

Journal 01  
Autumn/Winter 2008

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# Arts for Health Cornwall and Isles of Scilly Reclaiming the arts for everybody

## Welcome



Welcome to the new journal from Arts for Health Cornwall bringing you information about our creative projects for well-being.

In this edition we are focusing on how creativity can improve quality of life and care for older people and you can read about the impact of this work on one of the care homes in which we have worked. The section on training and development outlines a course we are developing for health and social care staff working with older people so that creativity becomes integral to the way in which older people are cared for.

We are also just about to complete our Arts in Primary Care project in which trailblazer GP surgeries across Cornwall worked with an artist for 18 months to develop

creative responses to the needs of the practice and its patients. These responses have included improving the waiting room environment, running creative arts activities for patients and staff, filmmaking and dance and movement sessions.

We plan to publish this journal twice a year and we are keen to encourage contributions from readers.

Please let us know what you would like to read about in future editions, or if you have thoughts on arts and health work that you would like to share with others, contribute an article.

Jayne Howard, Director  
Arts for Health Cornwall  
and Isles of Scilly

'In this edition we are focusing on how creativity can improve quality of life and care for older people'

Left:  
(clockwise  
from top  
left) Jenny  
Atkinson,  
Jayne Howard,  
Nicky Puttick,  
Lollie Brewer

## Who we are, what we do

Our aim is to create a link between arts and health, similar to that which exists between sports and health



Arts for Health Cornwall works to help integrate creative arts into the broader health and social care landscape of Cornwall, promoting the role of creativity and the arts in improving health and wellbeing. We are a registered charity, formed in 2001 and are based in Truro.

Right:  
Sharing ideas  
at one of our  
Networking  
events

We have a small staff: Jayne Howard is our Director, Jenny Atkinson our Project Coordinator and lead on the Older Persons'

Project, Nicky Puttick our Administrator and key point of contact for the organisation, and Lollie Brewer is currently working with us on an Arts and Mental Health project. We have a committee of Trustees, chaired by Gwyneth Evans, who bring a wide range of skills, knowledge and experience, and we work with a lot of creative practitioners who deliver our exciting projects and activities. >>

### Our work covers the following themes:

**Buildings for Health**—improving the environments in which health care is delivered. Currently this includes the new Truro Health Park development.

**Mental Health**—we are running creative taster sessions for both professionals and the wider community this autumn with a view to expanding opportunities for people to improve their mental health and well-being through the arts.

**Children and Young People**—we have worked with particularly vulnerable groups such as young people with psychosis, and the siblings of children with disabilities, and are keen to develop our work in this area.

**Older People**—you can read more about this project later in this journal.

**Health Inequalities and Public Health**—we have developed a strong partnership with St. Petroc's Society focused on improving the lives of people who are homeless. We work with the Public Health team on a range of important public health issues, such as healthy eating, physical activity and sexual health, to develop creative contributions to such issues.

### Primary Care—more about this later in this journal

Our work is varied in scope, and in addition to working in health and social care settings, our projects extend to cover a wide range of environments, groups and individuals across the county. We take a broad view of the arts and incorporate a wide variety of art forms into our projects; including dance, theatre, music, crafts, creative writing, digital media as well as the visual arts.

We focus upon the act of creativity as a positive tool for healing and change, emphasising the creative process itself over the end result.

We seek to engage and empower the local community in all of our projects and help to forge networks for arts and health practitioners by holding regular networking events and maintaining a strong involvement in other key organisations across the county. We also support training and development of practitioners and are keen to contribute to the developing evidence base for arts and health, through evaluation of our activities and exploring opportunities for research.

**'We take a broad view of the arts and incorporate a wide variety of art forms into our projects'**

## Why arts and health

### The basic premise of the movement is that creativity and the arts can, and do, heal

Right:  
A mosaic created by patients and staff of Falmouth Health Centre, as part of our Arts in Primary Care project



The Arts for Health movement is relatively new to the UK, and as a new field is expanding fast at present, evolving and growing every day. The basic premise of the movement is that creativity and the arts can, and do, heal. Creating art is universal human behaviour; regardless of culture or time, humans have always made art.

This strongly indicates that we need and benefit from art in some way. Our work is about helping to establish exactly what these benefits are and how we can integrate this into our health care systems and everyday lives. In our

modern, fast paced lives we are largely losing the basic connection to our inherent creativity, and what would naturally be a part of our daily existence has become categorised into the pursuit of a few talented elite. >>

'Art is not a part of life, it is not an addition to life, it is the essence of those pieces of us that make us fulfilled. That give us hope. That give us dreams and provide the world a view very different than what it would have been without us.'

*Hasan Davis  
Artist, lawyer and activist*

The Arts for Health movement is about reclaiming the arts for everybody, about getting over the notions of 'good' or 'bad' art and bringing the focus toward a different system of values... towards the many benefits that creativity brings; lifting us out of the closed mindsets that illness can bring and into other possibilities.

On a sociological level, Charles Landry and Francois Matarasso in *Use or Ornament, The Social Impact of Participation in the Arts*, comment that, 'Art programmes have been shown to contribute to enhancing social cohesion and local image: reducing offending behaviour; building private/public sector partnerships; promoting interest in the local environment; developing self-confidence; enhancing organisational capacity;

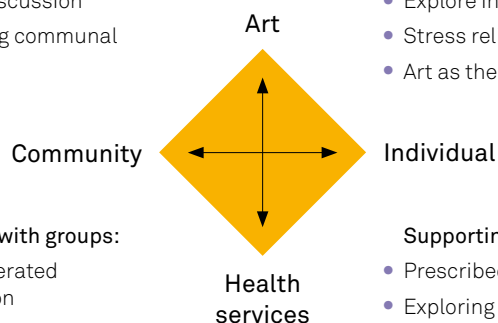
supporting independence and exploring visions of the future.'

A useful visual tool for understanding the value of creativity as a central feature in a healthy society is the Arts for Health 'diamond', which is perhaps better described as a prism. Four approaches are represented, but the potential across the surface of the prism shows the relationship between the individual and the wider community, the creative community and health and social care provision.

The field of Arts for Health is therefore very broad allowing for a wide range of activity; it includes creative therapies, improving the physical environment in which health care is delivered, community arts and creative activities with targeted groups and individuals.

#### Health is unity:

- Healthy activity= healthy discussion
- Supporting communal thinking



#### Individual creativity and well-being:

- Explore individual health
- Stress relief
- Art as therapy

#### Supporting health delivery:

- Prescribed art
- Exploring process of care from individual perspective
- Environment of care

Left:  
The Arts for Health Diamond (Tom Smith, CAHHM, Durham University, 2001)

## Older Persons' Project

Creativity and a 'can do' attitude improve care, enhance the caring role and show that older people can still learn and develop

Right:  
Members of Hayle Day Care Centre take part in a creative movement session



Improved quality of life for our older citizens is the main aim of our Older Persons' Project >>

We are now just over halfway through this three year programme designed to support health and well-being in our older population through creativity. The programme has been funded by Arts Council England, South West and through Cornwall's Local Area Agreement and is being externally evaluated by Cornwall Health Research Unit.

Our first series of creative projects in 14 care homes and community hospitals took place last year and we have just recruited artists to deliver creative projects in a further nine settings. This time we will also rotate the artists between the care settings to widen the range of experience for the care staff and clients.

The feedback from the first round of projects has been very positive:

'I observed that clients have greater flexibility... stamina, improved coordination and ability to remember movements from one session to the next... with movements being larger and more confident.' *Beaumont Court Rest Home*

'The whole ethos of care has improved, new staff are seeing their role far beyond that of personal care and older staff have been delighted in the improved relationships between themselves and the residents, especially those with dementia.' *Fairfields County Rest Home*



**'Keep it simple—it's nothing difficult—it just takes a "can do" attitude'**

'Friendships were struck and support for each other was expressed as well as plenty of lively assertive conversation about all kinds of topics, current and reminiscent. The presence of laughter was always there in spite of people's obvious pain.' *Camborne Redruth Community Hospital*

'The dance looked wonderful and really created a party atmosphere, and there was plenty of fun and laughter! Mrs O commented "That was very energetic! I've used far more energy than I've done in a long time and I feel great!"' *Beaumont Court Rest Home*

'Mrs F—who normally doesn't speak, looked at me and said "lovely".' *Redannick House*

'While working on wishes, Mrs P, who usually just repeats the last word that you say, wrote down SO NICE, so J, through a series of coloured cards and stickers, discovered her favourite colour is orange and favourite flowers are marigolds.' *Redannick House*

**'Mrs F—who normally doesn't speak, looked at me and said lovely'"**

### What we have learned to date

Music and movement activities attract the larger numbers and seem to be easier for people to join in, but more difficult to sustain in the long term.

Arts, craft and word-based art tends to be more intimate, attracting smaller numbers, but is more personal, individually rewarding and easier to sustain.

Distractions e.g. staff being called away, undermine and devalue the activity.

Advertising the weekly activity in advance works well e.g. posters and word of mouth by staff.

Music accompanying or in

advance of the activity can add to the general atmosphere and involve clients who don't want to 'join in' directly.

Running the activities in the hub of the home allows the 'curious' to accidentally wander through or watch from afar.

Keep it simple—it's nothing difficult—it just takes a 'can do' attitude.

Some settings have a more supportive culture for developing creativity, and this needs to be considered when matching activities to the care setting.

All staff need to be made aware of the project and its benefits, with strong visible support by the Matron or Manager.

### Other projects include:

- Read Me Better in Community Hospitals where volunteers read to patients.
- Intergenerational activities aimed at breaking down barriers and improving understanding between generations. A recent example of this was creating flags for Falmouth's town centre during the Funchal 500 Tall Ships Regatta.
- Sharing and Learning sessions for all involved in the programme. These are held regularly and are highly valued.
- Training courses: see page 12.

**Left:**  
A resident of Chypons Care Home in Newlyn participates in a music and singing workshop.  
**Right:**  
A resident of Woodland House in St Austell wearing her 'dream hat'



## 'I enjoy creatively combining voice, movement and breathing to enable participants to discover or enhance their own singing abilities'

**Gillian Basher, Activities Coordinator from Porthgwara Nursing Home in Coverack since 2002 describes the impact on the project on the care home and staff:**

'I was thrilled when we had the opportunity to work with an artist, through this project. Our artist was a lovely lady called Lis Thomas who brought a painting project to our residents. This was fantastic as it was bringing residents together and offering them something completely different, which I, as I had never done any drawing and painting before, couldn't offer them. Each week Lis brought in different ideas and inspirations, which we captured through drawing, painting and collage. We discussed the famous artists and copied their ideas, styles, and techniques. These sessions were the springboard for many other conversations and activities such as reminiscence; it built us up a great big file of "things to do". One resident's daughter commented "I didn't know mummy could draw", one of the residents said "I'm really enjoying these afternoons, I feel like a teenager again" and Mr T said

"I'm not a painter really, I used to sculpt and this painting thing is new to me". Who says older people can't learn?

I have also used these activities to promote Porthgwara Nursing Home as a good place to be. Through this creative project, I can show how we promote the residents' health and well being and keep them as independent as they wish. For me, this project has made me more aware of what people can do despite their illness. I can think creatively to give each person back their occupational health, so that they can continue to be and to do what they did before, if they wish to. It gives me a tremendous sense of fulfilment.

So what's happened since the project? Well, we continue to develop our activities as well as ensuring our day to day tasks are completed in a more fun and creative way. Through AFHC, our residents have been working with some film students from University College Falmouth, learning to create film; we have also been busy at the Stithians show, promoting health and well being in nursing

**'For me, this project has made me more aware of what people can do despite their illness'**

**Right: Valerie Stagg enjoying one of her successful singing workshops**



homes—and showing off the art work of the residents. We are also looking forward to being part of the Lionel Blair Tea Dance in October.'

### **Valerie Stagg, Singing and Voicework Facilitator describes her approach to this work:**

'My background is in community arts with a particular fondness for jazz singing. I have been facilitating workshops and courses for 20 years whilst practising as a professional Complementary Therapist in Shiatsu. I always hope, where appropriate, to integrate some of this bodywork into my voice sessions.

I have many years of experience in working with all age groups, ranging from music sessions with early years, schools and youth groups to reminiscence and singing with elders. I am happy with the full

range of abilities, especially with people with learning difficulties in colleges and residential settings. I enjoy creatively combining voice, movement and breathing to enable participants to discover or enhance their own singing abilities.

I have been involved in the Older Persons' Project since the very beginning and am pleased to have the opportunity to work with them to try to establish a way of ensuring singing becomes more ingrained into everyday life in care settings.'

### **Our singing programme**

Singing has proved to be very beneficial for older people, with strong supporting evidence, but difficult for the care staff to maintain without a lead artist. We'll be working with Valerie, to develop an approach to this important aspect of the programme.

**'The singing, was greeted with great enthusiasm with people joining in... or simply listening'**

## Training and development

### Training for care staff in creative skills, building confidence in existing skills and teaching new ones

Working in partnership with Truro College, we have developed a course for health and social care staff that will enable them to develop and support creativity within their care settings.

Although the course can be taken as a stand alone course, it has been designed to meet NVQ criteria and will provide a contribution towards NVQ levels two, three and four.

The course is being designed and delivered by Caroline Schanche

and Noel Perkins—you can read more about them opposite. The course aims to encourage learning through experience and, as such, will be as practically based as possible, with a creativity workbook accompanying the course.

The first two courses began in September 2008 through Truro College, one in Bodmin and the other in Camborne. Future dates are to be arranged but you can find out more, included how to book places, on our website.



Left: Caroline Schanche (far right) leads a craft and movement session for artists and staff taking part in our Older Persons' Project

'creativity has a vital role to play in promoting health and well-being'

#### Practitioner profiles

##### Noel Perkins

Noel originally trained as a fine artist, gaining a degree in sculpture from Bath Academy of Art in 1982. Throughout the 80s and 90s he worked as a freelance artist in many different contexts that included undertaking private commissions, public and community arts projects and as a theatrical prop maker.

Reaching his limit for serious back pain and freezing cold studios he began studying movement improvisation seven years ago and now combines a passion for improvisation with video and visual art media in his creative work.

Over the past 25 years he has worked with a wide range of people to promote and support creativity development. Noel is one of the six artists in Cornwall working on the Arts in Primary Care project (see page 14).

##### Caroline Schanche

Caroline took a degree in Theatre Language at Dartington College of Arts. She specialised in post-modern dance forms and participated and performed in the Dartington International

Dance Festivals. After graduating she began working in London particularly with marginalised groups such as adults with learning disabilities and elderly visually impaired people.

Having witnessed the transformative power of movement through her work, she trained as a dance movement therapist in order to deepen her understanding of the relationship between motion and emotion. She specialises in teaching dance improvisation and works with groups of all ages and abilities in a wide variety of settings. In addition to working with Noel on the development and delivery of the Creativity in Care Settings course, Caroline is also working with Hayle Day Care Centre on the Older Persons' Project for AFHC.

Noel and Caroline say 'Far from being the preserve of artists and mad scientists we believe creativity is a fundamental human ability available to everyone, at the core of our work is the belief that creativity has a vital role to play in promoting health and well-being'

For more information on Noel and Caroline please visit their website at: [www.mydogcoulddothat.com](http://www.mydogcoulddothat.com)

## Update: Arts in Primary Care

### A winning combination of the skills of the artist with the often untapped creative capacity of patients and health care professionals

Arts for Health Cornwall has been working with GP surgeries across Cornwall, providing a range of different activities with a view to discovering what is possible in a primary care setting and what benefits there might be for all who use or work in the surgery.

The GP surgery is the most-used health service with 90% of health problems being dealt with in the surgery and 78% of the population visit their GP at least once a year so it made sense for us to look at how we could bring the arts into the practice. This project has the potential to help the NHS by giving people a greater range of choices over ways of dealing with their health problems and by focusing on the whole person rather than just the illness.

With funding we had from the Arts Council England, South West, we were able to provide 6 surgeries with a lead artist for 18 months to develop a programme of creative activity that responded

to the needs of the practice. It has been independently evaluated by Cornwall Health Research Unit and patients who have participated in the various creative activities have reported a range of benefits, including improved confidence and self-esteem, increased stamina ability to cope in difficult situations.

The project has also helped us understand what factors help and hinder the success of this work, with artists reporting that communication with the wide range and often large number of staff working in the surgery was key to ensuring that patients who could benefit from the activities



Left: 'It's not the tea, it's who you drink it with'—an animated film by artists, patients and staff at Morrab Rd surgery in Penzance

Right: Live music and 'BBC' style interviews during a flu clinic at Perranporth surgery



were identified. GP surgeries are not designed to be exhibition spaces or creative workshops and artists had to be inventive in how they used the spaces available to best effect.

The range of activities has been huge, with a common thread of linking the activities to the local physical, social and historical environment.

#### These activities include:

- Regular creative sessions in the surgery for patients groups, often sharing similar health conditions.
- Exhibitions and music at the 'flu vaccination clinics.
- Sculpture workshop aimed at children with asthma and their families to help them better understand their condition and how to manage it.
- Celebratory health days.
- Animation and video work.
- Creative writing sessions.

- Dance and movement sessions for older patients.

There will be a fuller report in a future edition. The evaluation report is available from AFHC.

#### Participating practices and artists:

Callington-Gunnislake Group Practice with Noel Perkins

Perranporth Surgery with Lollie Brewer

Falmouth Health Centre with Rosie Hadden

Pool Health Centre with Helen Tanner

Stennack Surgery, St. Ives with Janet McEwan

Morrab Road Surgery, Penzance with Lizzie Black

At Bude surgery we are working with the Bude Arts Society who will take referrals from the GP to their regular art group, funded by this project

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# Notes

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## Diary dates

### Annual General Meeting

3 October 2008, 3pm

Hall for Cornwall

Be prepared for the unexpected!

### 'Creating a Healthy Future' Networking event

18 November 2008, 10am—4pm

'Plan It Earth Centre',  
near Penzance.

Our next networking event  
explores the relationships  
between creativity, health  
and the environment.

Places are limited, please  
contact us to book.

### Arts for Health South West

#### Annual General Meeting

25 November 2008

Taunton

For more details visit  
[www.ahsw.org.uk](http://www.ahsw.org.uk)

#### Open House

10 December 2008, 10am—4pm

16 St Mary's Street, Truro

Drop into our offices for tea and  
a mince pie!

For more details on any of the  
above, please contact the office.

## Resources

We have a library of books,  
journals, training packs and other  
materials that are currently being  
catalogued and are available to  
use at our office. Just give us a  
call to check that someone will  
be here and you are welcome to  
drop in and spend time in our  
offices just browsing or studying  
from them. We want to develop  
the resource library further so if  
you come across any really good  
books or other resources relating to  
creativity and well-being please tell  
us about them.

## Contact

For more information about our  
range of projects see our website:  
[www.artsforhealthcornwall.org.uk](http://www.artsforhealthcornwall.org.uk)

You can contact us by telephone:  
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Or by email:  
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Our office is located in a small  
openway next to the British  
Legion club.

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