional support and understanding of their needs.

Our aims were to connect with pupils in need of wellbeing support and to develop and offer the opportunity for the school to refer these pupils to either an afterschool arts session at Dusty Forge, or to provide opportunities within the school day.

We delivered 8 sessions at the school, 8-10 participants at each session.

Challenges

Our aim was for the group of participants to grow over time, but due to time restrictions, I worked with a given group of pupils with additional needs who required additional supervision. Although the participants greatly benefitted from the sessions, I would be unable to provide adequate support for the pupils in a community setting. If there was a wellbeing, dedicated room available at the school, this might have provided a more relaxed environment.

Although staff were present to assist, I was not in a position to receive any background information prior to the sessions in order to tailor activities to individual needs. In addition, the group participants were not constant session to session.

Outcomes

We recognised that the students gradually opened up and started sharing many important mental health challenges, and also the difficult times they had encountered. Some pupils had come from very difficult circumstances such as moving countries or being in foster care. We were able to listen and give them a weekly activity that would give them an opportunity to talk and bond with others, in a more relaxed setting than formal teaching.

2. Art Sessions at Dusty Forge

Our Aim was to work with the newly created Youth Wellbeing Service to provide arts sessions for Young People referred through GP practices and Third Sector Organisations

We have run various projects at the centre for a number of years involving pop-ups exhibitions and arts opportunities for children and youth, but our primary core arts projects tend to focus on wellbeing/social prescription for adults 16+. This project has enabled us to introduce a more focussed group specifically for Young People, but embedded within our wider work. Having the flexibility to place youngsters where they feel most comfortable has been really important. For example, I have some students who have preferred to join the older group and not take part in youth group. It has been interesting to observe and compare the benefits and barriers to working in both the educational and community settings, and there have been pros and cons to both. We have delivered 5 sessions at Dusty Forge to date, with 8/10 participants at each session

Challenges

Funding for the wellbeing service was cut and referrals through GP practices was very slow to begin. After struggling to recruit participants, the decision was made to work with Young People referred through Family Services, attending with their siblings or parent, and this has worked very well.

Key 'Magic moments':

As we are always encouraging diversity and inclusivity, we are constantly looking at ways to improve and offer ways to do this. With this in mind, we recently introduced a pot of pronoun badges free for the group to take voluntarily. One 15 year old student didn't interact for the first half of the session. They then asked about the badges and if they could take one. When they took a badge they were clearly more comfortable to talk and when their mum came to collect them they said 'look, they have the badges!' Setting up the right environment can make a big impact on the interaction of the group and will be really essential to make keep improving and adapting the sessions going forward.

Outcomes

In addition to the youth sessions, ACE Arts currently run regular adult sessions via another ACW (Connect & Flourish) project at the Dusty Forge.

We found that some young people preferred to join in with the adult sessions. There were various reasons for this:

- preferring to attend with carers/parents due to poor confidence or severe mental health issues
- being more comfortable around adults
- differences in levels of independence.

One youngster struggling with alcoholism was supported in the adult group (16+) alongside a parent.

Although we advertise 13+, some youngsters coming along were as young as 11 years. Having checked with the health board we made the decision to welcome any secondary school age pupils as we did not want to shut down the opportunity to anyone who would benefit from it. There was a process of ensuring that the group attending were comfortable, and were able to manage any mental health conditions, or attend with a parent or carer - and that we offered a safe space.

The community group, therefore, ranged from 11-19 years, they all bonded really well and it became a very supportive, dynamic group.

Two of the pupils had additional needs of autism and ADHD

Types of Output

- Collage/ mood boards reflecting 'self' Positive pictures and words.
- Developing mask designs and mask making.

Project Outcomes and Feedback:

The experience of working at the school provided valuable learning for the future.

Provision of sessions at the school didn't enable pupils to step outside their normal day, and sessions on a self-referral basis would be more tailored to participants.

Despite some practical challenges, the support staff and teachers involved were really pleased with the outcome and strongly felt they had recognised a positive shift in those pupils involved. Our final session was attended by the school's well-being liaison and the deputy head. As well as setting up a pop-up classroom exhibition on this day, the youth team played games of Jenga and cards with those who finished their work. The staff commented on how the group were interacting so well together and were really happy and settled. It was also really valuable to let one pupil, who was often withdrawn, to help with the set-up of the display of artwork, and he responded with interest and communication.

Some of the pupils attended the event at the Grange Pavilion, and they were proud to see their work displayed at both the endpoint pop-up exhibition, and at the Pavilion event, giving them the opportunity to take family and friends to see what they had achieved.

- We demonstrated that there is a need to provide wellbeing support through the arts working with young people in Ely & Caerua area. At ACE there has recently been a shift in our youth team due to staff and funding issues, and the focus is on youth social prescription. It is a slow process to establish links with GP's, referrals youth team and third sector organisations, however, we set up referrals through CYPFHS and have demonstrated positive outcomes and benefits to young people in a relatively short period of time through this project.
- We found that advertising through our ACE Facebook was the most productive way of recruiting sign-ups.
- Young people were positive in taking part in the pilot Youth Festival
- We were able to set up referral pathways through NHS services, but also through social prescribing/ community platforms
- We identified local gaps in the provision of support for young people through the creative arts, both during school time and after school
- We identified a potential for GP's/ wellbeing support workers to refer pupils to arts and wellbeing provision for vulnerable children and young people during school hours

Feedback from Participants

'It's the first time I've been to a group like this, with other kids in the community. It's made me smile!' Ellie, age 12

I like mine because it's nearly finished!

I like the 3d masks: Octopus and fantasy mask because they are really different from everyone else's – they are very extra – good extra!!

Talking about the mark making activity we did on the first sessions 'I found it calm and relaxing'

I like it because I made it!

I like my brother's, it's like Zelda.

I like L's because when I look at it it makes me feel very happy.

I have a very big imagination and that's what I realise when I look at what I've made.

I'm really pleased with the way the cards came out – the way I painted the cards (aged down with gold and brown paint)

I like the tentacles on the 3d octopus – they're really clever

I like the way I've made mine into a spirit ghost like design. The octopus is really creative.

Feedback from parents after the Grange Pavilion Arts Festival:

'My daughter got to have her first taste of having her artwork on display. Shes really enjoyed these sessions with her best friend, and getting to meet and make new friends along the way. Thanks - these two had such a great eve (*re-the event)

'I don't know what we would have done without it. Teifion couldn't walk after being affected by covid. He was a ballet dancer. My other son Taran is autistic. It's been a real lifeline for us.'

Feedback from Youth Support Workers and Creative Practitioner:

'At the end of session 3 I asked if anyone would like to say anything about the room. No pressure, it could be one word to describe their collage or a description. This was really well received and 7 out of the 11 pupils present described their work. Some made stories about what was happening in their collage (we used cuts outs from old lifestyle magazines and collage books along with a selection of emotive and descriptive words I provided which were optional)

' I really enjoyed the art sessions at the school. At first there were a few really quiet young people who at times struggled to engage but did well with support. Having lots of us around to encourage young people that is was okay to be different and having a safe space to do so really brought out their creative side. My magic moment was the last day, watching young people set all their work out with pride and teachers coming to see. Young people also expressed how they did not want the sessions to end, you could see the positive impact the art sessions were having on them and they were opening up more.'

Danielle: Youth Well-being Connector, ACE

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😊	😊

'The creative wellbeing was lovely. The pupils, with a range of social and emotional needs took part in creative activities starting with collage work and culminating in 3D mask making. These activities were well-chosen and pitched to be accessible to all while allowing pupils to explore using a range of media. During the sessions, the pupils were able to express themselves through their creative outcomes. They also worked companionably and time spent together has fostered healthy relationships between them as the young people learned to share and negotiate.

Their creative outcomes gave genuine opportunities for staff and pupils to offer praise and affirmation to members of the group. Initially some of the young people found this difficult to both give and to accept; by the final session it was great to see quiet smiles of pride.

Initially some young people were reluctant to be involved but the nature of the session was very inclusive and welcoming which meant that they chose to attend and looked forward to the sessions.

While the young people themselves found it hard to put into words the value they placed on the project, the quality of their outcomes, their willingness to participate and confidence to try new things is testament to the benefit of the project.'

Judith Rees : Deputy Head, Fitzalan High School

Links to relevant material – **Social media posts, fliers, Images, blogs, etc**
I have been documenting the projecting on our ACE social media week by week.

Instagram Pictures of the project can be found on Instagram here:

[@youngartsforchange • Instagram photos and videos](#)

To create a link between the various strands of the project we collectively ran a photo challenge with the hashtag #youngartsforchange

Well-being Arts for Young People

Free term time weekly art workshops
For youth age 13-24 years

Starting Monday 27th February

Time: 4-5.30pm

At the Dusty Forge
460 Cowbridge Rd West, Ely
CF5 5BZ

Email nicolap@aceplace.org to sign-up




Nic Ace
19 February · 🌐

Edit

👍❤️ 10 4 💬 22 ➦

👍 Like 💬 Comment ➦ Share

Top comments ▾

Nic Ace
Danielle Ace Hannah Ace Scott Ace Mags Ace
Like Reply Share 7 w

Alex Withey
Thanks for this, Tasha can come up next Thursday 😊
Love Reply Share 7 w

👉 Nic Ace replied · 2 replies

Write a public comment...

ACE - Action in Caerau and Ely

Like Comment Share

Write a public comment...

Nic Ace is with Mags Lyons and 2 others.
29 March at 20:43 · 🌐


We've had a really wonderful time working in Fitzalan High School over the past few months on our 'Youth Arts for Change' pilot project, exploring the potential for youth arts on prescription & sharing creative ways to support well-being for local young people.

This week we installed a pop-up exhibition which was attended by the deputy head teacher, well-being and support staff!

We are so proud of all the pupils involved 🌟🌟🌟

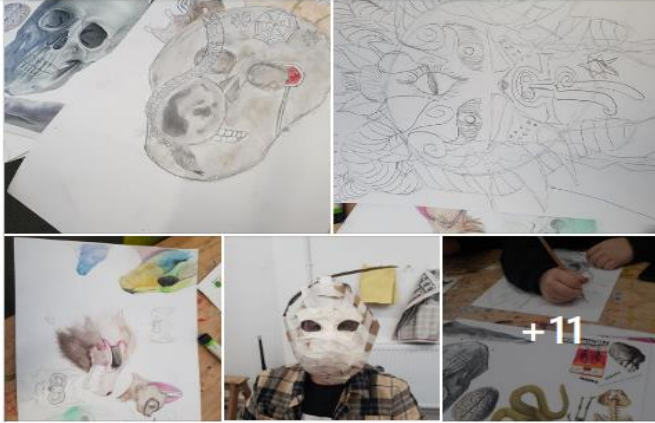
There will be an opportunity to view the work as part of a wider youth arts festival at the Grange Pavillion on June 9th - details to follow closer to the time 🌟

[#artscouncilwales](#) [#baringfoundation](#) [#UHB](#)





ACE - Action in Caerau and Ely



Nic Ace

Admin

· 28 March at 09:51 · 🌐

More amazing work to share from our youth arts project! The talent in this group is really wonderful 😍 So impressed with everyone's work - well done all!



You, Dave Ace, Jeffrey Clarke and 3 others

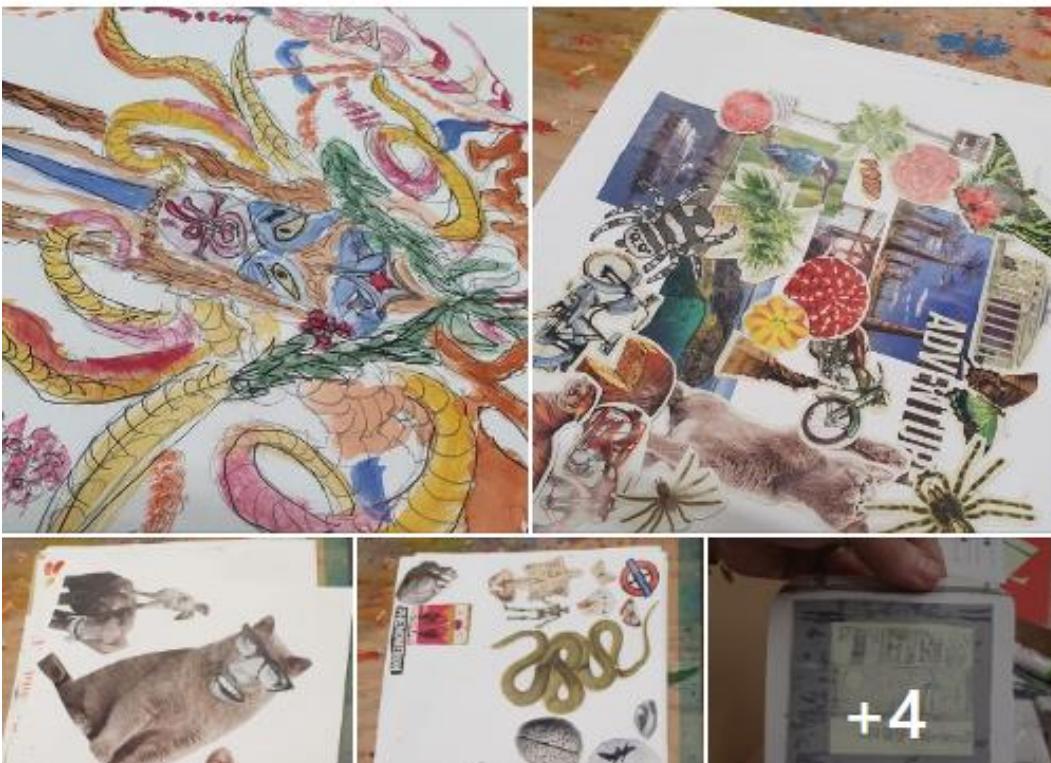


ACE - Action in Caerau and Ely

Incredible work created at our new youth project at the Dusty Forge yesterday! It was so good to welcome some new young people along too.

We are creating collages to inspire mask designs. Can't wait to see these designs come to life 🤩

[#cardiffandvaleuniversityhealthboard](#) [#artscouncilwales](#)
[#baringfoundation](#)



4. Young Arts For Change Breathe Creative and SHED Eating Disorder Service – Creativity for Wellbeing Reach

Partners:

**SHED Service for High Risk Eating Disorders
Breathe Creative
Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team**

November 22 - June 23 (30 sessions)

Output:

At the beginning of the project we sent out arts packs to 15 service users in collaboration with the Occupational Therapist, Abigail Appollonia at the High Risk Eating Disorder Service. We had a core of 5 participants. We meet via zoom initially, and when we had built up trust, we started monthly face to face sessions.

We delivered 30 sessions, 16 online sessions and 14 face to face workshops, the sessions included creative writing, photography, animation, art and mindfulness.

Each week we explored different themes, through discussions, creative writing and art work. Participants took photos during the week and shared them in the following session. We included themes such as Reflections, Nature, Permission, Pause, Mind the Gap, Patience, Journey, Wabi Sabi Acceptance,...

Participants inspire each other at each session, during one, we discussed waiting in a hospital waiting room. Many find the hour waiting for their appointment very challenging, we discussed the sensory overload of the waiting room, sounds, smells, people. One participant shared that she feels unsafe and at times leaves before her appointment, feeling she failed.

We discussed what would help patients in waiting rooms, one participant suggested mindful waiting. We creating art work and creative writing which led to the co-creation of a booklet for the SHED waiting room. One participant wrote this poem:

*Life's waiting room
In the waiting unsure of
time.
Wondering
Thoughts flyby.*

*How long will it last?
When to be seen?*

*The place of knowing what was, not sure
what's ahead. Having to handover,
losing some control. The urge to escape
is rising the fear for the unknown.*

*All too intense,
too noisy too
much
But nowhere to hide.*

*Then reminded. After the
waiting, things might get
clearer, Answers might come.
There I have the choice, to
push through, to not give up
and be, in the waiting make
it my friend for that moment.*

*Letting emotions come on go, notice them
and sit with them. Get into that space,
Where it feels safe enough.
Telling myself; this too
will pass*

Co-creation of a privacy screen:

The waiting room of SHED is shared with other services and is very busy, we are looking at creating a colourful room divider that will provide some privacy and a positive focus.

Outcomes and feedback:

- The positive aspect of zoom is that people can join from anywhere and even join when they are unwell, or struggle with transport. One participant joined the zoom sessions whilst travelling, she joined us from Switzerland, Tenerife and Portugal, another participant has regular hospital appointments, she doesn't want to miss the sessions and joins from the hospital cafeteria.
- The difficulty of zoom is that you are not always sure who can overhear the conversations and it is also harder to assess how unwell some is. We are now looking into finding a space in the hospital for her to join the sessions in a more private environment.

- Using zoom Zoom is like looking in the mirror
This is difficulty for anyone who is self-conscious, and all participants in this project are vulnerable in this way . We enabled a safe space for participants to turn off their screens, or to doodle, knit or do anything else that means they don't have to look at themselves.
- The participants were very supportive of each other, and very aware of what might trigger another person eg they avoided conversations around food and details of their eating disorder, self-harm, negative or suicidal thoughts.
- One participant, a young girl, found it difficult to be in a group with others with Eating Disorders, she has since joined another Breathe Creative Art group (via Ty Canna)
- We are aware of the danger that a groups of people with eating disorders runs the risk of participants comparing their illnesses and how that could have a detrimental effect on the individual. We ensured that the sessions were strength based and supportive, the focus was on looking forward,
- focus was on positive coping mechanisms and **safe spaces**.
- The sessions became an important part of the participant's week and a positive focus in their lives.

With most interactions with health professionals, the young women have an expert-patient relationship. In this project they are the experts of their lived experience and the authors and creators of their booklet.

The sessions give participants the opportunity to look beyond their diagnosis and to build on their strength. Creating a booklet for others also provides the participants with a meaningful focus and an opportunity to celebrate their creative talents.

Feedback from participants:

"This group got me back into art again, it is wonderful "

"I find the group very uplifting and challenging sometimes it usually takes me ages to do anything, but it brings me into the presence and I'm using that skill in other areas of my life, - also meeting the others has been really beneficial "

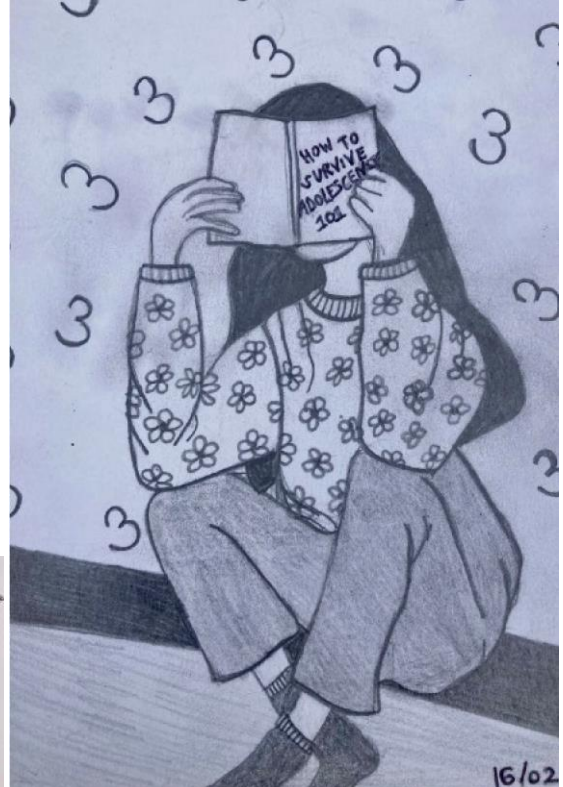
The art group for me has been a space created to breathe, a safe space to just be, I love the variety of ways I can be creative, a relaxing setting, being with people that don't need any explanation. "

"I feel relaxed after the group."

"I was initially overwhelmed but I enjoy having a space where I can just be in and I have started being creative again in the sessions and during the week."

Artwork created in the sessions:

NOTE Please contact the Arts For Health and Wellbeing Team for consent to use any of the following images



Partnership working and Learning:

The service users of SHED are vulnerable, and in order to offer a safe process and safeguarding, it was crucial that health professionals from the SHED team and

Breathe creative worked together effectively.

At the start of the project we ran a training session for the SHED team (the first time they all got together since COVID) where we shared our person-centred approach and gave the team the opportunity to explore different art forms and experience the creative process. The Shed team shared with us their safeguarding inductions, and each session was supported by a health professional from SHED. For anyone struggling they could have time out from the session in a break out room with the health care professional.

Feedback from partner organisation (SHED):

It is great to see the participants in a different context, they are so much more open, engaged and relaxed than when they come to the service.

"I didn't realise how talented the young women are."

Our arts outcomes for the project were a Waiting Room Booklet and a Privacy Screen for the waiting room.

As a team we took part in the Grange Pavilion Art Festival, demonstrating some of the arts interventions we had delivered as part of the project, including an animation workshop.

Future development:

Many young people struggle with transition from children's services to adult services, and the SHED team believes that the arts might make the transition easier.

We are also talking to the CMH Teams to identify how creativity for wellbeing could benefit their service users.

Katja Stiller

Breathe Creative www.breathecreative.co.uk

The Waiting Room

Creativity for Wellbeing

SHED Service for High Risk Eating Disorders

Breathe Creative

Over the past six months participants came together in weekly sessions to explore different topics and art forms e.g. creative writing, photography, animation, art as well as different relaxation techniques.

During one session we discussed waiting for a medical appointment, many find the time in the waiting room very difficult. We talked about what could make it easier for patients and what could help them deal with anxiety and the sensory overload of a hospital waiting room. We created a booklet filled with artwork, creative writing, images and activities that also acknowledges the challenges of the recovery journey.

*'I am so proud of you
Waiting here is an achievement
It is a really hard thing to do
To wait and to keep fighting
I know
Because I waited here
Just like you.'*

(First page of the Booklet 'The Waiting Room')

We created a safe space, our sessions became an important part of the participant's week and a positive focus in their lives. The time spent together allowed the participants to look beyond their diagnosis, to build on their strengths and learn new coping mechanisms. Creating a booklet to help others also provided the group with a meaningful focus, an opportunity to celebrate their creative talents and to work as a team.

Feedback from participants:

"This group got me back into art again"

"I find the group very uplifting,
also meeting the others has been really beneficial."

"The art group for me has been a space to breathe,
a safe space to just be, I love the variety of ways I can be creative,
a relaxing setting, being with people that don't need any
explanation."

"I have started being creative again in the sessions and during the week."

Feedback from the partner organisation (SHED):

"It is great to see the participants in a different context, they are so much more open, engaged and relaxed and I didn't realise how talented they all are."

This link will download the booklet created, welsh version available on the website

[Click to Download](#)

The booklet is available in Welsh and English

Please visit our website <https://www.cardiffandvale.art/artsandminds>



Summary

Total Outputs across the project:

Partner	workshops	events	Training sessions	Film	Book	Other Co-producing event, screen	Totals
Youth Forum/ LJ, SB,JK	21	3		1		6	31
4 Winds/ LJ	12	2					14
Dusty Forge/NP	24	3	1				28
SHED/KS	30	2	2		1	1	36
Totals	87	10	3	1	1	7	109

Outcomes in summary across the project for Year 2, Arts and Minds: *Young Arts for Change*

1. Establishment of new pathways linking the Grange Pavilion Youth Forum, Youth wellbeing teams at ACE, Dusty Forge, Children and Young Persons Family Health Service and Eating Disorder Teams to accessible, meaningful creative opportunities for Young People (YP) + Young Adults (YA)
2. Success in establishing regular 'Safe Spaces' where YP enjoyed art and self-expression at 4 different venues
3. Identified gaps in support for young people in the community
4. Understanding what works/what doesn't work in engaging with YP + YA
5. Identified a strong need for bespoke tailored sessions for small groups, whilst also establishing the foundation for a Youth Festival in Grange Town, and larger/wider events
6. Building strong relationships with a network of experienced artists and health professionals who understand the subtleties of working with young people
7. Building a network of community support/social prescribing and third sector organisations, a foundation for further work
8. Demonstrated how the arts have the unique ability to bring young people from different communities together, building their confidence in a safe space, and giving them a platform for their voices to be heard

Please listen to the audio interviews recorded at the event to hear some of the reactions and responses to the project:

<https://cardiffandvale.art/2023/09/01/young-arts-for-change-summer-arts-festival/>

''Its made me think about what wonderful people we have in our community.

Wonderful, creative, elegant youngsters, and the Youth Forum is ready to play a part in whatever they plan to do in the future, bringing the community together.

The art exhibition is incredible, with the artefacts, the face masks, the video piece, bringing the community together through this art exhibition, which has all helped to support mental health and wellbeing and has really helped to open up discussions about that. So I think the older members are ready to pass on the mantle to those young people who are now stepping up to discuss and have conversations about pressing issues in our community which are affecting young people''

Ali Abdi, Community Partnerships Gateway Manager

<https://cardiffandvale.art/2023/09/01/young-arts-for-change-summer-arts-festival/>

We are embedding and naturalising the creative arts within health board and community-based services

Through social prescribing activities we aim to reduce the stigma associated with Mental Health, particularly for deprived, marginalised and vulnerable communities

We have developed a tailored approach, ensuring that our project is delivered at the right time to the right people and by the right arts organisation and artist

The project will be sustainable, will develop and grow, and we have a potential to discover innovative opportunities and avenues to explore

We have developed unique projects which support inclusivity, diversity, improved access to services, increased cultural competence, improved access to arts opportunities, a platform for voices to be heard, and which provide a Safe Space for the most vulnerable in our community.

We have developed a gentle, easy access approach which has built trust and strong relationships in marginalised communities

Please contact melanie.wotton@wales.nhs.uk for further information on the project