



Creativity in Care

Evaluation Report

by Kate Duncan and Jo Wheeler

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Chronicle Arts for the delivery of the Creativity in Care Training

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Programme Summary

The Creativity in Care programme was delivered by City Arts (Nottingham) and commissioned by Nottinghamshire County Council. The Creativity in Care programme built on a premise of creatively exploring ‘whole’ care home environments and investigating how we might develop approaches that best respond to the individual needs of older people. This strand of work set out to establish models of working that improved engagement of older people in arts activities whilst also establishing a structure for supporting Activity Co-ordinators in delivering arts activities more confidently in residential care settings. The subsequent project design was informed by a number of training and consultation sessions with Activity Co-ordinators that took place prior to and during the artist residency at Eastgate Care.

The main aims of the programme were to explore creative and sustainable approaches to promote the well-being outcomes for older people in residential care, supporting their physical, social and emotional needs.

This was achieved by:

- Delivering an artist's residency in partnership with a Nottinghamshire residential care home
- Providing support and guidance for the City Arts young creative apprentice who assisted the project
- Providing mentoring opportunities for Activity Co-ordinators through one to one support with an artist to assist with planning, delivery and evaluation of a creative intervention in their workplace
- Organising a series of training events for Activity Co-ordinators to offer stimulus for new creative ideas, opportunities for sharing and to prompt discussion
- Reporting and disseminating the findings from the project.

Our delivery partners included:

- Rebecca Beinart
- Elizabeth Morris & Jo Stockdale
- National Campaign for Drawing (the Big Draw)
- Chronicle Arts

Acknowledgement and thanks to Eastgate Care Group and all of the busy, dedicated and talented individuals working in many care homes who joined us in this programme.

Summary of Learning Outcomes

This report reviews the outcomes of the artist residency, creative mentoring and training and sets out recommendations based on the findings in order to inform future work.

The main learning outcomes of the programme were:

1. Learning – new approaches were developed by staff members resulting in improved motivation and engagement of residents; the stimulation of new ideas grew through the training, mentoring and the artist residency; new networks and shared opportunities were established between care homes as result of the programme; the engagement of families increased; staff awareness grew in utilising resources to support the delivery of future arts activities i.e. networks developed, sourcing inexpensive/free arts materials, funding opportunities, training opportunities, useful websites, evaluation reports

2. Empathy – the artist/Activity Co-ordinators listened to residents and devised responsive work that met the needs of individuals and groups; Activity Co-ordinators felt increased confidence in responding to resident's needs; residents were more supportive of one another; increased contributions of family and visitors as a result of the residency

3. Social skills – positive interaction between residents increased; one to one work supported social engagement for the more isolated residents; sharing was supported and developed between residents through engagement; improved confidence of residents in expressing themselves and being listened to

4. Value – an improved sense of well-being was gained through participation in the arts; confidence improved and increased decision making; staff members acknowledged the residents contributions; visitors and families saw artwork created by the residents on display in public areas; contributions were made to the artwork by family members

5. Legacy – improved communication, networking and sharing between carehomes; training was accessed by residential care staff to put into practice beyond the life of this work; subsidised training opportunities made available beyond the project; knowledge of local resources were gained to be utilised to improve the residents experiences and engagement



"It was one of the best learning activities I have been to in a long time, all the people were so inspiring and caring. It was a great platform for sharing ideas and helping others"

Care home staff member

Introduction

Statistically we are aware that in the UK there are over 10.5 million older people¹ and this figure is steadily increasing with advances in care and medicine, quality of life and continuing improvements in mortality rates at the oldest ages combined with overall past declines in fertility rates. By 2035 it is projected that those aged 65 and over will account for 23 per cent of the total population. Further to this there are over 400,000 older people currently in residential care homes in the UK, and these individuals are often socially excluded and marginalised.

In order to develop good models of practice a holistic and person-centred approach is advocated by The Social Care Institute for Excellence (SCIE), commissioned by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), to develop a definition of excellence for social care:

“Excellence in social care is rooted in a whole-hearted commitment to human rights, and a continuous practical application of that commitment in the way that people who use services are supported. People who use services are demonstrably placed at the heart of everything that an excellent service does.”

We have identified four essential elements of excellence:

- Having choice and control over day-to-day and significant life decisions***

¹ Population Trends (PT), Summer 1998, table 6

- Maintaining good relationships with family, partners, friends, staff and others***
- Spending time purposefully and enjoyably doing things that bring individuals pleasure and meaning***
- An excellent service supports and enables people to engage in activities, pastimes and roles which bring individuals pleasure and meaning and enhance their quality of life.²***

We believe that engagement in arts activities can be part of delivering essential elements of excellence within care settings for older people. However, evidence suggests that people aged 75 and over have significantly lower arts engagement rates than the other age groups.³ As the Baring's Report, After You Are Two, highlights that “with all the competing pressures a care home manager has to juggle everyday it would hardly be surprising if arts activities did not always feature as a high priority”.⁴

The Creativity in Care programme set out to provide support in overcoming some of the barriers that face staff, carers and homes in trying to provide creative and imaginative environments for older people.

The arts can offer innovative approaches regarding levels of engagement and have enormous value in complementing other activities and experiences within care settings. The arts more broadly, can also add value to many aspects of a high standard of care, such as valuing the contribution of individual's as co-producers, promoting a sense of belonging and identity, choice and self-determined outcomes, confidence, friendships, stimulation, expression and lifelong learning.

It is crucial to view older people as continuing to make valuable contributions to our society and not assuming that once they go into specialist care, or become isolated that they become one homogenous group. Therefore if we ensure that choices are available, the connections made amongst a group of peers in older life can be nurturing, enjoyable and empowering.

“Artistic expression can particularly explore and challenge stereotypes and assumptions, revealing the glorious complexities of getting through life. Older people’s perspectives, as they create new works of art, bring a wealth of possibilities of subjects, forms and contexts that can enrich the cultural offer for very many people”.⁵

² Recognising Excellence in Social Care, SCIE, 2010, p24

³ Taking Part in the Arts survey <http://www.artscouncil.org.uk/what-we-do/research-and-data/arts-audiences/taking-part-survey/>

⁴ K. Organ, After you are two: Exemplary practice in participatory arts with older people, 2013. <http://www.baringfoundation.org.uk/AfterYAT.pdf>

⁵ K. Organ, After you are two: Exemplary practice in participatory arts with older people, 2013. Page 9





About City Arts

City Arts aims to develop and inspire arts participation that brings people together, stimulates change and creates stronger, healthier communities. This aim stems from our belief that participation in the arts can enrich and transform people's lives and we have been pioneering innovative and creative approaches for over 30 years. We direct resources towards creative work with vulnerable and marginalised groups including at risk young people, exiled communities, people with enduring mental health issues and others with specific needs.

City Arts' 35-year history has given the organisation a deep understanding of the important role that creativity plays in an individual's sense of place and value in society. Over the last three years City Arts has been working in partnership with care homes and Nottinghamshire County Council to produce several practical tool kits that embed creative expression and participation within older people's care provision.

To download all of these resources go to:
www.city-arts.org.uk

City Arts has explored different approaches to creative delivery in the care home environment in order to develop robust approaches to this area of work and to ensure that finite resources are used to demonstrate good value for money. This project has predominantly focused on developing wider skills, stimulus and ideas for Activity Co-ordinators in order to sustain activity beyond the duration of the programme.

Creativity in Care is a programme run by City Arts with support from Nottinghamshire County Council. For more information on how Nottinghamshire County Council supports arts engagement please visit: www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/arts

About the Programme

Training

The Creativity in Care programme began with a series of introductory training events that were advertised widely to care homes in the county. To support the programme, six training sessions in total were organised for care staff providing opportunities for people to share ideas and experiences and increase knowledge, skills and confidence in using the arts to improve well-being for residents. **112 participants** attended the training sessions in total.

- July and August 2012 *Exploring the Arts with Older People in Care* (2 sessions) – these sessions included discussion and practical creative ideas from the Big Draw and were delivered by Nottinghamshire County Council Arts Service at Rufford Craft Centre
- November 2012 *Activity Jamming Session* - hosted by Eastgate Care, this event gave Activity Co-ordinators the opportunity to network, share and discuss ideas and included a practical workshop delivered by artist Rebecca Beinart
- March 2013 *Creativity and the Ageing Brain* (2 sessions) – training led by psychology consultant Elizabeth Morris that offered an insight into brain function and evidence of ways to stimulate healthy brain function in older people
- March 2013 *Creativity in Care* – Final sharing event providing an overview of the project and presentations by Activity Co-ordinators involved in the project. Findings and resources from the project were presented with discussion and practical ideas from Rebecca Beinart and Psychotherapist and Drama Therapist George Bassett.

The main aim of these events was to stimulate interest in the project and provide practical support for staff from residential care settings. Care staff discovered how national projects and the arts are being used to support carers, residents and their families. During these sessions the toolkits developed previously by City Arts were made available, resource information packs, museum discovery boxes and practical sessions that explored a range of visual arts activities. The Big Draw - *Campaign for Drawing and Creativity and the Ageing Brain* events were repeated due to high demand.⁶

⁶ The Campaign for Drawing has one aim: to get everyone drawing. Drawing helps us to understand the world, to think, to feel, to shape and communicate ideas. The Campaign shows that it is fun, accessible to everyone and invaluable - in education and everyday life. The Campaign's annual Big Draw festival runs throughout October. Over 1400 organisations in the UK and twenty other countries participate - offering events for all ages and abilities: www.campaignfordrawing.org

During each of these sessions we consulted with participants, discussed and explored the challenges and needs of Activity Co-ordinators. This information formed the basis for the next phase of this project and subsequently Eastgate Care Homes were selected to take part in the residency. See Appendix 1

Discussions were also raised about an Activity Co-ordinators Network and what it might look like. The main points made were to:

- Share ideas and resources
- Share contacts for the delivery of activities, donations and publicity
- Engage families
- Share fundraising/events and ideas
- Investigate the potential of sponsors to support the network (local businesses etc)
- Links/organisations were suggested within the local community and particularly how Adult Services within local authorities could support care homes.



"I will definitely try new ideas learnt from today"

Participant Feedback

"I learnt more about dementia and ageing"

Participant Feedback

"I will think wider than just 'crafts' and incorporate emotions and senses"

Participant Feedback

"I wish there was more recognition across care settings that the arts are a genuine means to improve and maintain health and well-being"

Participant Feedback



“the response was overwhelming – beyond expectations. Nell, without encouragement, shared the project with her family and asked them to the computer to add to the map”

Activity Co-ordinator

Artists Residency

From November – December 2012 Rebecca Beinart worked at Eastgate Care Home at Alexandra House as artist in residence over eight days alongside the Young Creative Apprentice at City Arts.

Creative activities were explored using different materials and approaches:

- People and places
- Using the medium of radio to generate individual's stories and experiences
- Health and well-being

Together they created an historic map of Eastwood, a home remedy recipe book, bath bombs, lanterns and a number of audio recordings celebrating and sharing the residents' knowledge and experience. On the last day Rebecca brought in a large screen and projector, props and lanterns to create a cinema corner to screen *It's a Wonderful Life*.

Project Aims & Approaches

The project sought to trial different approaches to improve the well-being of residents in the care home by:

- increasing resident's confidence to engage with creativity
- supporting residents to express their views and contribute ideas to the activity programme

- working creatively within the constraints of a modest materials budget to develop ideas that are sustainable and can be easily replicated by other residential care environments
- increasing the confidence of staff members regarding the engagement of residents in creative activities
- strengthening relationships between residents, staff and families (and the wider community)

At the outset of this project a number of evaluation tools were established that would document the outcomes of the project, these were project diaries written by the artist and young apprentice, feedback from Activity Co-ordinators, investigation with the participants into the notion of well-being and mentor questionnaires.

The first creative session with residents commenced with a large street map of Eastwood. Copies of archival photographs of the area from the Picture the Past website were introduced and Rebecca invited residents, staff and visitors to plot the photographs and add details onto the map. The activity prompted a wealth of stories, memories, conversations and contributions. The older people shared details of their lives about where they lived, went to school and worked, it was a journey of discovery in sharing these memories. The project engaged well with a group of women from

the small lounge area, usually the quiet room for crosswords and reading. A number of family members and visitors also took part in some of the sessions.

Creative Mentoring

In order to extend the scope of the project to other care homes in Nottinghamshire County, Rebecca offered opportunities for Activity Co-ordinators to take part in a period of mentoring, skills sharing and the development of new approaches and methods in engaging older people in creative activities.

Rebecca supported Activity Co-ordinators to plan, devise and evaluate creative activity in their settings, and offered three sessions with each home. Five Homes took part in the mentoring programme. The initial meeting established the issues and opportunities specific to each home. In response to the initial findings, the artist supported the homes in personalised ways offering training, ideas, resources and visits to scrap stores to support the staff in their creative delivery.

The main aim of this structure was to enable and support Activity Co-ordinators beyond the project, ensuring that there was a level of sustainability built into the project.

Initial meetings with Eastgate Care were very open and honest and it was clear from the outset that there are daily challenges that have an

impact upon the care and activities delivered within the home. Early feedback from staff at Eastgate identified that the very word 'activity' and 'Activity Co-ordinator' often generated lack of enthusiasm and preconceived notions about engaging in creativity amongst their residents. Residents assumed that activities were patronising, childish and without purpose. Staff sensed that the residents had limited understanding or interest in mental well-being or the purpose of engaging in stimulating activities to support it - being healthy meant being physically healthy. The staff therefore asked the artist if she could address the notion of well-being in the design of her activities with residents.

The Remedy Recipe Book activity was well received in the small lounge. Rebecca developed this session to introduce new approaches to the creative activities on offer, explore well-being and also to bring an activity to residents that would stimulate familiarity and past experiences. The remedy recipe book invited residents to create a booklet together collating their memories, recipes and ideas around what makes them feel well. The artist brought in old medicine bottles, homemade rosehip syrup and remedies to smell and taste, prompting recollections and conversations of family recipes and cures for ailments. The subject also prompted discussions with residents around well-being and 'what makes us feel good'. Their thoughts, memories and recipes were compiled into a booklet that they helped to design and illustrate. The residents involved began to feel ownership of the activity, bringing down books of flowers from their rooms to contribute and spending time on the illustrations.

In addition to talking about remedies we started to ask people what things made them feel well or at least better. These were some of their responses:

Peggy: *the smell of bluebells in the spring. Peggy, who is almost 100 used to be a keen rambler and she started leafing through a wildflower book and telling us about flowers she remembered*

Participants Engaged

Care Home Staff	5
Visitors/Family Members	10
Residents	21

Nancy: *having good memories to look back on keeps you going, and of course a good husband to start with*

Jessie: *people make me feel happy; joking; shopping for food and clothes*

Millie: *my daughter, Linda*

Brenda: *has a medical condition and has Osteoporosis and spondylitis; she is in continuous pain and finds the only thing that helps is Morphine*

May: *Listening to music in my room; Jim Reeves; Daniel O'Donnell and Ken Dodd.*

Rebecca and the creative apprentice also worked on a one to one basis with residents who have additional support needs in the big lounge. The artist used sensory handling objects, drawing and lantern making. She felt this worked with varying degrees of success

as feedback was difficult to gain from the residents themselves. However, the Activity Co-ordinators and some relatives commented on how positive it was to see certain residents engaging in something different from their everyday routine.

More tailored work on a one to one basis also took place with individual residents who preferred to remain in their rooms or were not physically able to access the main lounge areas. Fred, who appeared to really value the opportunity, began talking about his relationship with TV and Radio and how it's changed over the years. This led to recording Fred's reminiscences of radio comedy. Rebecca edited this with excerpts from his favourite shows to create a digital audio piece.

Fred also spoke of his loneliness and boredom and the frustration of not having the energy or the physical ability to do anything but sit in his chair. He'd previously lived a full and colourful life and enjoyed the opportunity to share some of his memories and his sense of humour,

"I must be a bit better, because I'm being funny again!"

To download a series of activity toolkits developed by Rebecca Beinart. The toolkits have been informed by and based upon her experiences during the residency: www.city-arts.org.uk/creative-activities-with-older-people/



"They were proud of themselves. Everyone wanted a book because it had their name in it. Emily was especially proud and I think she saved her book and gave it to her daughter"

Activity Co-ordinator

"She spent an hour working on very carefully colouring one image, and said at the end that she was really 'chuffed'. [The creative apprentice] worked with Judy, who said she didn't think she could do it, but then made a whole booklet of images and a very psychedelic looking toadstool!"

Artist

Excerpts from Rebecca Beinart's Diary

The residency format was very successful on the whole, providing the space for the artist and staff to experiment, learn and explore together and not necessarily have all the answers. The process led to the artist exploring and getting to know the rhythms of the care home. The residency gave her the opportunity to learn about specific and individual details regarding each of the residents and the setting. Much of her approach was based upon a person-centred model and it was intuitive.

“I am still adjusting to this environment - it's a very different group of people to work with and I have been feeling a bit like I'm not doing enough. However, I think that stimulating conversation and spending time chatting is really important, and the emphasis is not just on producing something.**”**



When it did come to the making, themes developed with a purpose that drew on the residents' experience and invited and valued their personal contributions. This was crucial to the success, outcomes and the residents engagement in the activities.

“I think the photos, mapping and objects have worked well as an introduction.... I want to try and stick with this strategy of asking them to share their knowledge and ideas and getting people involved in more making. Obviously arty activities may meet some resistance, but if it has a purpose, and if we're asking them to help us with something, people will be more interested.**”**

The residency approach provided the artist with the opportunity to take some time to talk to staff and residents and get a sense of the rhythm of the home and how it operates. This was necessary in order for the interventions to be sensitive, appropriate and responsive.

“I'm still getting used to the Care Home and don't want to be intrusive. But I think this feeling of slight chaos is actually normal for a Care Home - where so many unpredictable things can happen.**”**

The home has recently changed its status in caring for people with dementia, therefore the residents have a very broad range of needs and abilities and the home is realising that specialised approaches need to be developed. The artist would have liked to explore more multi-sensory approaches, however found that very challenging to achieve within the setting. Activities took place in the lounge areas as the care home did not have room for a dedicated space for activities. This was difficult when not all of the residents wanted to be involved at any one time and also staff needed to tend people's essential care requirements. This meant that prior activity plans in this environment were not always possible and at times the artist felt she was getting in the way.



“I still feel like I have not found an approach for working with residents who have more severe dementia or have been affected by strokes. I feel like part of this is to do with the space & environment, and perhaps this is the thing to work with first. But that's really challenging, because I don't want to disrupt the routine too much.**”**

The extracts above were taken from Rebecca Beinart's diary reflecting on the project and processes involved. We found the diary a useful tool in reviewing the work and developing future work. It is also fair to say that in just 8 sessions more specialist approaches were difficult to develop because of the time limitations, the time needed to develop an understanding of the care home environment and also the resident's particular needs and unique personalities.

Creative Apprentice Diary

BY OLIVER WARRINGTON

"We first arrived at Alexandra House on Thursday 15th November 2012 and were greeted by Lorraine, an Activity Co-ordinator at the home, she was keen and enthusiastic, but hadn't been expecting us. Becky explained the purpose of being there and Lorraine was quick to introduce us to the residents, we visited the small lounge where seven ladies sat. It was extremely nerve racking; after all you are entering somebody's living room wanting them to do something, which I would find intrusive. It was made a lot easier as Lorraine was with us, who the residents quite clearly look up to. We explained who we were and the residents didn't seem that interested, but as the day went on, it felt like we'd known them all our lives. It was quite clear that the way you approach the residents determines whether they'll get involved, and the word 'activity' doesn't go down very well.

We began with showing the residents some old photos of Eastwood to see if they recognised anything, which they did. One of the residents even pointed out her father on one of the pictures, and I recall her saying "*this is a trip down memory lane, isn't it?*"

In the afternoon, we visited the bigger lounge, which has the television on all the time, and where most residents are either sleeping or just watching the television; although there were two gentlemen in the corner who were engaged

and looked excited to see us. We decided to show them the objects from access artefacts (**Nottingham City Museums and Galleries Loans Service**) and again, they took a trip down memory lane. This led onto several stories and even telling us where he had met his wife, who was visiting at the time.

As each day went by, it was clear to see that the research into arts and dementia isn't significant enough and Lorraine wants help to try and do more to engage residents, learn new strategies and understand that everyone is different and you need to cater for everyone's needs. This is challenging as they all suffer from different types of illnesses and react differently to certain activities that are on offer. Lorraine mentioned that there isn't enough training available to understand the levels of the illness and awareness of the strategies that can be used to help.

As we progressed sometimes it felt like we weren't having a huge effect being at the home. This made a good discussion point in order to come up with solutions to make us all comfortable and continue the great work that we were doing. It's also very tricky to be able to accept rejection, which happens often in care homes as dementia has an effect on memory loss. You could sit with someone and create something, and then a few hours later they'd completely forgotten. However you have to remember how happy and how much they enjoyed the activity whilst

participating."

The creative apprentice at City Arts was fully committed to the project. He had not worked with older people before and the artist commented that the support he offered and his ability to engage with the residents was a great asset to the project. He felt he'd gained a great deal from the opportunity too, learning new skills to transfer to future work as well as broadening his general life experience. For him the best thing about the project was:

"seeing the resident's smile and knowing that you're making a difference by being there"

he went on to add,

"It's made me more aware of dementia and levels of dementia... It's made me more open minded... [I've learnt that] people with limited communication can express themselves through creativity"





Learning Outcomes

One of the main learning outcomes from the project encompasses the 'whole' care home approach, starting with the individual at the core and recognising the wider impact upon staff members, family and the wider community. City Arts has a strong track record of delivering programmes of work that support the arts, health and well-being agenda. Through the long-term evaluation of City Arts' programmes, common themes emerge in support of the beneficial impact upon well-being when participants have engaged in the arts. Our previous studies show that the consistent outcomes for improved well-being comprise a sense of belonging, feeling valued and safe. As individuals we all have different interests, needs and outlooks, therefore one size does not fit all. Therefore we have learnt that as an artist, Activity Co-ordinator or staff member, if we delivered socially engaged work using a particular formula on each occasion or had particular expectations of the participants; we might feel disappointed if things didn't go to plan. In accepting that we need to be flexible, adaptable and empathetic, our expectations are more realistic. Therefore, when participants feel listened to, valued and accepted as part of the community, this has a positive impact on improving the well-being

of individuals taking part.

During the project Activity Co-ordinators, staff and family members commented that residents were more confident and outgoing during sessions as a result of engaging with the artist in residence. Where residents had felt unmotivated to participate in previous arts activities delivered within the care home, more residents had engaged than on previous occasions. One to one sessions with residents who were unable to leave their bedrooms, commented that by engaging in the arts activities, they felt less bored and isolated. Whilst this may be attributed to the novelty of a new individual (the artist) working within the home, the Activity Co-ordinators felt that they could test new strategies to support them in understanding and catering for residents' individual needs.

We learn't that...

- Family engagement encompasses the whole home approach and helps to engage the wider community beyond the individual for whole home benefit
- By looking at the environment and patterns within care settings, subtle changes can be made in order to support engagement and reduce the occurrence of challenging situations for both staff and residents i.e. specialist areas for activities, layout of the room/setting up the room for special events in an interesting way to stimulate interest, resource cupboards, planning time for Activity Co-ordinators
- Structures of the activities need to be devised to suit individuals and respectively, group engagement, ensuring that residents within the whole home are reached
- There is a need to invest in dementia training for both staff and artists in order understand the condition better and respond to resident's specialist needs
- It is important to devise activities that ensure residents voices are heard and that there is a mechanism for influencing activities and choices being made
- Valuing the contributions made by residents, staff and families is crucial to support a sense of belonging, self-determination and confidence
- Longer term investment would need to be made in the delivery of arts programmes in homes in order to have a deeper impact. However, positive and sustainable skills have been disseminated to care staff and Activity Co-ordinators for the on-going development of arts engagement for older people within Nottinghamshire county.

Staff Outcomes

During the residency Rebecca worked closely with two Activity Co-ordinators at Eastgate Care who provided feedback that the residents had engaged, contributed and connected with other peers, staff and the artist during the residency. They believed that this experience had opened up doors and that there was now more willingness to try something new. It was essential that the project also sought to promote staff confidence and skills in delivering creative interventions within their own environment.

One of the Activity Co-ordinators particularly embraced the opportunity and said that she had gained a lot from the experience. After the project she felt very confident about trying new ideas, engaging and communicating with residents and commented that the project was extremely useful for her own professional development.

"It was great to be able to share and bounce new ideas off another person who has the same drive and enthusiasm as me...opened my mind to new ideas... and different ways to use materials...I've learnt so much, how to find out about what's out there and the help and support I could get"

Activity Co-ordinator

The artist also noted that the project appeared to boost the Activity Co-ordinators confidence and strengthen her role within the care home.

"It validated and confirmed that she was doing a great job, and has lots to offer... It seemed to slightly alter the care staff's

perception of the Activity Co-ordinator's role and the residents in a positive way, seeing residents as more active rather than passive, and having something to offer"

Artist

However, the Activity Co-ordinator who was not able to take part in many of the sessions seemed to have less confidence in the project's legacy. She felt concerned that the residents had responded well to the activities because the artist was new and different and felt that once the project had finished she was *"not sure they will engage with us as we're here all the time as activity ladies"*. This is a valid response and in order for activities to continue to grow and develop there will be on-going challenges for the care home to address. There are a wide range of priorities and needs to consider in what is a highly demanding environment.

It is hoped that the project will leave a lasting legacy, however the intervention on this occasion was on a relatively small scale. Whilst there were a range of skills and techniques adopted by the Activity Co-ordinators to continue the model of working, many other factors also need to support their roles in order for this to be sustainable. Recommendations based on some of the outcomes of the project will be highlighted later on in this report.

The project presented both challenges and opportunities for the artist and she reflected that she'd also learnt a lot that had made an impact on her thoughts about both work and life.



"[The project has] made me think differently about themes I already explore in my work such as memory, connection to place, remedies and local knowledge... it's also given me a deeper insight into the realities of a care home and revealed many positives but also challenges I hadn't considered before, particularly around structures and systems. I'm now thinking in a more nuanced way about old age and end of life and how we deal with that as individuals and as a society"

Artist

Many of the care homes don't currently have an infrastructure that directly supports the work of the Activity Co-ordinators and their roles often cross over to support the care needs of residents. The training and consultation sessions revealed that often Activity Co-ordinators feel undervalued and isolated within their settings. The model of the artist residency sought to address these experiences by offering support through mentoring and the development of new ideas and approaches collectively.

- The development of new ideas has had a positive impact upon the Activity Co-ordinators confidence and supported them in planning work that involves residents in different ways, stimulating a renewed interest in devising engaging activities
- The sense of value and internal staff expectations of the Activity Co-ordinators role was raised during the residency. In order for positive change to take place, a whole home approach would need to be adopted in order to better support the role of Activity Co-ordinators. There is a need for a strategic approach and some investment (i.e. training, resources, support) in order to meet the full potential of the role to be fully valued and developed
- Wider networks beyond the programme offer opportunities for sharing and on-going support for Activity Co-ordinators in the county.

Creative Mentoring

Mentoring opportunities followed on from the residency and were established in order to roll out the programme to a wider number of care homes. The mentoring was devised in response to feedback from Activity Co-ordinators and high attendance figures from training sessions in the summer. Unfortunately although there seemed to be enthusiasm at the training sessions, only five care homes (employing 8 Activity Co-ordinators) responded to the call out to get involved in the scheme. The training was widely advertised after the training via an email mailing list. We have since discovered that the use of and access to computers in some care homes is limited and this may also have contributed to the poor uptake.

Resident's needs:

Each of the care homes engaged in the mentoring scheme varied in supporting 40 – 80 older residents. In each of the care homes, the range of needs and abilities of residents differed significantly, with some residents being very able and confident and other individuals requiring a high level of support with specialist needs such as dementia, mental health issues, challenging behaviour and limited physical capabilities. Therefore group work and more specialised one to one work is currently delivered by the Activity Co-

ordinators. The budgets/resources available and activity spaces varied considerably again, with some of the Activity Co-ordinators having to become very resourceful and skilled fundraisers in order to purchase equipment and arts materials. One home in particular had support from the League of Friends who assist with devising ideas for activities for the more able residents. One of the homes engaged in the mentoring was a Christian care home and had developed a particular ethos around the notion of spirituality and used the 'five ways to well-being'⁷ model. They emphasise well-being and connectedness to God and the communities around them. This home also runs a regular singing programme, gardening and has a dedicated display area which includes mining artefacts and a board that gets written on each day, celebrating 'what we are good at'.

The majority of care homes that engaged in the mentoring had no professional or external support regarding the delivery of arts activities. One home in particular stated that "*our most urgent challenge is helping the care staff*

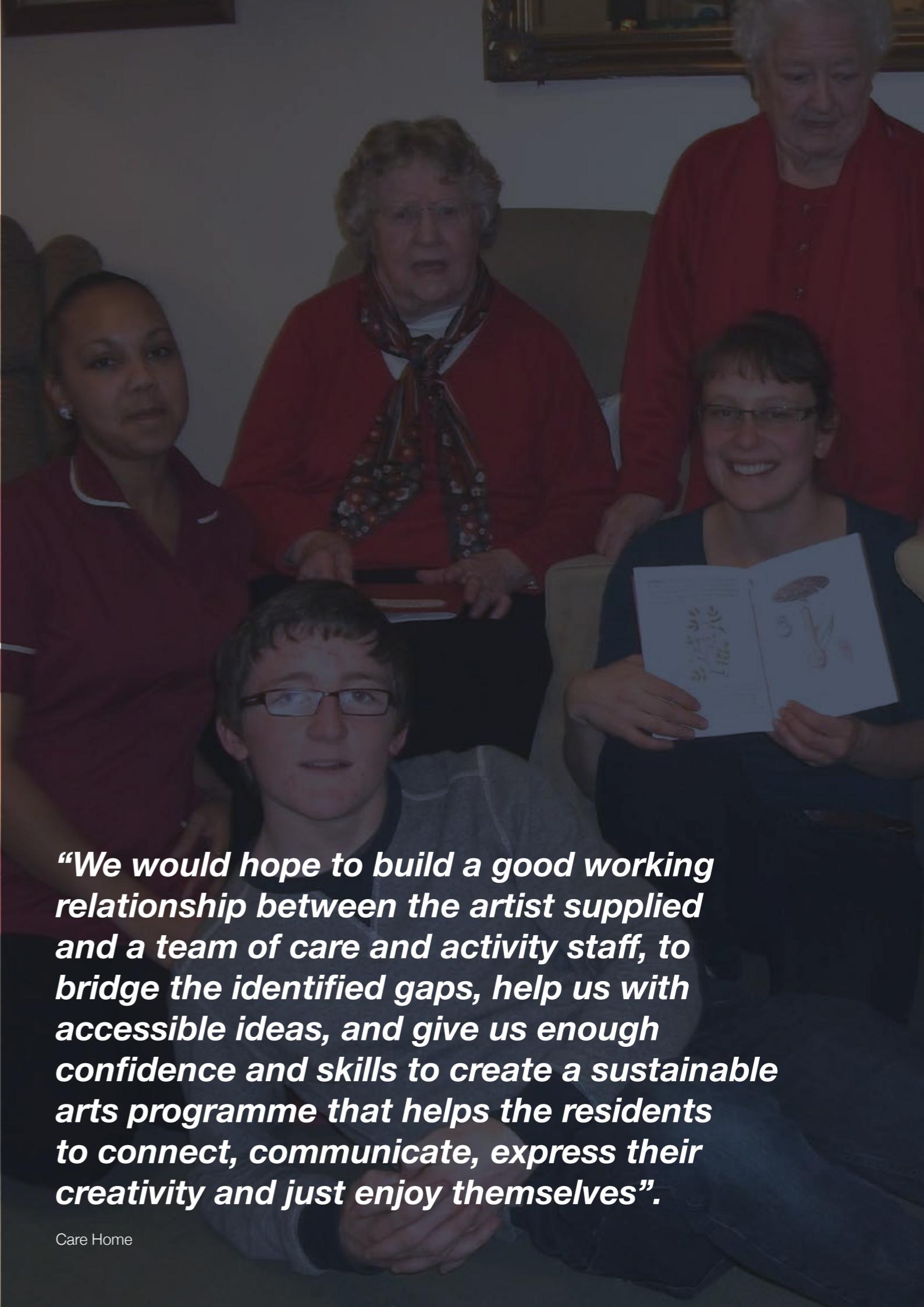
⁷ The Five Ways to Well-being were developed by the New Economics Foundation (NEF) from evidence gathered in the UK government's Foresight Project on Mental Capital and Well-being. The Project, published in 2008, drew on state-of-the-art research about mental capital and mental well-being through life. It asked NEF to develop the Five Ways to Well-being to communicate its key findings. <http://www.neweconomics.org/projects/entry/five-ways-to-well-being>

to be confident and articulate about the arts, and how this enhances well-being for people. We have an excellent level of support at the top level for trying new things. Sometimes our ability is challenged by the residents' ability and confidence, as well as the staffs' ability and confidence".

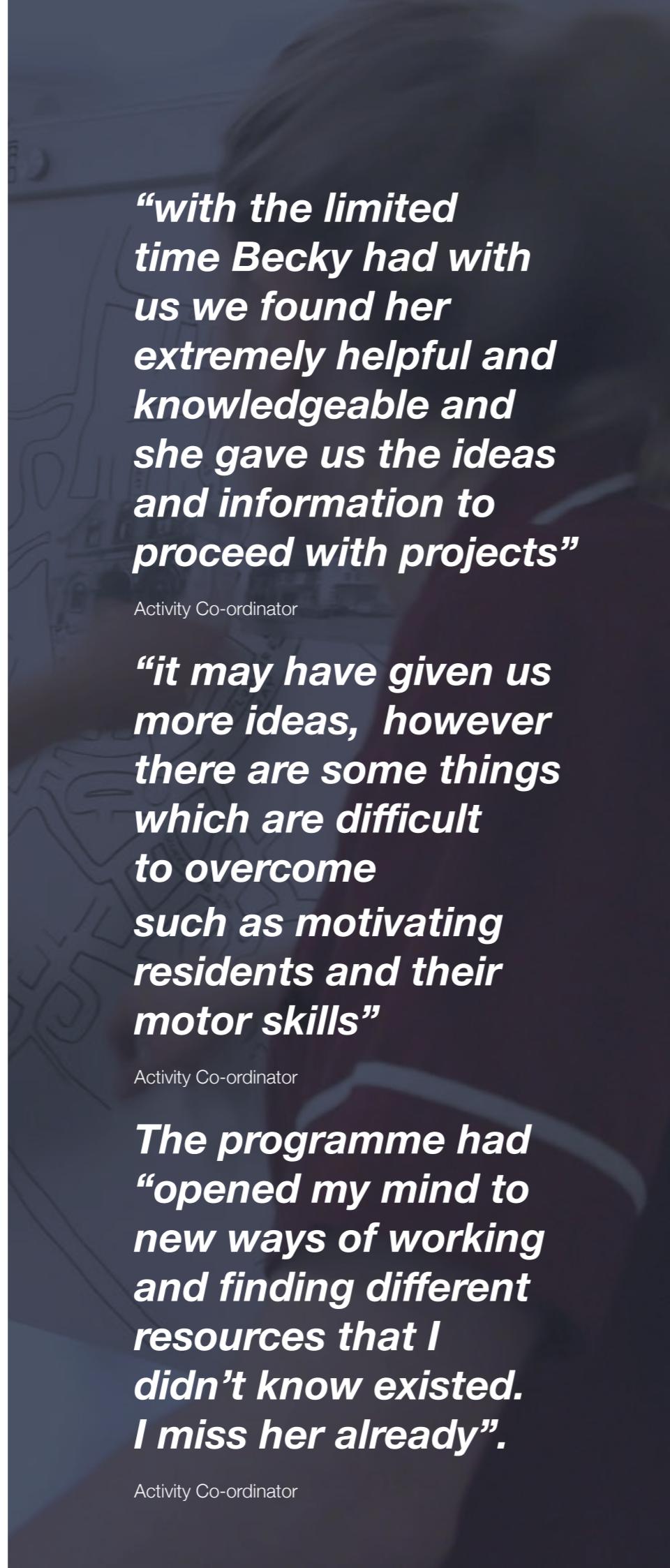
Activity Co-ordinators engaged in the mentoring programme identified several key issues through initial consultation sessions, these were:

- lack of confidence in the delivery of creative activities for both staff and for residents engaged in the sessions
- residents' abilities i.e. particularly motor skills and sometimes a reticence to engage
- the need for greater involvement of carers in supporting activities delivered
- an appetite for new ideas to stimulate both staff and residents.

Rebecca's approach to the mentoring comprised 3 sessions with each Activity Co-ordinator. The first, consisted of a consultation session with the Activity Co-ordinators in order to establish individual requirements that informed Rebecca's planning and subsequent sessions. This approach supported bespoke mentoring that responded to the particular needs of each care home and Activity Co-ordinator.



"We would hope to build a good working relationship between the artist supplied and a team of care and activity staff, to bridge the identified gaps, help us with accessible ideas, and give us enough confidence and skills to create a sustainable arts programme that helps the residents to connect, communicate, express their creativity and just enjoy themselves".



“with the limited time Becky had with us we found her extremely helpful and knowledgeable and she gave us the ideas and information to proceed with projects”

Activity Co-ordinator

“it may have given us more ideas, however there are some things which are difficult to overcome such as motivating residents and their motor skills”

Activity Co-ordinator

The programme had “opened my mind to new ways of working and finding different resources that I didn’t know existed. I miss her already”.

Activity Co-ordinator

The following sessions included ideas for one to one work, access to local resources, opportunities and useful websites, practical guidance and innovative ideas regarding the delivery of arts activities based on specific themes.

Challenges:

On the whole the mentoring programme was very successful; however the time limitations of the mentoring restricted the content of the sessions to introductory tasters. Nottinghamshire County is also largely rural, requiring extensive travelling times between homes. Scheduling the respective visits for all of the Activity Co-ordinators (15 sessions in total) required considerable organisation to suit people's individual diaries. Some of the sessions were also cancelled at very short notice by the care homes, requiring re-scheduling to take place.

One Activity Co-ordinator did not find the sessions particularly useful and was difficult to contact in between sessions to schedule further dates, subsequently they did not complete the programme. The Activity Co-ordinator insisted that the artist delivered the arts activities directly with some of residents with dementia. The Activity Co-ordinator commented that the mentoring sessions were not specialist enough and did not meet the particular needs of their residents with dementia. Whilst Rebecca enjoyed the sessions, the mentoring had been purposefully devised to directly engage with Activity Co-ordinators on a one to one basis. Whilst the care home was contacted to follow up activities and to gain feedback regarding the mentoring, no response was forthcoming.

Recommendations

This short programme has helped inform an effective model for the development of on-going work in care settings in Nottinghamshire County. The training sessions have provided us with the opportunity to talk directly with Activity Co-ordinators about common issues and establish a network of exchange between care homes. This process has broadened the knowledge and access to local resources in supporting cultural and creative engagement with older residents in care homes.

It is clear that resources and additional support is needed for Activity Co-ordinators in order to invest in greater opportunities for the facilitation of high quality arts programmes with older residents in care homes. This commitment, if it is to be sustainable, must also come from the care homes themselves, working in partnership with other key organisations, investing in people and resources that support well-being through high quality arts experiences with residents, families, staff and visitors.

The following recommendations have been made as a result of conversations and feedback from discussions with care providers during training sessions:

- Involve and support more staff in care homes, to build knowledge, confidence and trust and to challenge the physical environment/spaces, supporting a ‘whole home’ approach to well-being

- Advocate for the importance of creating a stimulating environment within the care home. A need for gaining more support, respect and recognition for the Activity Co-ordinator's role
- Discuss notions of well-being with residents so that they gain knowledge about their own mental health and the benefits of engaging, contributing, trying new things and connecting with others
- Investment in resources and an annual activity budget, to allow for:
 - care homes to work together with the potential of sharing ideas and expensive resources i.e. a data projector to show films and images
 - planning time for Activity Co-ordinators that supports the development of creative approaches that will best respond to the needs of residents
 - the need for specific training and equipment, particularly enabling support for residents with dementia
 - access to computers and technology to support improved internal/external communication and enabling better access to resources that support cultural and creative engagement
 - the development of toolkits or resources for other staff/visitors to utilise when the Activity Co-ordinators are not there
 - continued training and networks to enable the sharing of ideas, resources and development of projects with other care homes



Conclusion

Many artists working in a socially engaged way enter different scenarios and settings with a fluidity and flexibility in their work. Based on feedback from Rebecca's diary, she found the residency an immersive experience, both challenging and rewarding. Rebecca's role in many ways was to explore, as she put it very early on in the project, and *"understand the rhythms of the care home and the residents living there"*. Her subtle interventions were sometimes at odds with the rhythms of the care home and sometimes disrupted the set daily routines, challenging perceptions of creativity and approaches used to engage residents. Inevitably one of the main impacts upon her residency was to stand in the shoes of the Activity Co-ordinators and experience the daily challenges that they face. There is no, *one size fits all* and what might work one day in a certain situation with an individual, may not work the next day. The rhythms therefore are a mixture of set routines that offer residents and staff stability, but are also unpredictable as events of the day unfold, requiring exceptional empathy, skill and resilience amongst staff that work within the care homes.

Within Rebecca's residency, the emphasis was sometimes not about producing a piece of artwork as an outcome at the end of each session. More subtle engagement with residents with severe dementia was required with less verbal communication and more intuitive approaches. Therefore bespoke responses and activities were devised to best reflect the interests and needs of individuals. After some discussion with another artist who works in similar settings, Rebecca used the approach of just 'being and not doing'. Subtle approaches that concentrate on sensory and environmental conditions using light, movement and touch can be very effective in supporting residents who have greater support needs. In such a short space of time within this residency, this kind of model was a challenge to make any considerable impact with, as the distractions of communal spaces and daily routines did not support the conditions to explore more specialised methods. In order for specialised ways of working to be successful, a longer term commitment and 'whole home approach' would have to be adopted to support such experiences for residents with higher levels of need.

An important part of the work during the residency, was particularly to engage the residents in activities that struck a chord and had a resonance with individuals and their experiences. The activities that were most successful focused around generating conversations, memories and the facilitation of activities on common themes i.e. old photographs, music and dancing, a connection to place, entertainment, radio, old remedies etc. The remedy booklet that was produced was shared with all of the residents, staff and visitors.

"Some of the care staff sat down and read through it, it made them chuckle to see some of the things the residents had come up with"

Artist

Rebecca felt that this particular activity had been effective as it had been produced by the residents with their input, ideas and shared their knowledge, resulting in whole home impact including residents, staff and visitors alike.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Consultation outcomes from healthcare professionals and Activity Co-ordinators

The care home environment - motivation and expectations	<p>Part time staffing is a challenge and stretched staff capacity results in challenging environments when the demands of residents can be high at times. Priority is given to meet resident's physical and care needs.</p> <p>Some care homes have limited or inappropriate spaces for activities. There is an expectation amongst other members of staff upon Activity Co-ordinators to entertain all the residents.</p> <p>Activity Co-ordinators find it challenging to engage residents in activities around care schedules and busy care staff – also some activities may not appeal to all residents.</p> <p>The residents often prefer 1-2-1's rather than doing a group activity. If the activities are not introduced carefully, I 'can't do it' seems to be a common theme with residents engaging in activities.</p> <p>Some residents find arts and crafts frustrating – by using different approaches and introducing the activities as a game, or something with another purpose seems to support better engagement.</p> <p>The Activity Co-ordinators know the residents well, which improves the engagement of residents.</p> <p>Sometimes there is a general resistance from residents in engaging in arts activities - also other members of staff sometimes find it hard to understand the benefits.</p> <p>Some Activity Co-ordinators felt the need for more advocacy from key staff within the care homes in order to demonstrate the benefits and support for practical ways to go about quality delivery.</p> <p>Some staff acknowledged that morale was sometimes low and that if it was improved, this would support better commitment from staff.</p> <p>Challenging the culture within the home - improving communication, respecting and understanding each other's roles, spreading enthusiasm – using inspirational examples from on-line and other sources.</p>
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Ability	Acknowledging the range of abilities of the residents is helpful – adapting approaches for those who have complex health concerns, mobility, concentration, dexterity and memory loss.
Health and Safety	Creating activities that are achievable and achieve satisfying results.
Finances and resources	These regulations have to be followed, and is important to consider the needs of each resident, the space, equipment and activities delivered.

Opportunities

Benefits	The unique and valuable ways the arts can improve well-being, self-esteem, engagement and inclusion for older people in care.
Training & Networking Events	Training days/events leading to new skills and networking with new people.
What's on in your area	Take advantage of resources in your local community and organisations that may be able to support the delivery of activities.
Volunteers	Volunteers can offer opportunities to support the work with residents, giving 1-2-1 creative support to residents whilst learning. Community volunteers could be sourced from the recently retired, University of the Third Age for example – see www.u3a.org.uk - as well as young people, students and schools.
Media Interest	Dementia and older people's care is a growing topic in the media and press campaigns. More awareness will bring more interest, funding and research to support our work. Use the local media to talk about what you're doing and gain local coverage and support.

Resources

People	Our own enthusiasm! Sharing our ideas and successes – blogging etc. Creating our own resource boxes – memory boxes etc, sharing resources between nearby care homes.
Partnerships with local organisations	Schools, FE colleges, Universities/students, arts organisations, archives services, venues, museums and galleries.

Online resources and publications, newsletters	The Baring Foundation, NAPA - The National Association for Providers of Activities for Older People, Picture the Past (online archive of old photographs from Nottingham and Derby).
Pet therapy	<p>Animals can bring everyday life closer and happy associations of home comforts. Pet therapy has been introduced to help make this loss more bearable and support health issues.</p> <p>Animal Road show - £10 per hour</p> <p>Other contacts: White Post Farm, City Farm and The Mini Zoo.</p>
Materials	<p>Limited funding and resources impacts upon the quality of materials available for activities. For cheaper alternatives, look at companies offering access to recycled materials - Scrapstores:</p> <p>www.playworks.org.uk/scrapstore</p> <p>Local companies may also donate materials such as and DIY stores - Wilkinsons, B&Q etc.</p>
Funding	<p>Funding sources - contact Local Authorities, Nottinghamshire Community Foundation, Trusts and Charitable Foundations i.e. Boots, Arts Council England, local and national businesses. Visit your local Council for Volunteer Services (NCSV, NAVO) websites for listings of local and national funds to support training, materials, bringing in external expertise and events and activities in your local area.</p>
Gaps/Needs	
Training	Support for Continuing Personal or Professional Development CPD, enhancing skills, increasing confidence and enabling different approaches to the delivery of activities.
Advocacy	<p>Advocacy needed from key staff members and management to support and promote the effectiveness of arts in care homes with older people. Examples of research to show that art has the capacity for meaningful impact.</p> <p>It is useful to be aware of government and high profile initiatives in order to promote local projects.</p> <p>The use of language to disseminate project outcomes is important and link evaluation to current models of health outcomes i.e. Care Quality Commission and Dignity in Care.</p> <p>Stimulating development of work with looking at new approaches to the work and research.</p>
Bridging The Gap	Could some of the more mundane work in care homes be approached in different / creative ways to inspire and bring creativity to the existing routines and make it part of the daily schedules for staff and residents.
Fundraising	The need for budgeting and fundraising support.

Useful Websites

Picture the Past – online archive of images from Nottingham and Derby

www.picturethepast.org.uk

Access Artefacts – Nottingham City Museums and Galleries community loans resource

www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/museumprojects/index.aspx?articleid=11876

Local blog by Julie Elliot from Eastgate Care Homes about using the arts in older people's care.

art4themindmidlands.wordpress.com

City Arts - community arts organisation with 30 years of experience of using the arts as a tool to improve health and well-being.

www.city-arts.org.uk

Nottingham based Scrapstore

www.playworks.org.uk/scrapstore

Rufford Abbey Craft Centre and Country Park near Ollerton – Nottinghamshire County Council Gallery and Park – with free entry to gallery and park (parking charges may apply). Website includes accessibility map and info about the education and learning programme and free events throughout the year as well as artist led workshops available to book.

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/arts

www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/enjoying/countryside/countryparks/rufford/

Free education and family activities available to download from the website at:

<http://cms.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/home/leisure/arts/ruffordcraftcentre/ruffordeducation/ruffordeducationfamily.htm>

Memory Bridge creates programmes that connect people with Alzheimer's disease and related dementias to family, friends, and other people in their local community.

<http://www.memorybridge.org/resources.php>

Information about local Funding Opportunities

Nottinghamshire County Council

<http://www.nottinghamshire.gov.uk/learning/schools/servicesforschools/index-of-all-services/arts-service/>

NAVO – Nottinghamshire Action for Voluntary Organisations

www.navo.org.uk

Nottingham CVS | Nottingham Community and Voluntary Service

www.nottinghamcvs.co.uk

This organisation runs the Big Draw event. Lots of useful links and resources to download as well as guidance on how you can develop and register your own Big Draw.

www.campaignfordrawing.org

Hosted by City Arts – a forum and website to promote and develop community access to arts activity in Nottingham and Nottinghamshire.

www.openartsforum.org.uk

A UK grants programme concerned with strengthening the voluntary sector, international development and the arts. In recent years they have focused their funding on developing arts work with older people and have a number of useful publications about this to download for free, including:

- *Creative Homes – How the Arts Can Contribute to Quality of Life in Residential Care*
- *Ageing Artfully – Older People and Professional Participatory Arts in the UK*
- *An Evidence Review of the Impact of Participatory Arts on Older People*

www.baringfoundation.org.uk

Doncaster Community Arts report and film about their creative Dementia Cafes.

www.thepoint.org.uk/article/arts-and-dementia

National Association for Providers of Activities for Older People. A membership organisation that produces resources and a regular newsletter with ideas and support – recommended by some of the activity co-ordinators who attended the day.

www.napa-activities.co.uk



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