



## **'Southbourne Creative Hub'**

### **Name of Organisation**

Southbourne Creative Hub

### **Title of project/programme**

Southbourne Creative Hub

### **Dates of project/programme**

2012

### **Summary**

The Southbourne Creative Hub opened in September 2011 and spent 2012 establishing a number of arts for health and wellbeing initiatives that reflect and respond to some of the needs of the local community. These have formed the foundations for The Hub to develop and increase its work in this area in 2013 and beyond. The work was guided in particular by a) Five Ways to Wellbeing - connect, be active, take notice, learn, give and b) the aims and objectives of Intergenerational Learning and Active Ageing.

### **Shortlisted for the Arts & Health South West Award 2013 for a health organisation**

### **Overview**

#### **IDENTIFYING NEED**

**Mental Health** – meetings were held with managers and key workers from the public, voluntary and business sectors in adult social care. Their clients identified a need for creative and social activities in a neutral and supportive venue. The Hub director was

invited to speak at the Dorset Wellbeing and Recovery Partnership. **Active Ageing** – local residents, including older people attended open events at The Hub and completed questionnaires. A desire to interact with younger people was evident. Researchers for a UK-wide project for the Joseph Rowntree Foundation interviewed older Hub users. The Director attended Arts and Older People sessions at Creative Care Dorset (Dorset County Council). The Director was invited to join the Mayor of Bournemouth's Action Group to help reduce isolation for older residents.

### **AIMS**

- Lay the foundations for groups who need tailored support to participate and contribute.
- Spread understanding of the value of the arts for health and wellbeing in our community.
- Demonstrate value, i.e. inviting people to attend our Jericho Art Group exhibition.
- Provide events where people of different ages or support needs can do things together.
- Develop The Hub as an example of best practice.

### **OBJECTIVES**

- Start an art group run by and for vulnerable adults that contributes to their recovery.
- Hold a range of activities requested by older residents that supports their contribution as well as participation.
- Support members of the above groups to attend mainstream activities, as and when appropriate, to widen access to creative activities.
- Encourage Hub users to contribute to larger Southbourne events such as the Halloween Party to build their confidence in less supported situations.

- Foster positive attitudes towards vulnerable members of our community through their wider contribution to events and celebrations.

### **WHAT WE DID**

Jericho Art Group (JAG) - a pilot project with vulnerable adults due to mental ill health. Funded by The Richmond Fellowship, members were referred by their key worker. The group held meetings, sourced materials and planned activities. They produced a group piece to celebrate the Bournemouth Air Show, entered in the Bournemouth Chamber's Window Competition and an exhibition of individual work was attended by over 70 people. Sale of work provided sufficient income to carry out an extra project in early 2013.

Older residents started a needlecrafts group, an informal session with opportunities to get to know each other. They created knitted bunting for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee for our windows. Members of both groups volunteered at Open Activities Days, helping children with crafts, manned our book stall and sold raffle tickets. Our Family Friendly Cabaret featured performances from people aged 12 to 80 with an audience age-range of 2 to 93. We ran sessions for adults with learning disabilities and their carers in circus skills and drumming.

The Director carried out research into current provision of Arts for Health and Wellbeing, commissioned by Creative Care Dorset. The Hub Director attended a three day EU conference on Intergenerational Learning and Active Ageing in October.

A number of individuals initially attending a supported group now attend mainstream activities.

The Director is the Community and Events officer on the Southbourne Business Association committee. The Hub and Domestic Angels held a showcase for local businesses to learn about the arts for health and wellbeing and corporate social responsibility.

### **ART FORMS**

Visual arts, singing, drumming, percussion, music therapy, creative

writing, karate, circus skills, Qi Gong, storytelling and needlecrafts.

### **INTENDED HEALTH OUTCOMES**

Physical – Qi Gong (gentle movement and meditation to music): improved mobility and relaxation.

Needlecrafts - improving or maintaining dexterity.

Mental Health Recovery – increased independence, improved engagement through group activities, sense of achievement through sharing work with the wider community. That a number of JAG members should attend un-supported activities at The Hub, as and when appropriate enabling re-engaging with the wider community.

Learning Disabilities - increasing independence and a sense of acceptance through participating in mainstream activities and learning new fitness skills.

General – disseminating understanding of the value of arts for health and wellbeing for individuals and the community, fostering a culture of inclusion, particularly for vulnerable adults and between the generations.

### **OUTPUTS**

14 JAG members, across a six month pilot, attended initially with a key worker and then on their own after a few sessions in most cases. Quieter members became more involved during group work, and all gained a sense of achievement sharing their work with the wider community. They earned enough from sales at their exhibition to run an additional project.

Two adults with learning disabilities attended Qi Gong with their key worker, then on their own, increasing independence and participation. The facilitator gained experience in working with adults with learning disabilities.

Seven people of various ages with various medical conditions attend Qi Gong with regular individual feedback and questions available with the facilitator.

Nine adults, vulnerable through mental ill health attend drumming, singing, creative writing, Qi Gong, Karate or open day activities, increasing confidence and independence or sharing their skills. One

person has been asked to help organise the drumming circles. Three people attended open days to help children with arts and craft activities.

17 older people have contributed by volunteering in a number of ways at various activities, increasing opportunities for social engagement, keeping active, sharing their skills and engaging with young people.

Our showcase to the local business community gained us four new corporate supporters.

Our aims and objectives contributed to The Hub being awarded a Heritage Lottery Fund grant in October 2012 with activities running until July 2013.

## **PARTNERS**

The Richmond Fellowship, Domestic Angels Ltd and Southbourne Business Association

## **WHO WAS INVOLVED**

Client referrals to JAG came via support organisations in the voluntary, public or business sectors.

Local residents of all ages engaged through open days, word of mouth, flyers and local media coverage.

## **LOCATION AND ACTIVITIES**

All activities, except those with learning disabilities, which took place in a local church hall, took place at The Hub.

## **INNOVATION**

We have fostered links between the local business community generally and those working in adult social care in the private, public and voluntary sectors. We have encouraged a commitment to corporate social responsibility for small and micro businesses who can contribute in small but significant ways. Working with the Southbourne Business Association we have had a direct in-put into ensuring that the local community events and celebrations they support are increasingly inclusive and provide opportunities for different age groups to interact together. Our community has a high percentage of older residents, particularly those who are widowed

and whose family live elsewhere, in need of social activities they can contribute to, not just participate in.

Our showcase with Domestic Angels, attended by local Councillors as well as businesses, gave us the opportunity to spread understanding about arts for health and wellbeing. This resulted in our research for Creative Care Dorset and the Executive Summary of the Joseph Rowntree Report: Widening Choices for Older People with High Support Needs being distributed locally and The Hub being invited onto the Mayor of Bournemouth's Action Committee to tackle isolation.

In the current climate of cuts and closures we have met with many professionals working in adult social care in the public sector to spread a realisation that we, as a not-for-profit social enterprise, can provide much needed activities at an affordable cost.

## **PARTICIPATION**

Members of JAG were referred by their key worker in these organisations: The Richmond Fellowship; Futures at Knightstones; Re-Think Mental Health; Domestic Angels Ltd; three local Community Mental Health Teams and East Dorset Early Intervention Psychosis Team.

The Hub has over 150 users who attend a variety of activities and events, including older people, from amongst our local residents. The members of JAG and a number of older people helped organise and run a number of open days which were well attended by the local community of all ages.

## **OUTCOMES**

Southbourne is building a climate of increasingly successful community celebrations and an understanding that everyone has something to contribute. The Hub has been actively involved in this work. The Business Association paid for The Hub to host pumpkin lantern carving workshops ahead of the Halloween Party in 2012, which was bigger and better attended than ever before. Our community singing group lead hymns at the first ever Southbourne Christmas Lights Switch-on in December. Links are being forged between the business community and local voluntary organisations connected to our culture and heritage, such as The Friends of Fisherman's Walk and the Charles Rolls Memorial Trust who have both held meetings and presentations on their work at The Hub and given talks for our occasional coffee mornings.

An understanding that creative, social and cultural activities contribute to people's health and wellbeing in many different ways and on many different levels is now better understood, particularly by our local Councillors. They understand that benefit is derived from a range of very specific interventions for certain conditions aimed at particular medical outcomes, through more general activities for certain groups, such as those with early-stage dementia taking part in reminiscence activities to the wellbeing of us all through opportunities to get creative and meet new people. The Richmond Fellowship's UK Creative Arts Programme Manager visited our JAG exhibition in December and then met with The Hub Director and local Richmond Fellowship staff to assess the evaluation and feedback from the pilot in order to devise a development framework for JAG. This includes expanding the types of creative activity to include drama, life-story work, dance and movement, gardening and through links with Bournemouth University, in digital media. Also, in due course, the ambition to replicate this model for Richmond Fellowship clients in Poole. These developments are dependent on funding, which is currently being pursued with assistance from experts from The Bournemouth Council for Voluntary Services and the Council's Safer and Stronger Communities Department.

## **LEARNING**

As well as the skills and learning acquired by participants and contributors to the various activities and events outlined elsewhere, and the dissemination of understanding of what the arts for health and wellbeing, intergenerational learning and active ageing are, freelance arts facilitators at The Hub have gained experience in working with vulnerable adults.

Feedback and evaluation not just from activities such as JAG but many of our activities is enabling us to get better at ensuring that we are inclusive and are reflecting the wants and needs of local people. At the same time we now understand much better that for some people, the concept and model of The Hub, particularly for older people, is new and takes time to get used to before they become confident that their in-put and contributions are genuinely sought.

## **CRITICAL SUCCESS FACTORS**

For those joining JAG it was essential that they had the opportunity to visit The Hub either in advance or at their first attendance with their key worker in order for participants to feel confident about where they were coming and what they would be doing.

For JAG and for activities for older people, we needed to let participants know that we understand attendance may not be regular. This reflects the reality of their lives. Reasons for not attending included pre-booked appointments, arthritis playing up, adjusting to changes in medication and close family visiting. We encouraged participants to let us know when they could not attend and most complied readily and usually wanted to share the reason why although we did not ask. Including time for such flexibility into the organisational side of projects is now an important factor. In a similar manner, allowing time for older people to chat and talk about their circumstances, or how they are feeling today, is now built in to our activities as an essential component if they are to truly derive benefit for attending. The experience and expertise of The Hub Director in arts for health and wellbeing and community engagement, and the experience and expertise of the Director of Domestic Angels, our primary business partner, in social policy and adult social care, enabled us to speak with authority and gain the ear and support across the public, voluntary and business sectors locally.

## **FUNDING AND RESOURCES**

The Hub is a not-for-profit social enterprise, registered as a Community Interest Company.

JAG funded by a Richmond Fellowship grant. Additional materials were donated by Re-Think Mental Health.

Open Days were funded by a Green Goals Partnership grant. Our local history project is funded by a Heritage Lottery Fund grant. EU Conference on Intergenerational Learning and Active Ageing attendance was funded by a Travel and Exchange Grant from the European Network for Intergenerational Learning.

The Hub research into the provision of Arts for Health and Wellbeing in Dorset was paid by Dorset Local Authority (Dorset Loves Arts), Arts & Health Southwest and The Arts Council England.

The Hub receives help-in-kind from our landlords, Bournemouth

Beaches, in the form of a peppercorn rent, and donating second hand office furniture, tables and chairs and dance mirrors. Several local businesses also support us by supplying equipment, office resources, printing and publicity at cost price. Domestic Angels and The Southbourne Business Association support us with business advice and guidance.

Start up support was received from Bournemouth Council's Economic Regeneration Department with a £500 grant and through negotiating a 60% discretionary reduction in our business rates, together with a £250 grant from The Phone Cooperative. Income is generated by hiring The Hub to local teachers and facilitators for regular classes and occasional workshops and for birthday parties. The Hub is also hired commercially for one off activities such as AGMs, training and recruitment drives.

### **Contact details for further information**

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