

Journal 02
Summer 2009

Arts for Health Cornwall and Isles of Scilly

Creating inspiring
and healing
environments



Welcome

In this edition we will be exploring how the senses are essential to health and wellbeing, in particular focusing on the environments within which health and social care are delivered, including our involvement with the new Truro Health Park development.

We encourage your responses to any issues raised in these articles, and warmly invite you along to our new monthly research discussion group (see back cover for more details) which will examine a different topic relating to Arts and Health each month.

Since our last journal we have moved offices to Jubilee Wharf in Penryn, which has proved very successful with the opening of our resources room and improved access for all. This therefore seemed like a good opportunity to look back over the development of Arts for Health Cornwall & IOS over the last eight years, and we are delighted to introduce one of our founders, James Sargent as he reflects on our story so far.

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

Since our last journal we have moved offices to Jubilee Wharf in Penryn



Left:
The AFHC
team outside
their new
offices at
Jubilee Wharf

The first eight years

Increased recognition has resulted in heavier demand for our services—rising from ten clients to approximately 1,250

Right:
Patients at
Camborne
Redruth
Community
Hospital
take part in
a creative
workshop



The solution

We chose to launch a pilot project, and demonstrate the result at what would be Cornwall's first Arts in Health conference. This was a high-risk strategy! A flop would confirm the sceptics!

The project in February 2001 was led by three media and drama artists working with a group of ten disaffected young people in Wadebridge, who were not backward in coming forward with their grudges and frustrations. But they were grabbed by the technology they could use to express their disaffection.

The conference

'The Feel Good Factor' in March 2001, was our first major step towards raising awareness of issues and stimulating debate on a broad front. 150 delegates attended. The keynote speaker was Dr Rosalia Staricoff—well known for her evidence-based approach to Arts in Health. The conference ended with an unforgettable media/arts presentation by the Wadebridge 'tearaways'. Not >>

Our story began in January 2000 with the formation of the Cornwall Arts and Health Development Group from a diverse collection of individuals whose common passion was the power of the arts to contribute to people's health and wellbeing. The aim was to move as quickly as possible to the status of a registered charity with a strategic countywide Arts and Health brief.

The problem

The very idea of an Arts and Health relationship had become largely obscured over time, and was generally absent from the working practice of both arts and health practitioners. There was a need to foster a more holistic vision.

There was a need to foster a more holistic vision

one had been on-stage before, or was accustomed to approval of any kind beyond their peers. Their performance was hard hitting stuff, yet they brought the house down, with offers of further funding from the floor! That experience proved a turning point for the better in the lives of several in the group.

The conference created the 'buzz' we had hoped for, causing a ripple effect of positive reaction across the county, sufficient for us to prepare the ground to become a charity and bid for the necessary funds.

The inauguration

By July 2001, funding was in place, and at a public meeting in Truro we were established as a charity. Clive Parkinson joined us as Development Director with the task of mapping the existing pockets of arts and health practice in the county and identifying opportunities for future development. In doing so, he also successfully continued to raise awareness and helped to create a positive image for the Charity.

The Arts in Buildings for Health

In Spring 2003, a series of seminars was arranged in association with the Cornwall LIFT Programme. These were for arts practitioners, architects, design, and health professionals. For the first time the opportunity existed to integrate the arts into a major programme of new healthcare buildings in

Cornwall right from the planning stage. The seminars consolidated our position as partner in the subsequent building programmes (including Truro Health Park).

A new Director

From Jayne Howard's arrival in 2004, our capacity to deliver arts and health projects across the county has increased enormously. It's clear that the aspirations of those who laid the foundations in 2000 are being truly fulfilled!

Now that AFHC is established at Jubilee Wharf, this brand new people-and-eco-friendly building will provide us with an exciting platform for future development. There are many challenges ahead for us, but there is also increasing recognition of the effectiveness of our work across the health and social care community resulting in heavier demand for our services.

*James Sargent
Chair of AFHC from 2000—2003,
resigning as Secretary in 2006*

Our growth since 2000

From a budget of £9,000 to a turnover of £162,500.

From 1 project, with 3 artists in the first year to 20 projects and 60 artists in 2008.

From 1 Development Director to a Director and 3 part-time staff.

From 10 clients to an estimated 1,250 clients.

The conference created the 'buzz' we had hoped for, causing a ripple effect of positive reaction across the county

Role of the senses in healthcare

It is time to start considering patients as whole beings, affected in many subtle yet profound ways by their environments

Right:
Installing an
artwork at
Perranporth
Surgery



Our senses 'anchor' us in the world. We need only look at sensory deprivation studies to realise how important to our health and wellbeing they are; participants have experienced symptoms ranging from worry and fright, boredom, panic, change in body-image, loss of contact with reality, temporal disorientation, speech difficulties, to hallucinatory-like experiences,

simply by experiencing a lack of sensory stimulation.

When it comes to ill health, it is well documented that our environment makes a huge difference to recovery. The Department of Health state that 'understanding the senses is the key to creating healing environments' and produces a series of guidelines for >>

'The effect on sickness of beautiful objects... of variety of objects, and especially of colours is hardly at all appreciated... People say the effect is on the mind... The effect is on the body too. Little as we know about the way we are affected by form, colour, by light, we do know this, that they have a physical effect.'

*Florence Nightingale
Notes on Hospitals, 1885*

considering each of the senses in health care environments, Yet today, we find repeatedly that health and social care environments are hugely under-estimating the importance of the senses.

Evidence in 1984 showed that post-surgical patients exposed to a view of trees instead of a brick wall, experienced fewer complications, required less pain relief and had shorter stays (Day, 2007, Ridenour, 1998). The Department of Health states 'Research has shown that floral and fruit fragrances slow respiration, lower blood pressure and heart rate, and relax muscles. Fragrances may also reduce pain by encouraging the release of one of the body's most powerful endorphins' and that 'unwanted noise can increase heart rate, blood pressure, respiration rate and even blood cholesterol levels. It can reduce weight gain, disturb sleep patterns and negatively affect hormonal balances'.

So who then has been considered at the centre of design for health care buildings? The people who use them, who will perhaps experience some of the most challenging and frightening times of their lives there? Their visitors? The staff who work often long and demanding hours in these environments every day? Sadly, the majority have been designed largely with functionality and economics in mind, focusing on diseases rather than people.

If we as a society are to master health care, it is clearly time to start considering patients as whole beings, affected in many subtle yet profound ways by their environments. The qualities of sound, vision, touch, taste and smell provide crucial clues as to how to go about initiating these changes.



Left:
Detail from
artwork
created by
patients at
Perranporth
Surgery

Patients exposed to a view of trees instead of a brick wall... required less pain relief and had shorter stays

Project: Truro Health Park

Creative application of the arts can help to shape a more inspiring vision for the buildings in which health care is delivered

Right:
Lead artist
Rob Olins
consulting
some of the
Health Park's
potential
users



Over the last three years Arts for Health Cornwall and Isles of Scilly has been working on an arts strategy for the new Truro Health Park, due to be opened in Spring 2010 as a flagship primary health care centre.

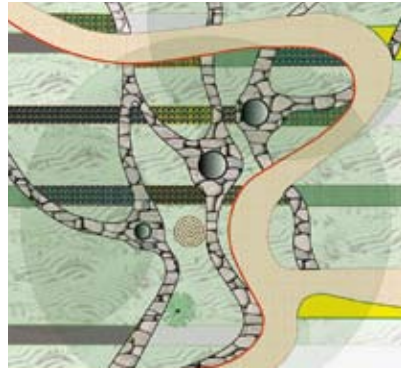
We know that creative application of the arts can help to shape a more inspiring vision for the buildings in which health care is delivered and make a positive contribution to the health and well-being of the whole community. >>

Working with Community 1st Cornwall we planned to:

- Create an innovative health-promoting environment which recognises the contribution of creativity and the arts to improving health and well-being
- Integrate the historical and aspirational elements of health services in Truro
- Promote community accessibility and involvement in Truro Health Park

Our work began in 2006 when lead artist Rob Olins led a series of community workshops with residents of the Malpas and Trelander estates to define the ‘feel’ of the Health Park and to stimulate creative ideas for specific spaces.

A key issue that arose from the workshops was the importance of bringing the outside into the



The aim is to create spaces which are striking yet soothing and uplifting

building, reflecting the natural landscape of the area. There was also a strong desire to have a sense of natural flowing water—water being perceived as calming, with health and life-giving properties, and having the potential to bring gentle, natural movement into a static environment. Situated on the confluence of three rivers, this is of particular significance in Truro.

Following these workshops we identified a number of locations for specific commissions:

The locations identified were:

- The two main entrances
- Flooring
- Inner courtyards
- Monterey Pine area

In early 2008 we commissioned artists to develop these proposals, coordinated by our lead artist, Rob Olins. Over the following months they worked on designs and showed these ideas to the general public in October when

Left: Proposal for the Monterey Pine area
Right: Drawing of *Blu Tri-Veru* which will illuminate the space with soft liquid colours

we held a consultation event on Truro’s Lemon Quay. Despite poor weather, over eighty people visited our marquee to see the proposals and talk to the artists. There was overwhelming support, with one gentleman commenting that ‘I think about 30% of the healing is in the design of the building’ and others exclaiming their delight that we were trying to bring colour and life into what can often be bland spaces. ‘Make it a talking point,’ was one comment. There was appreciation for reflecting the natural environment inside the building, and people were intrigued by the unique courtyard proposals.

After this public consultation, more detailed designs were then approved by Community 1st Cornwall and partners. As the building takes shape over the next nine months, the pieces are being constructed and installed.

The proposals

Entrance installations

The aim is to create an inviting and welcoming experience, which lifts the spirit on entrance. *Coloured Sails* is an interactive light sculpture that uses primary colours to inspire relief and ease emotions. Its soft colour changing sequences will confer a warm and pleasant atmosphere, creating a welcoming feeling. A built in motion sensor triggers a colour sequence when someone walks below the Sails, which respond by sending



ripples of colour around them.

The other entrance will house *Blu Tri-Veru* (‘three rivers’). Inspired by river colours this artwork made of dichroic glass will illuminate the space with soft liquid colours. Patterns of light shifting in hue and intensity will be projected in the surrounding space, reminiscent of sunlight playing on water due to the area’s natural light.

Internal courtyards

Truro Health Park has been designed around a number of small courtyards that provide space for arts and planting to bring the outdoor environment closer to those inside the building. Steve Geliot has proposed an exciting combination of planting together with large sculptural pieces. The aim is to create spaces which are striking yet soothing and uplifting. The combination of simple shapes and exquisite materials, plants and light is intended to have a healing quality as well as bringing life into the spaces. The glass sculptures >>

‘I think about 30% of the healing is in the design of the building’

What is Truro Health Park?

A state of the art health care facility, under construction. It will unite two GP practices with community health services including sexual health, speech therapy, child and family services, physiotherapy, dentistry, and a pharmacy.

What is Community 1st Cornwall?

The Department of Health, the local healthcare community and the private sector joined forces to establish the company, to deliver a new generation of community-based primary health and social care premises in Cornwall.

will play with natural light to create a watery quality, reflecting the sky. The planting will also be very striking—soft and pillowy in one courtyard, and bold and vertical in the other.

Monterey Pine Courtyard

In addition to the smaller courtyards, there is a larger area of Monterey Pine trees, which are an important feature of the local landscape retained on the site. Mike Westley and Rob Olins have worked on ways of enhancing their beauty and providing a 'walk for the mind' for people using the glazed corridor that runs past them.

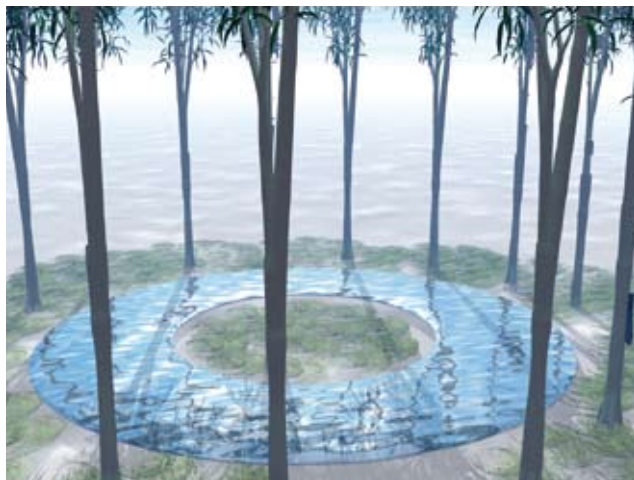
Walls and flooring

In the initial workshops people commented that flooring areas were often neglected yet provided an opportunity to help people locate themselves in the building. Will Levi Marshall has worked

closely with the architects and potential users of the building to create a sophisticated and subtle design for both flooring and walls which uses punctuations of colour and line to articulate spaces and zones, gently contrasting the linearity of the building.

The wall space will also display inspirational words of health and well-being. In the autumn we will be running a poetry workshop with residents of Truro to create poems for display to provide points of interest and discussion.

We are working in partnership with the Truro Historical Project to develop an oral history of the site, which is where the first Cornish hospital was built. We plan to make this available to people using the facility, providing a fascinating link between healthcare of the past and today.



Left:
Artist's
impression
of the glass
sculpture
proposed for
the internal
courtyards

Right:
The artists
visit Truro
Health Park
site. From
left, Will Levi
Marshall,
Steve Geliot,
Hemera
and Aether,
Rob Olins,
Michael
Westley



Artists' profiles

Rob Olins

Rob's work is influenced by architecture, engineering construction processes and the subconscious effect that volumes, forms and colour have on our perceptions of the world. Mood colouring, unusual combinations of materials, lighting, magnetism, kinetics, optical effects and interactivity are all tools he uses to affect how people 'read' their environment to achieve the desired effect.

'My initial role was to establish what kinds of artistic works could be integrated into the building and where they should be. As Lead Artist, I am now supervising a team of other practitioners engaged on the project. Our combined practical experience enables the project to include many exciting art interventions to ensure that the health

centre has an imaginative and integrated design.'

Michael Westley

Michael is Principal of Westley Design, a landscape architecture and inclusive design consultancy. Westley Design works extensively in healthcare settings to develop multi-sensory landscapes that positively benefit the health and well-being of service users, staff and visitors.

'For Truro Health Park I worked with Rob Olins; we took the notion of a protected paradise and worked together to design a space which was highly prominent yet not initially accessible to the public. The space works on a psychological level to invite the viewer into a series of unfolding, connected spaces, formed by planting and linked by a sinuous, sculpted line that followed a pathway of site from foreground to distance.' >>

Steve Geliot

Steve Geliot has many years experience working in the field of public art. He started out as a wood sculptor and became increasingly interested in collaborating to create whole environments. Steve's work with Truro Health Park hopes to combine the life affirming and dynamic energy of living plants with a sculptural sensibility.

'Plants give you an ever changing tableau; they pick up atmospheric changes and movements that sculptures can only partially respond to. The sculptures benefit from existing in such a dynamic setting. I have worked in a number of healing environments, and have a passionate belief that these spaces should not merely be designed based on clinical processes and patient flows—the quality of the physical environment plays a crucial part in how patients feel.'

Aether and Hemera

Aether and Hemera are the ancient Greek god and goddess of brighter upper air and daylight. Aether is Claudio, the interaction designer; Hemera is Gloria, the lighting artist. Together they explore the aesthetic challenges of light and its powerful possibilities to trigger emotions

and response, creating a sense of identity or setting a mood.

'Our creative approach aims to explore the unique qualities of each architectural project to create artworks integrated with the design. In Truro Health Park this resulted in three suspended artworks dialoguing with each other from two adjacent voids, with other materials used in the building and with user path viewpoints.'

Will Levi Marshall

Marshall trained in ceramics and established an international exhibition record in that field with his work in many public and private collections. Since he received an award from the Scottish Arts Council to develop larger scale work, he has been personally commissioned for a number of projects. Although this often involves a ceramic element he does not limit himself to one material.

His central artistic concerns revolve around creating interplay between line and form, the dynamic and the static, accenting and redefining a user's perception of architectural space. Local history and environment often provide a springboard and touchstone for projects.

'I have a passionate belief that these spaces should not merely be designed based on clinical processes'

Evaluation reports

Right:
A celebratory day at Bodmin hospital to mark the end of a story telling project

Arts for Health Cornwall and Isles of Scilly (AFHC) commissioned Cornwall Health Research Unit (CHRU) to produce three evaluation reports on different aspects of our work. Simon Bennett and John Bastin are co-authors for all three.



Strength through Creativity: A Study of Arts for Health in Primary Care in Cornwall

Published in July 2008, this report reviewed the Arts in Primary Care project in which six artists were placed in GP practices for a period of 18 months. The report concludes that 'there was an overwhelmingly positive response to the project from participants, practice patients and practice staff... (it) was successful in involving a significant number of beneficiaries and anecdotal evidence from health professionals suggested improved health outcomes and a reduction in GP attendance amongst some individuals'.

Health Interventions in the UK: A Review of the Literature

Published by CHRU in April 2009, the report summarises the major arts and health literature reviews that have been carried out in the last 10 years, with an emphasis on those published since 2004, reviews key projects from across the country and summarises three important papers on evaluation methodology. Whilst it has been

published as a paper document, it is designed to be accessed via our website with links to the original research.

Arts in the Third Age: A Study of Arts for Health and Older People in Cornwall

Also published by CHRU in April 2009, this report evaluates AFHC's Older Person's Programme which has been running for almost three years. It concludes that 'the evidence collected shows that those partaking in the project benefited in terms of confidence and self-esteem, developed or revisited skills and expertise, improved mobility and progressed in the areas of socialisation and communication. These benefits were particularly apparent in those clients diagnosed with dementia.'

All three reports are available on our website: www.artsforhealthcornwall.org.uk

'Benefits were particularly apparent in those clients diagnosed with dementia'

Project: Midway Marker

The marking of a community and an opportunity to highlight the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of exercise

Arts for Health Cornwall are proud to have developed a Midway Marker for the South West Coast Path on the Lizard peninsula in association with the South West Coast Path Association and other partners..

The coast path runs from Minehead to Poole for 630 miles, with the halfway point at Porthallow village. A commission was developed with funding from a number of partners to create a piece of public art to mark this point.

We commissioned local artist Tom Leaper to develop a design for the Marker in collaboration with writer Stephen Hall, who worked with members of the local community in creating a poem 'Fading Voices' which is engraved on one side of the Marker; the other side is engraved with the names of local flora and fauna.

The local community have been greatly involved in the project and the opportunity has been taken to highlight the physical, mental and spiritual benefits of using the

South West Coast Path for exercise in the natural environment. The Marker has already proved to be a focal point for the village since it's recent installation, and offers a popular resting (and photo) opportunity for those walking the coastal path.

Writer Stephen Hall, describes the creation of 'Fading Voices':

My first step in gathering information on Porthallow (Pralla) was to research published sources, both historical and contemporary. However I found that specific information about Porthallow was sparse. This was frustrating because I knew there was a story to be told but I could not find what I was looking for—the unique voice of the village.

With the help of the Porthallow Village Association, local people were invited to an 'open evening'. The human, unheard story of Pralla came to life that evening through the voices of Pralla families adding colour and sense of place to the dry, often statistical information I had gathered.

'I hope I have done justice to past generations and the remaining Cornish families'

My main concern was to make sure I had got my facts right so when I had prepared draft texts I talked to people I had recorded, checking details and spellings to ensure they were happy with the text. Some aspects were difficult to define and it seemed at times that whatever I wrote regarding how many of this or that would certainly be challenged by someone!

I was very moved when one person I talked to on the telephone went very quiet when I'd finished reading

'Fading Voices'. After a long pause she said that as she listened to me, she felt a chill go through her as all her memories of Pralla and her family came back. She said that the fading voices of Pralla could to be heard at last. I hope I have done justice to past generations and the remaining Cornish families and that the many people who have chosen Pralla as their home and those who visit the village will gain a deeper understanding of the village's story and its unique voice through 'Fading Voices'.



Right: Writer Stephen Hall (left) and artist Tom Leaper (right) with the newly installed Midway Marker

Notes

Diary dates

Annual General Meeting

16 October 2009, 3pm
Zed Shed, Jubilee Wharf, Penryn

Why Arts for Health?

Research Discussion Group
Last Friday of every month, 2pm
AFHC, Jubilee Wharf, Penryn
This group now meets each month to discuss a different area of Arts and Health and explore some of the research supporting the work that we do.

Resources

We have now added to our resources a number of activity boxes that can be hired out—ranging from musical instruments, fancy dress outfits to arts materials. These are available for artists/activity leaders/support workers to hire out to use for 'Arts for Health' style activities. For more information please contact our office using the details opposite.

Environmental

Printed by Parklane Press using an environmentally responsible waterless printing process with vegetable based inks. Printed on Revive 100 made from 100% recycled post-consumer waste.

Trustees

We are currently looking to expand our board of trustees, and are open to expressions of interest from people of all sectors with a passion for arts and health work. If you are interested in becoming a trustee, please contact us for more information.

Contact

For more information about our range of projects see our website:
www.artsforhealthcornwall.org.uk

You can contact us by telephone:
01326 377772

Or by email:
info@artsforhealthcornwall.org.uk

Our postal address is:
AFHC
Unit 7 Jubilee Wharf
Commercial Road
Penryn
Cornwall TR10 8FG



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