

**The Baring  
Foundation**

## **CREATIVELY MINDED**

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An initial mapping study of participatory  
arts and mental health activity in the United Kingdom

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*by David Cutler*

# Creatively minded: an initial mapping study of participatory arts and mental health activity in the UK

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## About the Baring Foundation

We are an independent foundation which protects and advances human rights and promotes inclusion. We believe in the role of a strong, independent civil society nationally and internationally. We use our resources to enable civil society to work with people experiencing discrimination and disadvantage and to act strategically to tackle the root causes of injustice and inequality.

The Baring Foundation is one of the UK's best known independent funders. More can be found out about the Foundation in *A History of the Baring Foundation in 50 Grants*, marking the Foundation's fiftieth anniversary in 2019. One of its three grant programme covers the arts in the UK. The programme from 2010–2019 focussed on arts and older people and more can be read about the development of this sector in *Older and Wiser? Creative ageing in the UK 2010–2019*. From 2020 the Foundation will focus its arts funding on activity with people with mental health problems.

## About the author

David Cutler is the Director of the Baring Foundation and leads its arts programme. He has written a number of reports on creative ageing including the 2009 UK mapping study *Ageing Artfully*.

## About the cover image

Cover image by George J Harding. George is a fine artist and oil painter based in Bristol, UK. He specialises in portraiture, symbolic paintings, street art murals and reliefs made from resin and perspex. George sees his art as an exploration and journey of discovery through expression. For more information visit: [www.georgejharding.co.uk](http://www.georgejharding.co.uk).

Thanks also go to the Bethlem Gallery for putting us in touch with George. Based within the grounds of the Bethlem Royal Hospital, the oldest psychiatric hospital in the world,

the Gallery exists to support artists who are current or former patients of South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. See also page 38 of this report. For more information visit: [bethlemgallery.com](http://bethlemgallery.com).

## Acknowledgements

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Photo courtesy of START Inspiring Minds, Salford.



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## Foreword

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Help the Normals by Dolly Sen. Photo © Dolly Sen.

*“I want people to have the right to creativity ...  
it will do something to change their lives.”*

### Dolly Sen

I was born and brought up in London. At 14 I had my first psychosis. By 29, I had spent over a decade in my bedroom, rarely leaving it because I was so scared of the world around me and the world inside me. I was immovable and trapped. I had been in the mental health system but nothing they offered helped; in fact it made things worse. On my 30th birthday, I could take no more of this kind of life and made the decision to live or die. I chose to live. I did a lot of things to help myself, but luckily I discovered creativity, such as writing and art, which helped me express difficult feelings. I wrote poems about loneliness that made me feel less lonely. I realised I was drawing myself a map. If services and systems provide you with a map on how to be lost, and stay lost, you need to find the map elsewhere. Creativity has done that for me.

Creativity, in its simplest and purest form, is the power to change or create something. Here is an example: Before I wrote my memoir, ‘The World is Full of Laughter’ I was full of self-hate, I didn’t have an ounce of compassion for myself. Writing itself was cathartic, but it was in the reading of my story I had empathy for myself for the first time. Art became the roadmap back to myself. As my creativity evolved and I grew as a person, art became a way of life, and then my career. It has also given me an armour and shield to face the world, making a sometime ugly world a little more tolerable, a world beautiful enough to save my soul. I cannot capitulate, I can only create. I even use it in protest as I know it is a direct way to touch people.

In a recent exhibition I curated on art and protest, I wrote: "This exhibition will honour our right to be ourselves and to be treated with humanity and respect, and even our right to stay alive, by using art to confront, to embolden ourselves with, to stand tall, and to show others they are not alone."

I want people to have the right to creativity. It might not be as powerful a catalyst to them as it was to me, but it will do something to change their lives. People who have mental ill health have the right to express themselves creatively and to access culture. This report is invaluable as it is necessary for that very reason.

If art is a map back to yourself, then this report is the beginnings of an atlas that shows the many journeys to art, but also what pushes people away from it in ways little explored before. I am glad, for example, it considers intersectionality when it comes to barriers to accessing art and culture, and also what would help artists like me stay in the field.

I am grateful to the Baring Foundation for laying the bricks for a possible road forward.

Dolly Sen  
[www.dollysen.com](http://www.dollysen.com)

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# Summary

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This mapping report focuses on arts and mental health activity in the UK taking place in the last two years. It is intended to help the Baring Foundation prepare its new funding programme starting in 2020 and therefore largely focuses on our likely area of interest in participatory arts. It appears to be the first such mapping report. It includes over 170 examples of organisations running projects in the UK.

‘Mental health’ and ‘the Arts’ are used recognising that both are contested terms. What we have excluded is also therefore contested, including arts therapies and neurological conditions such as dementia and autism. This review has been undertaken through a literature review, calls for evidence, over forty visits to organisations and a similar number of phone interviews, as well as roundtable consultations and attendance at performances and conferences.

The Context section (page 10) notes recent changes in attitudes to mental health. It briefly considers the long and intertwining history of arts and mental health and offers a conceptual framework for arts organisations working in the field. There are a limited number of relevant national policies, but some thriving local ecologies. There is also work taking place around the world. The rather slight research base is mentioned as well as some cross-cutting issues, including the critical underpinning of an understanding of inequalities in society and how these impact health; the related issues of diversity and intersectionality; and the worrying pressures on the mental health of artists.

The Activity section (page 29) uses a straightforward typology and divides work by art form, type of organisation and setting, giving case studies for each and regional and national maps of activity. Types of organisations include arts (arts and mental health specialists, participatory, specialists in a series of related fields such as homelessness and ‘mainstream’

arts organisations) as well as mental health organisations and ‘other’ organisations (e.g. universities and housing associations).

Finally it would be wrong to jump to firm conclusions on the basis of this review but our first reflections are summed up in the Beginners’ Mind section at the end of this report (page 59). In brief:

## **1. Complex and hybrid**

Definitions of mental health are far from straightforward and also constantly evolving. The field of arts and mental health shares some of the space of participatory arts, disability arts and the art and health sectors. It is at the intersection of creativity, activism and treatment/wellbeing.

## **2. Dedication**

Working in this field feels like a vocation. Writing this report has involved meeting many artists who are quietly passionate about what they do and often have lived experience of mental health problems themselves.

## **3. Challenging work**

Constant funding pressures take their toll and participatory work requires sensitivity, expertise, stamina and resilience. Artists talked about burn-out and the need for greater self-care.

## **4. Longevity but also fragility**

There have been specialist organisations and initiatives since at least the early 1980s, but significant organisations have closed in recent years.

## **5. Broad and varied**

There is a good geographical spread of organisations and representation among arts forms.

**6. Low profile**

The field gets little media attention and has attracted the weight of very few well known larger arts organisations. However, Liverpool Philharmonic is a major exception to this and artists like Stormzy have raised awareness in popular culture.

**7. Under-researched**

It has been said many times that there is plenty of research evidence about the effectiveness in psychological terms of arts in this area, but we have found only a few academic studies with many participants.

**8. Fragmented and small-scale**

The organisations mentioned here are largely working in isolation, aware of very few peers. Most organisations were small with two to four people working full- or part-time in this field.

**9. Partnerships are key**

The work described here is dependent on a variety of partnerships, often between very different organisations such as small arts organisations and Mental Health Trusts.

**10. Children and young people**

This study has identified rather few examples of work taking place with children and young people.

**11. Undervalued by the health sector**

Very few organisations were getting any practical financial support from the NHS, with financing coming from either more general funders like the National Lottery Community Fund or arts funders.

**12. A time of rapid change and opportunity**

Increased attention is being paid to mental health in society at large and this will impact arts and mental health in a positive way. The introduction of social prescribing across NHS England feels like both a major opportunity but also a source of unfunded demand.

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# Introduction

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## HOW THIS REPORT CAME ABOUT

The Baring Foundation (the Foundation) has funded the arts since its inception in 1969. After the collapse of Barings Bank in 1995 and a reduction in the Foundation's resources of 87%, the Foundation has largely funded 'participatory arts', whereby professional artists are active in the community with people without their training to make creative work. Our recent arts programmes have focused on specific groups of people, refugees and asylum seekers (2004-2009) and older people (2010-2019). The Foundation thought long and hard, with the help of many people, as to where to focus its next period of arts funding. The main criterion was to find a field ripe for development, where a modest amount of funding might catalyse change for people who experience disadvantage and discrimination to exercise the right to culture and creativity. In late 2018 it was decided that this focus should be on arts and mental health, with funding available from 2020.

As a first step it was agreed that the Director of the Foundation, who leads the arts programme, should seek to map current activity in the UK. No such mapping study exists and it is hoped that this might be a contribution towards the development of the sector in itself, as well as good preparation for future funding initiatives. A similar approach was undertaken in the arts and older people programme which resulted in the report *Ageing Artfully* (2009).

### Scope and limitations

The Foundation has almost always funded professionally staffed arts organisations and this has meant that these have been the primary focus for this report. It is not to deny the importance of either individual artists or amateur or voluntary arts. Every funder has limits and areas of expertise.

Organisations included in the report needed to have been active in this field in the last two years to be included.

In line with the definitions used later in this report, work with people with cognitive or neurological issues including autism and dementia has not been included, though we understand the increased risk of co-morbidity. Also the large field of qualified arts therapy with around 3,500 practitioners in the UK, be that visual arts, drama or music, has not been included. At the moment, our practice in common with most arts funders, has not been to fund arts therapy, given its explicit clinical approach, but to see that as the domain of health funding and professionals.

This has not been a highly resourced, systematic or academic review and is not the last word on the topic, perhaps barely a primer. It is far from comprehensive and will instantly date. However, it is intended to illuminate the landscape and describe some major features. This will help shape the funding strategy of the Foundation.

### Definitions:

#### Mental health

It is often said that everyone has mental health just as everyone has physical health. But there is little that is settled or uncontroversial about describing mental ill health, which is much less the case for physical health. This report will draw on the social model of mental health, including the World Health Organization's (WHO) social determinants. It is important to recognise that mental and physical health are in reality deeply interconnected.

Mental ill health is treated by psychiatrists and in a circular fashion, psychiatry defines at least medically what is within the scope of mental ill health. Psychiatry has been described as the branch of medicine that specialises in the

treatment of those brain disorders that primarily cause disturbance of thought, behaviour and emotion. (Mcknight, Price and Geddes 2019). The WHO states that:

“Mental Health is defined as a state of wellbeing in which every individual realises his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.”<sup>1</sup>

The following broad categories would generally be recognised by mental health services in the UK.

### Psychoses

Psychoses affect 3% of the population at some point. In the Nineteenth Century they would have been referred to as ‘madness’. The NHS website states, ‘psychosis... causes people to be unable to perceive or interpret things differently from those around them’.<sup>2</sup> Schizophrenia and Bipolar Disorder each affect around 1% of the population. These diagnoses are not without controversy and a good exploration of schizophrenia can be found in *The Heartland: finding and losing Schizophrenia* by Nathan Filer (2018).

### Common Mental Disorders (CMD)

Common Mental Disorders, sometimes still referred to as ‘neuroses’ tend to be considered milder forms of mental ill health, though can have the most extreme consequences in some instances, such as suicide. Depression is by far the most common form of mental illness and will affect 15% of the population as a clinical condition at some point. A magisterial survey, including from the point of personal experience, can be found in *The Noonday Demon* by Andrew Solomon (2002). Anxiety has been called ‘fear spread thin’ and has many forms, including phobias. Obsessive Compulsive Disorder (OCD) falls under this category as do conversion and disassociative disorders including Post Traumatic Stress Disorder

and personality disorders. A 2016 paper by McManus et al identified one in five women and one in eight men in the UK as having a CMD.<sup>3</sup>

### Addictions

Addictions, including alcohol and substance abuse, have a complicated relationship to psychiatry. Not considered mental illness per se, they are however frequently highly connected, sometimes causing and often compounding mental ill health. It has become common to describe a dual diagnosis of addiction and a mental health condition and for these to be treated by mental health services.

Having described these three categories, it should be recognised that there is little that is uncontroversial about them, even within psychiatry, let alone among its critics which include people with lived experience of these conditions. The crucial relationship of social injustice and discrimination to mental health is briefly explored later.

### The arts

Perhaps slightly less difficult to define, but only slightly.

The Arts Council England (ACE) along with many others increasingly uses the terms creativity and culture, but then applies these to a fairly standard list of art forms.

In this publication, ‘the arts’ will be used broadly and inclusively to embrace and value the widest range of art forms including so-called popular culture.

The Baring Foundation has for some time been interested in and funded a broad range of art forms including the visual arts, circus and festivals, creative writing and spoken word, dance, theatre, music and singing, fashion and textiles, digital arts and arts organisations and artists that work with a number of art forms, ‘multi-art form or cross-arts’. If there ever was a useful distinction to be made between arts and crafts this has become ever more blurred.

Finally, the Foundation has often been interested in **participatory arts**. These are discussed in *The Restless Art* (2019) by

<sup>1</sup> See, for example: [www.who.int/mental\\_health/who\\_urges\\_investment/en](http://www.who.int/mental_health/who_urges_investment/en).

<sup>2</sup> See: [www.nhs.uk/conditions/psychosis](http://www.nhs.uk/conditions/psychosis).

<sup>3</sup> McManus S, Bebbington P, Jenkins R, Brugha T. (eds.) (2016) *Mental health and wellbeing in England: Adult Psychiatric Morbidity Survey 2014*. Leeds: NHS Digital.

François Matarasso, but could roughly be described as where a 'professionally trained' artist works with people who don't have that experience to support their creativity. The increasing interest in 'everyday creativity' emphasises the creativity of all people and replaces the supposed hierarchy between professional artists and the voluntary arts.

## LANGUAGE

It is quite easy to identify offensive language around mental health experiences and to see why these fuel stigma and discrimination.

It can be harder to find a consensus around acceptable language. This report will largely use the term mental health problem, as recommended by the national body for mental health in England, Mind. Other terms will sometimes be used for variation, including mental health needs, distress (a phrase more often used by groups of mental health activists), concerns or issues and people with lived experience of these. Mental ill health is used in distinction to mental health to indicate a diagnosis or potential diagnosis to be found in the 'Definitions' section above.

It is common practice in the NHS to refer to people being treated for mental health problems as 'patients' to denote the equivalence between physical and mental health services and to be non-stigmatising. This is not a report about clinical treatment and will not use the term patients.

The language here is certainly not fixed. It will doubtless evolve and its usage is not a trivial matter. In his book *The Heartland*, Nathan Filer convincingly questions almost all terms and diagnoses, wondering whether they all should have inverted commas around them. The term 'neurodiversity' coined in the 1990s and then used for autism spectrum disorder has been extended to include many learning disabilities and mental health problems but is not widely used.

## METHODOLOGY

This report has been based on desk research, enriched by visits to 40 projects around the UK as well as to work in the Netherlands and Finland. In many cases, other organisations mentioned in the report have been contacted by telephone.

Organisations were identified through web searches, an open call on the Foundation's website, calls through several networks, but largely through 'snowballing' contacts, asking each in turn if they were aware of any other activity.

There is no comprehensive list of organisations working in this area. Most organisations were aware of very few peers, doubtless too stretched to invest in research. A list of organisations contacted or found for this report can be found in the Appendix on page 65.

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# The context

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## SOCIAL CHANGE

Over the last decade at least there has been a consistent campaign to raise awareness of mental health problems and to reduce stigma and discrimination (the latter being illegal under the Equality Act 2010).

Before this, there is a much longer history of challenging mental health stigma by people with mental health problems and their allies, described recently in the 'Impatient' exhibition at the Bethlem Museum of the Mind in South London, illustrated by examples from the 1840s Alleged Lunatics Friends Society (ALFS). More recently, the National Survivor User Network has been key. There are numerous recent challenges such as questioning of the ubiquity of the concept of 'recovery' by Recovery in the Bin. This has had an important connection to the arts, for example, through the rich seam of survivor's poetry.

*Time to Change* describes itself as a social movement to end mental health stigma in England. It is run by Mind and Rethink Mental Illness and largely funded by Comic Relief. It has sister initiatives in Scotland (*See Me*), in Northern Ireland (*Change Your Mind*) and *Time for Change Wales*. *See Me* and other campaigns are using social movement methodologies with people with mental health problems leading campaigns and frequently using the arts.

Public Health England recently launched a high-profile public health campaign (including on television) called *Every Mind Matters*.

People from the arts, as well as public life more generally, are often prominent in raising awareness that people who are considered highly talented, successful and indeed loved by the public can experience severe mental ill health. There have been two recent BBC documentaries, one featuring Great British Bake Off winner, Nadiya Hussain, talking about her anxiety and another *My Psychosis & Me*,

featuring actor David Harewood. Princes William and Harry have thrown their weight behind mental health charities through their Royal Foundation, in particular through the *Heads Together* initiative which is both a campaign to reduce stigma and to raise funds for improved mental health services in particular in schools and the workplace.

There is no up-to-date research as to the effects of these more recent changes, though in 2016, Mind reported a 6% improvement in attitudes towards mental health since 2011. However at a subjective level, it feels that discussion of mental health has become more frequent, high profile, positive and less a source of shame or stigma.

## ARTS AND MENTAL HEALTH: A (VERY) POTTED HISTORY

There has been a continual dialogue between the arts and mental health over millennia. The written record begins with Plato and Euripides and took place around the world as argued, for instance, by Andrew Scull in *Madness in Civilisation* (2016).

The history of British society's approach to mental ill health has been described by Roy Porter in *Madness: A Brief History* (2002) from its origins in pre-Christian religions, to the Enlightenment approach, to the advent of asylums including Tuke's widely influential moral treatment approach. Asylums became a victim of their own success as institutions became too large, and were replaced in the twentieth century by talking treatments (influenced by Sigmund Freud in particular among many others), more effective pharmacology, and the resulting reduction in the use of psychiatric beds and the rise in care in the community in the 1980s. This was a pattern largely followed throughout Europe and the USA, with added dissent and energy from the anti-psychiatry movement in the

1960s, known in the UK largely through R. D. Laing but expressed more radically for instance in Italy and in Japan.

Andrew Beveridge in Tischler (2010) looks at the development of society's approach to mental ill health through the lens of the arts, citing Shakespeare's characters King Lear, Ophelia and Lady Macbeth, Robert Burton's *The Anatomy of Melancholia*, various portraits of illness in and out of the asylum by Dickens such as Mr Dorrit and Mr Dick in *David Copperfield*, up to Freud's Influence (which is sometimes described as greater on

the arts than on psychiatry), surrealism and latterly Sylvia Plath's *The Bell Jar* and Elizabeth Wurtzel's *Prozac Nation*.

There have always been great artists who have experienced mental health problems. Three of the most successful exhibitions in London in 2019 were of Van Gogh, Munch and Blake. Japanese visual artist Yayoi Kusama is sometimes described as having the highest attendances in the world for her shows and since the 1970s has lived in a psychiatric hospital with her studio very close by.

## Outsider Art

In 1913 a resident physician at the Bethlem Hospital, Theophilus Hyslop, curated the first public display of art by patients at an international medical conference. This attracted a lot of attention including on the front page of the Daily Mirror (though in order to deride its resemblance to the works of the cubists and expressionists).

The most prolific early collector of Outsider Art was Hans Prinzhorn, a psychiatrist in Heidelberg, who collected 5,000 works by psychotic patients from Germany, Austria, Switzerland and Austria, which he published a book about in 1922 called *Artistry of the Mentally Ill*. This had an important impact on key artists such as Max Ernst, Paul Klee and in particular Jean Debuffet who coined the phrase 'art brut' to describe work produced by artistic outsiders. He called it 'raw art' as it hadn't been through the 'cooking' process of formal artistic training. The Prinzhorn collection not only stirred the artistic community; in his view it was also useful in therapy as it could 'actualise the psyche and thereby build a bridge from the self to others'.

One amongst many other examples of artists was Adolf Wölfli who lived in a psychiatric hospital in Bern, Switzerland

under the care of Walter Morgenthaler who was fascinated by his patient's prolific artistic output which extended to poetry and music as well as painting and drawing.

There are now a number of international Outsider Art Fairs. The Dolhuys Museum in Haarlem in The Netherlands has created an Outsider Art Museum at the Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam and Outside In in England draws on this heritage to inspire a major arts charity.

'Outsider Art' is a problematic term, overlapping with 'untrained' art or 'native art' and not used much in the UK, though much more so in the USA and continental Europe. It was only coined in 1972 as an alternative to the French term 'art brut'. It is rarely used to refer to art forms other than the visual arts. Nor is it synonymous with art work by people with mental health problems. Work produced by other people such as prisoners can be referred to as Outsider Art and the work of people with mental health problems can be decidedly within the mainstream canon such as Kusama. In so far as it is useful as a term, it denotes art by people with mental health problems where they have not had art training and is simply one example of visual art produced without training.

A number of British psychiatric institutions have had artists among their number, perhaps most famously Richard Dadd at the Bethlem. Equally asylums had a long interest in using the arts, with for example the Crichton Royal Hospital in Scotland employing artists to work with patients as early as 1847, the Royal Montrose, also in Scotland, in 1901 giving Adam Christie a studio where he produced 200 sculptures, and Edward Elgar being employed in the 1930s to compose dance sets at an asylum in Worcester.

The recent history of arts and mental health seems to flow from at least five (interconnected) movements. Firstly, as just mentioned, there is the long use of the arts in some **psychiatric institutions**, many of which were closed, scaled back or reformed in the 1980s and 1990s. This then connects to the second area of **Outsider Art** (see page 11).

Thirdly there is more general interest in **arts and health**, including physical health which has waxed and waned. There was, for example, a 2007 initiative by the Department of Health/Arts Council England which faded in part due to a distracted Department of Health. However, the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing and many others have since taken up the baton. Some organisations in this report have been active in this field for around thirty years, e.g. Arts Care (1987) and Studio Upstairs (1988).

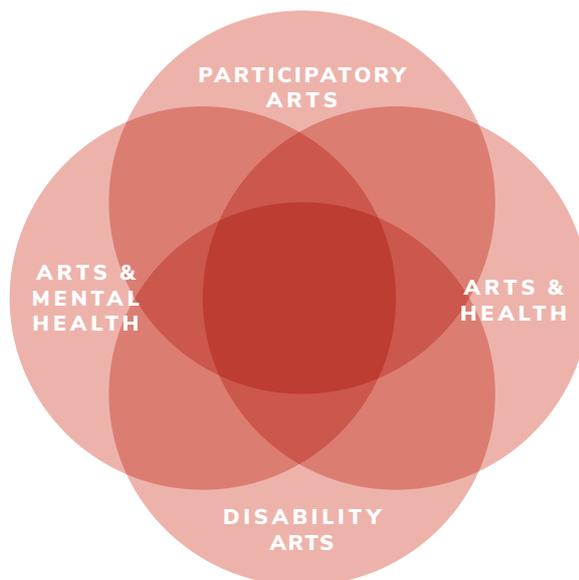
Fourthly, there is the different history of **disability arts**, not least the way in which it has radically and powerfully questioned what is 'normal'. Disability arts are more associated with activism and protest and aligned with the anti-psychiatry movement of the 1960s. It could be said that the work of artists Dolly Sen and the Vacuum Cleaner are witty, thought-provoking modern examples.

Lastly, there has been broader current of **community or participatory arts**, especially what François Matarasso (2019) calls 'the art of social impact' of the 1990s.

## CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORKS

This history influences, to some extent, the motivation and style of the organisations working in this field. They tend to come from three different traditions. In reality these blur and overlap, so the following can only be a broad generalisation.

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework of arts organisations delivering activity**



### 1. Disability Arts

This movement shares a common history with the disability movement. Developing in the 1960s, the movement strongly advocated disability rights and had as its underpinning philosophy acknowledgement that someone may live with a physical, cognitive, sensory or mental health 'impairment'. These become 'disabilities' only when society stigmatises these or fails to provide support which removes any obstacles. This has become widely known as the social model of disability. Disability arts organisations tend to emphasise voice, activism and social change.

### 2. Participatory Arts

There are both community based participatory arts companies serving a variety of different sections of the community and arts organisations specialising in working with a section of society, such as prisoners or homeless people, who take a participatory approach. Participatory arts will certainly be concerned with identity, self-expression and inclusion in society but also with the fundamental right to be creative and to have access to cultural opportunities.

There are a large number of arts organisations that specialise in specific fields where there is an increased risk of someone having a mental health problem. This report includes the fields of criminal justice, homelessness and refugees, but there are others. For the purposes of this report, these are defined as participatory arts organisations as they tend to use the approach described here, although they may not always identify themselves as such.

### 3. Arts and Health

While most people in the arts and health field would accept the social model of disability and understand the role of the arts in identity and creativity, there will often be a greater emphasis on health and wellbeing improvement.

It is sometimes said that psychiatry relies on an outdated and disabling medical model of mental health. Actually, as shown below, there are at least five models at play.

Therefore in the arts and health field, there is likely to be more than one motivation at work. Where this work is funded by health funders, arts organisations will often need to regard this work as treatment and measure health improvements.

These differing traditions and domains means that **arts and mental health activity** lies at the intersection of activism, creativity and treatment. There is no reason that these should be seen as in conflict but they can rather be complementary.

## Five models of the causes mental ill health

McKnight, Price and Geddes (2019) summarise the five models as follows.

**1. The medical model** is an approach found useful by general medicine in which psychiatric disorders are investigated by, for example, 'identifying regularly occurring patterns of symptoms (or syndromes) and relating them to brain pathologies'.<sup>4</sup> This has been useful for schizophrenia and mood disorders but less useful with anxiety and depression.

**2. The behavioural model** is 'an approach in which psychiatric disorders are explained in terms of adaptive and maladaptive behaviours'.<sup>5</sup> For people with depression, for example, avoidance of daily activities – and the enjoyment they can bring – can be seen as maladaptive. Progress in treatment can be made by identifying maladaptive and adaptive behaviours, and discouraging the maladaptive and encouraging the adaptive.

**3. The cognitive model** is 'an approach in which psychiatric disorders are explained in terms of cognitive biases'<sup>6</sup> and which influences how information is selected,

interpreted and acted upon by our minds. For someone with anxiety, for example, the normal physical signs of a 'fight or flight' response like a fast heart rate or sweating, might be interpreted as a heart attack – a misattribution which might lead to a 'panic attack'.

**4. The social model** sees 'close relationships between a person's mood and behaviour and their social environment'.<sup>7</sup>

**5. The biopsychosocial model** is 'an approach in which psychiatric disorders are explained by careful integration of physical factors (e.g. those in the medical model), psychological factors (e.g. those in the behavioural and cognitive models) and social factors'.<sup>8</sup> McKnight et al give as an example a young man with depression who is drinking too much, thinking negatively about his situation and future and avoiding work and friends who might be then encouraged to stop drinking (physical), identify and challenge negative thoughts (psychological) and consider a phased return to work and social life (social).

<sup>4</sup> McKnight, R., Price, J., and Geddes, J., (2019). *Psychiatry*. 5th edition. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp 61-62.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid. p62.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid. p62.

<sup>7</sup> Ibid. pp 62-63.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid. p63.

## INEQUALITY, DIVERSITY AND INTERSECTIONALITY

The structural inequalities in society that systematically leave a number of groups with worse life chances, for instance (but not exclusively) around poverty, gender and race, could not be more important when it comes to health. These discussions are framed in a number of ways, but one of the most influential commentators has been Professor Sir Michael Marmot. His seminal review of health inequalities will be updated this year in a new report *Health Equity in England: The Marmot Review Ten Years On* (2020) by the Health Foundation and the Institute of Health Equity.

This analysis is central to understanding mental health in modern Britain. The Centre for Mental Health has launched a Commission for Equality in Mental Health to consider what a system designed for equity would look like. The Centre writes, 'We know from research that there are

deep inequalities in our risk of having a mental health difficulty and the support we are likely to receive for it. Children from the poorest 20% of households are four times more likely to have a mental health problem by the age of 11 than those from the wealthiest. Having a disability, coming from a BAME community, being LGBT+ and having a physical illness are all associated with a higher risk of poor mental health at any stage in life. Yet groups with the highest rates of mental ill health often find services least accessible and, when they do receive support, they have the poorest outcomes'.<sup>9</sup>

*“None of the NHS staff helped me; and then I came here, and, actually, the fact this wasn't a medicalised place... I was greeted like a creative, fellow human being... end of.”*

**Artlift participant (See NHS England and social prescribing page 17)**

Photo courtesy of Artlift.



<sup>9</sup> Email to author.

Writing in 2016, Matthew Todd in *Straight Jacket* examined the mental health pressures of growing up gay in a heteronormative society, even one with a growing legislative basis for LGBTI rights. He linked this to an increased risk of addictive behaviour, self-harm and suicide. The LGBT Foundation estimates that LGBT people are three times more likely to suffer depression than heterosexual people.

In *Mad, Bad and Sad: A History of Women and the Mind Doctors from 1800s to the Present* (2007), Lisa Appignanesi gives a fascinating (and frequently chilling account) of gender bias in society and in psychiatry, and the relationship between the two.

That life experiences are complex and interacting is fundamental to addressing culture and mental health. The experience of a Black lesbian with clinical depression will be influenced by structural inequalities as will that of a poor working class white man with a learning disability and OCD. That inequalities and discrimination make more likely, compound and complicate both mental ill health and the treatment someone receives is not really in dispute. What becomes more complex is the contribution that structural inequality makes and its relationship to other factors including trauma. The privately educated bipolar City banker with a drug addiction is still at risk of self-harm and suicide, but this may be lower and the treatment better.

Intersectionality – that social categorisations are overlapping and interdependent – is true of human experience in general and highly relevant here. People with mental health problems will almost always face other issues or barriers in their lives. Many, perhaps most, people with mental health problems will not have a diagnosis by a clinician and this might be more likely in some communities than others.

How does this debate impact the arts? Certainly, it means that artists need to be aware and sensitive to these discussions. The experiences of people from diverse backgrounds need to be heard through the arts which can also challenge the injustices in society that contribute to these experiences.

## THE MENTAL HEALTH OF THE CREATIVE WORKFORCE

The mental health of the creative workforce is becoming an issue of particular concern. Much of this relates to the stresses of performance, be that on the stage, in the concert hall or other venues, but it also relates more broadly to insecure, low paid and undervalued work including in other art forms.

Inspire, the mental health organisation for Northern Ireland, published a worrying study in 2018 entitled *Changing arts and minds – a survey of the health and wellbeing of the creative sector*. It was based on the responses of 576 people in the creative workforce, mainly based in Ireland, North or South, but there are no strong reasons for believing the results would not be applicable to England, Scotland and Wales. The report found that the creative industries have a number of structural features which may contribute to mental illness. These include the gig economy, the perceived lack of value placed on work, low pay, and pressure to reach high standards. 205 respondents were paid below the poverty line. Alcohol and drug abuse seemed higher than for the general population and there were examples of being paid with alcohol. Responses for questions around suicide were especially concerning with 16% reporting having attempted suicide. In general, rates of mental ill health were three times higher than that of the general population. The report concludes with six practical recommendations to improve conditions for artists including through identifying risk and protective behaviours as part of the curriculum for professional training in different art forms.

In response to several tragic suicides in the acting profession, a number of initiatives have emerged. More attention each year is paid to mental health at the Edinburgh Festivals – the largest arts festival in the world. For many performers in particular, the Fringe Festival might make or break their career. There are an increasing number of initiatives for instance run by Objectively Funny which, amongst other things, distributed 5,000 advice booklets on mental health and FFS Livestream, an online chat show on mental health.

Other initiatives include the first appointment of a lecturer in mental health to a UK conservatoire by the Royal Northern College of Music and good practice guidelines and services for musicians in the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic. Help Musicians UK deliver the Music Minds Matter initiative offering a free 24 hour service. The Film and TV Charity has also set up a helpline.

In the context of this report there are reasons to believe that working with people with mental health problems may bring with it particular pressures, as well as the rewards and fulfilment entailed in such important work. In *Artists Practising Well* (2019), Nicola Naismith argues for the importance of affective support which she defines as how 'moods, feeling and attitudes can be supported by reflective practice activities'. Naismith describes this approach as 'Who will care for the carer?'. Cardboard Citizens (see case study on page 48) takes a number of measures for its staff including regular clinical supervision and training in trauma informed practice.

Beyond this, this report does not seek to consider whether mental health problems may be positively associated with creativity

for a number of reasons. Firstly, as a funder, the Baring Foundation wishes to support the right of people with a mental health problem to engage with the arts and culture, regardless of whether or not the arts either improve mental wellbeing or whether or not some types of mental ill health improve creativity. Whatever the relationship, creativity remains a right. Secondly, evidence in this field is complex and we are a long way from a definitive position. Mental health problems are common so it is unsurprising that many artists have them. In *Changing arts and minds* (2018) Inspire argues that it is the facets of the creative industries which systematically undermine mental health rather than any other causality.

## NATIONAL POLICIES AND FRAMEWORKS

### United Kingdom

It is always important to emphasise how few domestic policy strategies or institutions operate across the UK. Almost everything is devolved to the four nations, which affects funding opportunities and regulation for arts and mental health.



Photo courtesy of Artlift.

The All-Party Parliamentary Group for Arts, Health and Wellbeing operates at a UK wide level and its report *Creative Health* (2017), which includes mental health, has been highly influential.

Otherwise, the main relevant body is the Royal College of Psychiatrists, which has devolved Councils for each country. The Royal College does have a Special Interest Group on Art

which includes the use of arts in training of clinicians, arts therapy and the wider relevance of arts to psychiatry.

The equivalent body for psychologists is the British Psychological Society. The Royal Society for Public Health has also had an interest in arts and culture, but with more emphasis on arts and dementia.

## NHS England and social prescribing

Social prescribing, where a professional in primary health care refers a patient to local non-clinical services, dates back to at least 1984 and the Bromley by Bow Centre in East London. Referrals can be to a wide range of often voluntary or community organisations. The range of activities can be wide and include different forms of volunteering, gardening, walking and other physical activities and legal advice, though social prescribing has always included a strong role for the arts. Referrals are not limited to people with a mental health problem, but again a long-term, probably mild, mental health problem is quite usual along with social isolation. Evidence is gradually emerging of the effectiveness of social prescribing schemes in improving health and wellbeing outcomes and possibly reducing costs to the NHS from unnecessary visits to the GP.

However, social prescribing has recently been turbo-charged in England through inclusion in the NHS Long Term Plan and with dedicated funding. All GPs are now required to be organised into groups serving 50,000 patients and each of these networks will be funded to employ a social prescriber (job titles vary).

*“If it wasn't for the Artlift session I wouldn't have got out of the house today. I've also managed to go to a parent and child group today because the art group got me motivated.”*

**Artlift participant**

A significant point to note regarding this welcome development is that no NHS funding has been announced to support the services that will be provided to the patients who are referred, only to the (very important) task of social prescriber/link worker. In a sense, therefore, an unquantified amount of unfunded demand is being created, often for arts and mental health initiatives.

There are a number of examples of arts on prescription services but one of the most established is Artlift which largely serves Gloucestershire. Spearheaded by a GP, it was set up in 2007 with funding from Arts Council England and Gloucestershire County Council funding.

Currently funded by NHS Gloucestershire Clinical Commissioning Group, Macmillan Cancer Support and trust/foundation investment, Artlift provides courses on prescription for adults living with mental health challenges and for those living with other long-term / major health challenges adversely impacting on their mental health (with current projects focusing on chronic pain and cancer).

Artlift now receives over 420 referrals a year to its courses which draw on a range of arts genres including visual arts and crafts, photography, creative writing and printmaking. With partners at the University of Gloucestershire, Artlift now holds the largest known body of Arts & Wellbeing data in the world (a dataset of 1,870).

## England

Although the draft ten-year strategy for the Arts Council England (ACE) does not specifically mention mental health, it does express an intention to do more work in the overall field of arts and health and to develop closer relations with the Department for Health and Social Care and the NHS. ACE funds the relevant sector support body, the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance.

The current NHS Five Year Forward View for Mental Health does not refer to the value of the arts or culture. Among its major themes are greater resources for psychological therapies and parity in the health service for mental and physical health.

## Scotland

Creative Scotland's 10-Year Plan runs to 2024.<sup>10</sup> One of its four Connecting Themes is Equalities, Diversity and Inclusion.

In legislation this is underpinned by the 2010 Equalities Act which includes mental health, but the plan makes no specific reference to this. A series of tools are mentioned to support arts organisations in their thinking on particular themes but none are mentioned for mental health.

Similarly, the Scottish Government's Strategy for Mental Health 2017–2027<sup>11</sup> makes no specific reference to the role of culture and the arts to mental health. The Scottish Government is consulting over a draft Culture Strategy which does note the important contribution of the arts to mental health and a need for more cross-sectoral working. Finally, a major programme of Public Health Reform is underway in Scotland which includes the integration of health and social care.

## The Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival

The Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival (SMHAF) is led by the Mental Health Foundation and began life in 2007. It now takes place annually throughout Scotland in May. The Festival has a number of partners including See Me and the Royal College of Psychiatrists. It has received funding from Creative Scotland. One of the Festival's aims is to challenge preconceived ideas about mental health. It is supported by a team of 11 regional coordinators, enabling it to be a 'programme from the ground up' and stretch well beyond the Central Belt. It uses a co-production model now being adopted by sister international festivals.

The theme for 2019 was 'connected', aiming to bring together established artists and emerging ones finding their voice and the worlds of arts, activism and health. It covered a range of art forms including film, writing, theatre, music, visual arts, comedy and dance. It reached 25,000 participants in around 300 events.

The International Film Awards was hosted by the film critic of The Scotsman at the Centre for Contemporary Arts in Glasgow. 337 submissions were received and ten films honoured with awards. The Writing Awards were held in association with Bipolar Scotland at St George's Tron Church in Glasgow and hosted by Ian Rankin. There were 200 submissions leading to three overall winners. In addition, to mark the Mental Health Foundation's 70th anniversary, an online project was launched called 70 Stories using past winners. Since 2012, Talking Heads has been an important element of the festival where 15 volunteers with lived experience receive support to write critical and creative reactions to work at the festival. Outside May, a variety of other activity takes place, for example award winning work is toured and prizes are given during the Edinburgh Fringe Festival for the best work on mental health.

<sup>10</sup> See Creative Scotland website: [www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/connecting-themes](http://www.creativescotland.com/what-we-do/the-10-year-plan/connecting-themes).

<sup>11</sup> Scottish Government Mental Health Strategy 2017–2027, available at: [www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-strategy-2017-2027](http://www.gov.scot/publications/mental-health-strategy-2017-2027).

# SCOTTISH MENTAL HEALTH ARTS FESTIVAL



Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival. Photo courtesy of the Mental Health Foundation Scotland.

## Wales

The Welsh Government and the Arts Council of Wales (ACW) have been working closely together around arts and health, kicked off by a mapping study by ACW in 2018.<sup>12</sup> There is a Memorandum of Understanding between the Welsh NHS Confederation and ACW, and funding was found for new Arts and Health Coordinator posts for each Health Board at the strategic level. The Welsh Assembly has a Cross Party Group on Arts and Health. There are two membership networks, a more general one with 300 members and a more recent research alliance.

More broadly, the Welsh Government has given considerable priority to mental health, for instance in its *Together for Mental Health Strategy*<sup>13</sup> and a specific report into the mental health of younger people, *Mind Over Matter*.<sup>14</sup>

The Royal College of Psychiatrists in Wales has also appointed playwright and poet Patrick Jones as its Artist in Residence.

## Northern Ireland

“It was a bit challenging to start with and I didn’t talk much, but that soon went away. Now they can’t stop me talking.”

### ARTiculate participant

The Arts Council Northern Ireland (ACNI) has a draft framework for the period 2019–2024 which makes reference to continued work with the Public Health Agency and to wellbeing, rather than specifically to mental health.

Mental health and wellbeing are seen as an important policy focus in Northern Ireland. It is noticeable for instance that the country

## ‘ARTiculate’: young people & wellbeing arts programme

The Arts Council of Northern Ireland, in partnership with the Public Health Agency (PHA), launched the three-year, £600,000, ARTiculate programme in 2016, with the aim of improving the health and wellbeing of children and young people (aged 12 to 18) through participation in high-quality arts activities. Grants were made available to youth and community groups linked to the PHA to employ the services of artists and arts organisations in developing custom-made, arts-based projects for young people. These projects utilised the known benefits of participating in the arts – improved self-expression, confidence and motivation – to empower young people, strengthen their resilience, challenge stigma associated with mental health, and support help-seeking behaviour.

By the close of the programme in September 2019, 47 projects had been successfully delivered across all five Health and Social Care Trust areas in Northern

Ireland. Over 4,000 young participants had the opportunity to experience the range of arts, in projects shaped by the young people themselves, which contributed to a strong sense of ownership. Difficult issues were able to be addressed, and complex feelings expressed, in fun, engaging and creative ways, within a safe, non-judgmental space, all of which enhanced participants’ sense of trust, belonging and achievement.

For many of the younger people, participation in the programme presented their first real encounter with professionally-led arts activities, and for many, the experience was transformational. The overwhelming majority reported that they felt happier about themselves, that their self-confidence had improved, that they understood more about what made them feel unhappy and where to turn for help, that they had made supportive friendships with other participants, and that they intended to continue with the arts.

<sup>12</sup> *Arts and Health in Wales: A Mapping study of current activity*, 2018, [arts.wales/sites/default/files/2019-02/Arts\\_and\\_Health\\_Volume\\_1\\_0.pdf](https://arts.wales/sites/default/files/2019-02/Arts_and_Health_Volume_1_0.pdf).

<sup>13</sup> *Together for Mental Health: A Strategy for Mental Health and Wellbeing in Wales*, 2012, [gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/together-for-mental-health-summary.pdf](https://gov.wales/sites/default/files/publications/2019-04/together-for-mental-health-summary.pdf).

<sup>14</sup> *Mind over Matter*, April 2018, [www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11522/cr-ld11522-e.pdf](http://www.assembly.wales/laid%20documents/cr-ld11522/cr-ld11522-e.pdf).



**Youth Action Northern Ireland's Rainbow Factory School of Performing Arts, supported by ARTiculate.**

suffers the highest suicide rate in the UK. Therefore, the Public Health Agency has set up Suicide Prevention Implementation Groups in areas of greatest risk and the Arts Council of Northern Ireland works alongside these.

The experience of the Troubles in Northern Ireland means that there are a number of initiatives around reconciliation and inclusion, but also ones that accept the possibility of trauma resulting from recent history.

These considerations have meant that the Public Health Agency and ACNI have match-funded a £600,000 pilot fund over three years called ARTiculate around the mental health and wellbeing of vulnerable children and young people.

## LOCAL FRAMEWORKS AND COORDINATION

Arts and mental health work will almost always be experienced at the local level in communities where people live and work. Therefore, good communications between different services and mutual respect and understanding must help in offering good quality services.

A significant and long running example of local coordination is Arts and Minds in Leeds which is funded by the local NHS Foundation Trust. It has been working for over a decade to bring together anyone interested in mental wellbeing and creativity in the city. It has three part-time staff, each employed by a different sector. It has 20 partner organisations and set up the Love Arts Festival which has been running in the city since 2011 (with a fallow year in 2019). It can advise artists on how to work in mental health settings and arts organisations on how to get participants for projects. It also delivers several projects such as the Culture Club with monthly visits to local shows.

In 2017, the Mayor of London commissioned a report looking at the role and potential of culture for mental health in London.<sup>15</sup> The resulting initiative, Thrive Ldn, has a small number of partners and made some seeds of change grants. It is unclear what future plans there are for the initiative.

In some areas social prescribing may create the infrastructure for more coordinated and strategic work later. For instance, in Bristol the Arts on Referral Alliance, with funding from the Council, CCG and trusts, supports activity in thirteen locations delivered by local arts organisations for example Wellspring Arts and ArtEase.

**15** *The opportunities for arts and cultural activities to improve the mental health and wellbeing of Londoners*, Nikki Crane Associates for Thrive LDN, 2018, [www.thriveldn.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Thrive-LDN-Culture-Report-FINAL.pdf](http://www.thriveldn.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/Thrive-LDN-Culture-Report-FINAL.pdf).

## Brighton

Brighton may have the greatest wealth of arts and mental health projects per capita in the country. These include:

- Creative Future working in visual arts and creative writing;
- Synergy Creative Community, a peer led community organisation with weekly sessions in a number of art forms;
- Fabrica, the visual arts agency, and its work with Men in Sheds in Kemptown and Outside In;
- Artspace, a studio space for people with mental health problems;
- The Healing, Expressive and Recovery Arts (HERA) Project run by the Robin Hood Foundation and the Brighton Health and Wellbeing Centre;
- We are not Saints, a record label for people in recovery from addiction;
- The New Note Orchestra for people recovering from addiction;
- Cascade Creative Recovery, a grassroots initiative, volunteer led with a café and a number of creative projects including a choir and drama group;
- Rhythmix, Brighton based and with a broader remit than mental health but with a strong stream of work, especially for younger people.

There have also been some imaginative one-off projects such as the Brighton & Sussex Medical School presenting learning on mental health and drawing

at a conference, and an initiative on 'the art of attachment' for children and young people with mental health challenges.

The 2018 report of Brighton's Director of Public Health was entitled *The Art of Good Health*<sup>16</sup>, and made recommendations for Brighton to become a Centre for Excellence in arts and culture, supporting wellbeing and reducing health inequalities.

Coordination is improved through an Arts & Health Group meeting quarterly and reporting to the Brighton & Hove Arts & Creative Industries Group. The aims of the group are to:

1. promote the contribution that engagement in the arts makes to health & wellbeing;
2. develop opportunities for collaboration between the arts and the health & wellbeing sectors and a shared approach to evaluating arts, health & wellbeing activity;
3. encourage and support the work of the arts sector to address health and wellbeing priorities across the city;
4. co-develop arts initiatives and schemes working in collaboration with the Health & Wellbeing sector that reduce inequality, improve access and allow people to have choices and a say in what they are engaging with;
5. explore investment opportunities to support the development and dissemination of good practice.<sup>17</sup>

## THE MENTAL HEALTH SYSTEM

The NHS and therefore mental health services are devolved and the specifics of what is on offer will therefore differ from nation to nation. There are however broad similarities and this synopsis is based on the system in England. The more specialised arts organisations will

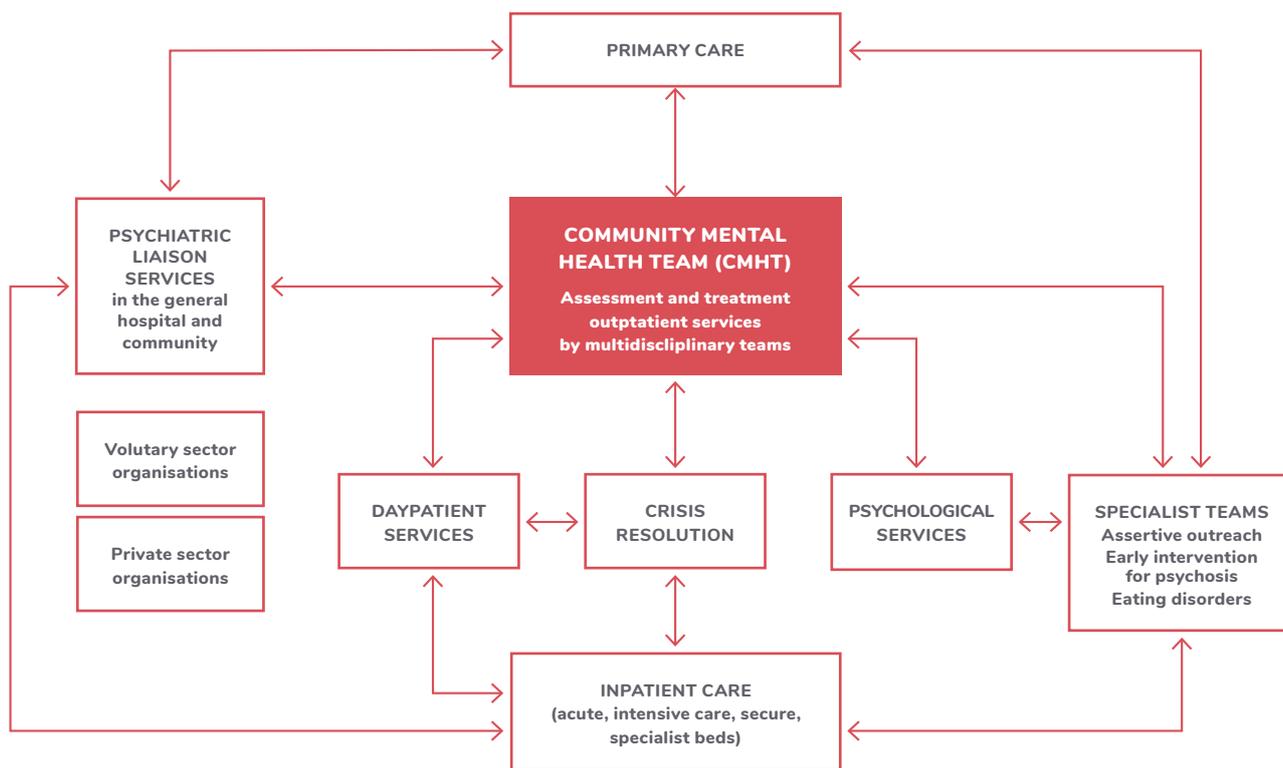
be expert at navigating the system while others will be aware that this is part of their participants' lives.

The graphic left – described as 'very simplified' – shows how complex mental health services are.

<sup>16</sup> *The Art of Good Health: Annual report of the Director of Public Health, Brighton and Hove 2018*, [www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/BHCC%20Public%20Health%20Annual%20Report%202018\\_0.pdf](http://www.brighton-hove.gov.uk/sites/brighton-hove.gov.uk/files/BHCC%20Public%20Health%20Annual%20Report%202018_0.pdf).

<sup>17</sup> Email to author.

Figure 2\*: A simplified structure of mental healthcare services in a state-funded healthcare system



The great majority of mental health problems will be treated in primary care. Only around 5-10% of more serious problems will be referred to secondary care. The common point of referral is the Community Mental Health Team (CMHT). These multi-disciplinary teams include a psychiatrist and will typically have a caseload of 250 patients from a population of 20-50,000 people. Often a care coordinator in the team will be assigned to a new patient to work out a care plan, usually with a number of elements for different team members. Key to this is effective collaboration including with external agencies in the voluntary sector.

It is not appropriate in a report focusing on the arts to give a full description of this system, but suffice it to say there are a number of other elements and the more severe and enduring the problem, the more likely that these will be involved. Equally it is true that this will affect relatively few people.

There are 60 Mental Health Trusts in England and they will be, to differing degrees, offering creative therapies using qualified therapists.

The degree to which they are engaging with arts beyond this will vary greatly though it is likely that all Trusts would have some engagement. There is however no overall assessment of what is happening in this respect or any inspection system which would allow for this.

Recovery colleges are an interesting part of the mental health system and have been springing up across England in the last ten years. There are now roughly 70. They emphasise that participants are students and that the courses they undertake are co-produced and delivered by NHS professionals such as psychologists and by Recovery College employees who have lived experience of mental health problems. The organisational form of recovery colleges varies, with some outside the NHS and operating as independent charities and others part of an NHS Trust. Funding largely comes from the NHS, but other sources of funding are possible too. Courses often focus on the self-management of a mental health problem or work skills, but can frequently include visual arts, creative writing and music.

\* Figure 2 © Oxford University Press 2019. Reproduced from Psychiatry by Rebecca McKnight, Jonathan Price and John Geddes, 5th edition, p103. Reproduced with permission of the Licensor through PLSClear. This figure (2) must not be further reproduced or transmitted, in any form of by an means, without prior permission of the licensor.

## West London Mental Health Trust

The Trust covers the three London boroughs of Ealing, Hounslow and Hammersmith and Fulham, serving a local population of over 800,000 and treating more than 99,000 people each year. It has three streams of work: Broadmoor Hospital; being a leading national provider of forensic services; and delivering local services. Services are spread across more than 30 sites and the Trust employs around 3,500 people. Broadmoor is one of three high security hospitals in the country.

It has 240 patients with an average stay of five to seven years. Artists have been involved in the redevelopment of the Hospital including Jon Thomson, the curator of Frieze, who made the coloured glass windows for the multi-faith room. The Trust uses eight qualified therapists who provide art, music and drama. Arts therapies can be on a group basis or one to one. Sessions are designed to balance talking and art making and take place in hospital settings.

## RESEARCH

The most up-to-date overview of research was published in November 2019 by the World Health Organization asking the question, 'What is the evidence on the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing?'<sup>18</sup> One section looks at the evidence regarding the management and treatment of mental illness. This section is divided four areas: perinatal mental illness; mild – moderate mental illness; severe mental illness; and trauma and abuse. Results vary according to condition and art form but limited positive psychological (and sometimes related physiological) effects are found for each domain. However the report considers both studies confined to art/music/drama therapy as well as community or participatory arts practice while *Creatively Minded* confines itself to the latter. The report also makes the important point that the arts can be very effective in combatting health-related stigma and promoting mental health literacy.

Two other recent compilations of research have been *Creative Health* (2017) by the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Arts, Health and Wellbeing and *Arts and Culture in Health and Wellbeing and in the Criminal Justice System: A summary of evidence* (Arts Council England, 2018). The latter includes a section on 'psychological health'.

There have been a small number of systematic reviews. In 2006, Hacking, Sacker, Kent, Shenton and Spandler published *Mental health and arts participation: the state of the art in England*.<sup>19</sup> As a follow-up to work being undertaken by the Social Exclusion Unit in Government, the team surveyed participatory arts projects for people with mental health needs aged 16-65 in an England-only study. It was estimated that 230 surveys were distributed and 116 replies received, of which 102 were completed. The authors concluded that participatory arts were 'a vibrant strand within the wider English mental health economy'.<sup>20</sup> All projects needed to rely on opportunistic bids to maintain activity. Low staffing levels were compensated by extensive use of volunteers. Many projects were quite well established and had been working for over eight years. Overall those projects were offering services to 4,000 people per week coming via a range of referral routes. The most common art form was drawing and painting (77%), then craft (60%) and creative writing (59%). Community settings were most used (48 projects), then healthcare (38), and specialist arts settings (36). It was felt the projects were successful in engaging Black and Minority Ethnic participants. A range of evaluation techniques were used to assess impact.

<sup>18</sup> Fancourt, D, and Finn, S. *What is the evidence of the role of the arts in improving health and wellbeing? A scoping review*, World Health Organization 2019.

<sup>19</sup> Hacking, Suzanne & Secker, Jenny & Kent, Lyn & Shenton, Jo & Spandler, Helen. (2006). *Mental health and arts participation: The state of the art in England*. *The Journal of the Royal Society for the Promotion of Health*. 126. 121-7.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid.

The following year, Hacking et al published a study of 22 projects as well as collecting data on an additional 62 new participants with mental health problems.<sup>21</sup> The study looked at outcomes after four weeks from the start of the project and six months after its conclusion. Although there were methodological problems over attribution, it was concluded the projects benefited participants in terms of wellbeing, empowerment and social inclusion.

In 2011, Leckey<sup>22</sup> conducted a systematic review of 11 studies on mental health in different settings which suggested that creative activities can reduce stress and promote relaxation and self-expression.

In 2013, van Lith, Schofield and Fenner published *Identifying the evidence-base for art-based practices and their potential benefits for mental health recovery: A critical review*.<sup>23</sup> The review restricted itself to the visual arts and examined 23 published studies using a framework by Lal of potential mental health benefits. They concluded that the identified areas of key benefit from the studies were psychological and social recovery, especially in the areas of self-discovery, self-expression, relationships and social identity.

### Infrastructure

The strapline for the MARCH Network is 'transforming our understanding of how social, cultural and community assets can support mental health'. It is one of a number of research networks that emerged in 2018 from an initiative to work across Research Councils on mental health. It estimates there are over one million 'assets' to be considered and has a strong focus on arts, cultural and heritage assets. It links researchers across academic silos and with practice on the ground aiming to change policy and practice. It operates across the UK. It has a good list of research studies in its resources section (including for the arts).

The Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance is funded by the Arts Council England to be a sector support organisation. It is free to join and

runs training, meetings and sends a newsletter. It has a steering group composed of regional representatives and is informed by LENS – the Lived Experience Network.

The London Arts in Health Forum is a membership body spanning health and wellbeing and offering, events, training and a newsletter. There are a number of regional associations in England such as the very active Arts and Health South West.

The Arts + Health Network Scotland is a membership organisation providing information and support.

### BEYOND THE UK

In referencing some work outside the UK, it should be underlined that the examples given here are from Europe and North America and they merely give the briefest glimpse of work even there. There are undoubtedly many examples of work from other parts of the world. There is also a vitally important discussion around the impact of colonisation and slavery on mental health in a number of countries, especially in Africa. Probably the principal theorist in this regard was the psychiatrist Frantz Fanon, author of *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952) who practised community models of psychiatry, in Algeria for example, and challenged the psychopathology of colonialism. Referring to the examples below is not intended to undermine these points but simply illustrate that practice in the UK has much to benefit from international exchange.

The N.E.F.E.L.E Project is a network of nine organisations involved in national arts and mental health festivals in Greece, Spain, France and Belgium. There are other national festivals which are not currently members. It had been funded by the Culture Programme of the EU and is based in Brussels.

There a number of museums in Europe which are based in psychiatric hospitals or which have used their archives for artistic as well as academic and curatorial purposes.

**21** Hacking, S., Secker, J., Spandler, H., Kent, L. and Shenton, J. (2008), Evaluating the impact of participatory art projects for people with mental health needs. *Health & Social Care in the Community*, 16: 638-648.

**22** Leckey, J. (2011), The therapeutic effectiveness of creative activities on mental well-being: a systematic review of the literature. *Journal of Psychiatric and Mental Health Nursing*, 18: 501-509

**23** Lith Van, T., Schofield, Margot J., and Fenner, P. (2013) Identifying the evidence-base for art-based practices and their potential benefit for mental health recovery: A critical review. *Disability and Rehabilitation*, 35: 16. 1309-1323.

These include the Museum Overtaci in Aarhus in Denmark and Dr Guislain Museum in Belgium. Saint-Paul in Southern France, the asylum where Van Gogh stayed, records his presence and the excellent study *Starry Night* by Martin Bailey (2018) makes clear that some of his most brilliant work was produced there.

In the Netherlands, the former national museum of psychiatry, Den Dolshuys in Haarlem, is being revamped and will be reborn in 2020 as the Museum of the Mind. It has already

spawned a collaboration with the prestigious Hermitage Museum in Amsterdam to create an Outsider Art Museum with an exhibition series and next door a busy studio and programme called the Outsider Gallery. In Rotterdam, a major care organisation has created the beautiful Atelier Herenplaats which has been running for thirty years and has just under forty studios for people with learning disabilities and people with mental health problems along with an ambitious exhibition programme. Also in Rotterdam, the Theater Babel is a mixed group

## Finland

Arts and mental health in Finland need to be considered within the context of strong state and civic leadership and relatively high levels of public spending and a highly developed and progressive civic society. Not surprisingly, this provides fertile ground for arts and mental health initiatives, as does acknowledgement of the prevalence of mental health problems nationally. (Around a quarter of Finnish people suffer from psychological symptoms with adverse effects at some point in their lives, and an estimated 7% of adults live with depression, anxiety and alcohol related conditions.<sup>24</sup>)

The previous Government chose arts as a driver of wellbeing as one of its 26 key projects and the new Government has enacted a duty on municipalities to promote culture and to report against a framework which explicitly consider arts and health/wellbeing.

A jewel in the crown of civic society in this field is the re-purposing of the beautiful 1840s asylum for the area of Lapinlahti in Helsinki into a wellness centre. Lapinlahti Lähde has a staff of eight and runs numerous workshops, making good use of the superb setting on the sea with lovely parkland all around. The centre is the site of around 200 events per year with a theme of culture and mental health. It is an open community facility, dedicated to destigmatising mental illness.

Finland is part of an international movement of 'Clubhouses' (Trombi) begun in New York which uses a peer support model for adults seeking recovery from mental illness. These often include arts or culture groups (e.g. to set up a band). More specifically, the 'think-and-do tank', Kukonori is piloting a network of eight Culture Houses for 18-35-year-olds, again using peer support. MIELI, the Finnish Association for Mental Health (one of three major national bodies) has adopted the model of the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival to run a national arts and mental health week each year in May. Around half its 56 local member organisations take part.

Some of the many other examples of work include:

- a baby dance hour provided by the Dance Centre of Central Finland in Jyväskylä, which recognises the problems of perinatal mental health conditions;
- 'Self-portraits', a peer led dance initiative by the Finnish association for family members of people with mental health problems;
- The Art Forge in a suburb of Helsinki which acts as a specialist arts and health project running numerous workshops and an annual drama production.

<sup>24</sup> Mental health briefing sheets: Facts and activities in members states, European Union, [ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph\\_determinants/life\\_style/mental/docs/finland.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/health/archive/ph_determinants/life_style/mental/docs/finland.pdf).

of actors with and without disabilities which produces 135 performances per year. No less impressive, the organisation responsible for psychiatric care in the province of Utrecht has long run an artist residency programme within its grounds. Related to this is a project called Beautiful Distress which has established a partnership with the Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn enabling four Dutch artists to spend three months there to produce art inspired by patients and staff there. They also have a public exhibition space in Amsterdam called the Beautiful Distress House.

Teater Vildenvei in Oslo has used drama as part of the recovery process there for over 20 years. The Festival Art et Déchirure has been taking place annually in Rouen in France since 1988. In Germany, the Kunsthau Kanne in Munster is located in a psychiatric hospital and has both a museum and a studio. It hosts a biennial expo of Outsider Art from Germany and beyond.

In Bad Durkheim, Wolfgang Sautermeister, a performance and visual artist, runs workshops with both art forms, as well as a gallery.

Workman Arts in Toronto is a multidisciplinary arts and mental health organisation, set up in 1987 by a psychiatric nurse. It now has over 400 artists in membership. It runs an annual national and international festival called Rendezvous with Madness each October. Examples of work in New York City include the Murals Arts project which describes itself as rethinking community building and mental health and the New York Mental Health Film Festival.

Outsider Art is a broad term (less used in the UK than in the USA and Europe) which can include work by self-taught artists with mental health problems. As such, the commercial Outsider Art fairs, such as the major annual fair in Paris, can bring together relevant visual arts organisations.

**Creating honey tasters for the RHS at Artlink Edinburgh. Photo courtesy of Artlink Edinburgh.**





Photo courtesy of Core Arts, London.

# Activity

The following three sections (art forms, types of arts organisations and settings) can only begin to illustrate the richness of each category. More examples are given in Appendix One. Nor are these categories water tight. A visual arts organisation may branch out into work on creative writing and organisations often resist a clear typology. Hopefully these examples will serve to underline the complexity of the field.

## ART FORMS

### Visual arts

Visual arts (broadly defined to include, for instance, sculpture and ceramics) seems to be especially widely offered. An independent evaluation of the Art Room, which offers therapeutic interventions for young people aged 5-16, demonstrated a number of benefits including an 87.5% improvement in self-reported mood and self-esteem.<sup>25</sup>

It is widely offered by specialist arts and mental health organisations working across art forms, for instance Artlift in Gloucester, The Dragon Café in London and Arts and Minds in Cambridgeshire. In Essex, Open Arts, which is run by the NHS trust, has a scheme which offers participants placements in studios with suitable support as a progression opportunity. Core Arts in East London started out when artist Paul Monks who was working in the old Hackney Hospital attracted the attention of mental health patients.

Outside In is an important and rare example of an organisation with national reach. It was formed in 2006 by Marc Steen who was then working at Pallant House, but since 2017 has been fully independent and gained status as a National Portfolio Organisation with the Arts Council England. It now has a presence at Fabrica in Brighton as well as in Chichester. Outside In has three main areas of activity: artist development, training and exhibitions.

### Studio Upstairs

Studio Upstairs is an arts and health charity providing an artistic therapeutic community for people with emotional and mental difficulties.

It began life in North London in 1988, the brain child of two artists with support from the Diorama Arts Centre and Camden Voluntary Action. Over the next thirty years, the studio moved several times in North London and expanded to add studios in South London and in Bristol. It has also expanded to add performance and creative writing strands.

However, a number of aspects of the founders' vision remain unchanged, including the recognition that many

of its service users need long-term support for distress rather than shorter term interventions.

The Studio Upstairs provides a number of services and roles for people within its community. Studio members are able to develop their artistic practice while there are a number of workshops for people with less experience, as well as respite services for carers. There are a number of routes for referral, including self-referral, through a GP, or for adults with a Care Plan from London authorities, as well as authorities in Bristol, North Somerset, South Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Bath and North East Somerset.

<sup>25</sup> Cortina, Melissa & Fazel, Mina. (2014). The Art Room: An Evaluation Of A Targeted School-based Group Intervention For Students With Emotional And Behavioural Difficulties. *The Arts in Psychotherapy*. 11. 10.1016/j.aip.2014.12.003.

It has also had partnerships with a number of galleries, for instance Poole Museum and Glasgow Museum of Modern Art. Around one third of the participants in Outside In's work have experience of a mental health problem, with other artists having learning disabilities or homelessness amongst other experiences. The uniting factor is a sense of exclusion from the mainstream world of visual arts and representation in galleries. There are now over 2,000 artists with their own website presence.

Visual arts are the dominant or exclusive art form for some specialist arts and mental health organisations such as Art Angel in Dundee, the Bethlem Gallery in the Bethlem Royal Hospital in South London, Artspace in Brighton and the Chilli Studios in Newcastle. Cathja takes the prize for the most inventive location with work taking place on a barge in West London.

Visual arts activities are offered too by many branches of Mind. Perhaps the most prominent of these is in Camden, North London, where the long-running project Portugal Prints not only offers workshops and exhibitions, but also takes participants on visits to galleries such as the Royal Academy.

There are a number of arts charities that take a special interest in working with mental health patients or settings, such as Hospital Rooms commissioning artists to enliven wards with new work, and Paintings in Hospitals in England and Arts in Healthcare in Scotland.

There are participatory or other arts organisations working in this area too, for instance the Association for Cultural Advancement through Visual Art (ACAVA) which manages large numbers of studios in London and the South East, Soft Touch in Leicester, Charnwood Arts in Loughborough and City Arts in Nottingham. City Arts also partners with the Institute for Mental Health at Nottingham University to run several exhibitions a year including an annual national open exhibition. Independent Arts on the Isle of Wight runs the weekly Anxiety Café offering art workshops. Yorkshire Sculpture Park has been running a project with Creative Minds in South West Yorkshire Foundation Trust

called Subject to Change. Participants join in monthly creative sessions including walks in the outdoors and going to exhibitions. In Belfast the ARTiculate programme has included graffiti art in its work with vulnerable young people.

## Music and singing

*“ One of the most memorable sessions I have had was with someone who had been in and out of services for 40 years.... We ended up playing a Beatles song. This gentleman decided to join in and sing with us...the song had been played at his mother's funeral but his emotions had never come out. He said it had helped overcome the tension inside him. He has now been 'clean' for three years and credits it with what happened that day.”*

### Lead musician, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Music and Mental Health Programme

There is probably more evidence regarding the beneficial effects of making music and singing on mood and wellbeing than any other art form. Only a minority of this work, though, has focused on people with mental ill health. A recent exception to this has been the breathe AHR (Arts Health Research) programme at Guy's and St Thomas' NHS Foundation Trust. It involved a group of 148 mothers with postnatal depression and compared the effects of group singing with other forms of creative play or a combination of antidepressants and psychotherapy. A recent grant from the Wellcome Trust means that this trial will now be scaled up. A 2016 study by Fancourt et al of the effects of group drumming on people with mental health problems showed positive results.<sup>26</sup> As did a 2016 Randomised Control Trial study by Perkins, Yorke and Fancourt (2018)<sup>27</sup> which reported the positive results of singing on a group of mothers with postnatal depression.

**26** Fancourt D, Perkins R, Ascenso S, Carvalho LA, Steptoe A, Williamson A (2016) Effects of Group Drumming Interventions on Anxiety, Depression, Social Resilience and Inflammatory Immune Response among Mental Health Service Users. *PLoS ONE* 11(3)

**27** Perkins R, Yorke S, Fancourt D. How group singing facilitates recovery from the symptoms of postnatal depression: a comparative qualitative study. *BMC Psychol.* 2018;6(1):41.



**Music performance at 'Common Play', run by Artlink Edinburgh. Photo courtesy of Artlink Edinburgh.**

Making music and/or singing is commonplace among organisations that choose to work in multiple art forms with people with a mental health problem. Among the many examples are Arts and Minds in Cambridgeshire, Core Arts in London, Moodswings in Manchester, the Robin Hood Foundation's HERA programme at Brighton Health and Wellbeing Centre and the Dragon Café in London.

There have been several free-standing choirs set up with the specific intention of working with people with mental health problems including the Inspire Choir at Cardiff University, the Harmony Choir in Edinburgh and the Swansea Valley Choir. The Birmingham Wellbeing Community Choir was initially funded by the Health Trust but when this ran out began collecting small donations for membership and selling merchandise, for instance, its CD, True Colours. It performs

at numerous community and other events and describes itself as picking up where the clinicians leave off.

There are a small number of Arts and Mental Health organisations which have specialised in music-making including Sound Minds in South London and Key Changes in North London. Rhythmix in Brighton has a broader agenda which includes social welfare and education alongside its core mission of music-making. It works with people with physical health problems and learning disabilities as well as people with mental health problems. Raw Materials in Brixton also has a broader membership but has a specialist strand for people with mental health problems called Raw Sound, which works both on hospital wards and in the community and aims to connect people with mainstream opportunities in education and employment.

## Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Music and Mental Health Programme

Since 2008, Liverpool Philharmonic has been working in partnership with Mersey Care NHS Foundation Trust to provide live music and music-making opportunities for over 10,000 service users, families and carers. Over 50 professional musicians have been involved since the programme's inception, using high quality music as a means to increase wellbeing and support recovery.

The programme takes place in secure services and in the local community, including Mersey Care's Life Room facilities.

Sessions include music-making, composition and song writing, performances, improvisation and group singing. At the Life Rooms, musicians deliver Recovery College courses including Improvisation, SuperSing, Music Promoters and Music & Film. Sharing sessions at the end of each course create pathways and progression routes to further activity at Liverpool Philharmonic Hall, including additional music-making sessions, and rehearsal and concert visits. Mersey Care service users are also supported to gain

employment at Liverpool Philharmonic through a pathways service with a guaranteed interview for candidates who meet the essential criteria for Liverpool Philharmonic entry level roles.

Liverpool Philharmonic's five-year plan for the Music and Mental Health programme aims to expand this successful partnership and increase its reach across Liverpool City Region. This includes a new partnership with Cheshire & Wirral Partnership NHS Foundation Trust and Wirral Council in 2019-20. Liverpool Philharmonic staff will also continue to support mental health awareness and anti-stigma campaigns in the city such as the Big Brew campaign supported by Mersey Care and the Zero Suicide Alliance.

*“ During the long process of recovery, the music sessions have helped me as some kind of anchor I can hold on to. ”*

**Service user, Royal Liverpool Philharmonic Music and Mental Health Programme**

An interesting recent initiative has been the creation of the New Note Orchestra, also near Brighton, to specifically work with people in recovery from addiction. Tonic Music for Mental Health is based in Portsmouth and works across the South Coast. It aims to challenge mental health stigma through music and was established by Kevin Cummins and Terry Hall who performed as part of the band The Specials.

Live Music Now operates across the four nations of the UK and is known for its model of taking highly trained early career musicians into 'non-traditional' settings. This has often included work in hospitals. This included a long term programme on secure mental health wards for the Tees Esk Wear Valley.

There have been a number of projects with children and young people including for those whose education has been interrupted by episodes of mental ill health. The City of London Sinfonia has had a three-year residency at the Bethlem and Maudsley Hospital School.

### Theatre and film

The essential point about work in the theatre is obviously that it dramatises the story of human experience. Therefore, it is not surprising that the experience of living with a mental health problem is the subject of so much of this work. Mental health, as a subject for theatre, has a long history, arguably from its Classical beginnings. So many of critically acclaimed plays in the canon have mental health at their heart from *King Lear* to *Blue Orange*

## Arcola Theatre

The Arcola Theatre was established in 2000 and is based in Hackney in East London. It has an enviable reputation for producing thought-provoking and exciting new work. It also has a unique approach to serving its local community, through establishing not one but five community companies involving the participation of people who can be seen as marginalised. One of these is the Mental Health Company.

Established in 2014, the Mental Health Company runs two projects per year. Through a workshop process an original

piece is devised and produced for public performance, either in the theatre or outdoors during the summer. The work has invariably had as its subject some aspect of the experience of mental ill health. Membership of the company is free and workshops take place each week. The company is funded from a grant by the local authority. A lot of thought has been given to the safeguarding and pastoral aspects of the company and a specific steering group for the project has been assembled which includes clinicians.

more recently. Theatre practice in this respect has also been influenced by Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed and Artaud's Theatre of Cruelty.

The Dutch Professor of Psychiatry, Bessel van der Kolk, is known for his work on trauma which he sees as the cause of many mental health problems, contending that it can change the structure of the brain. Equally, the brain's neuroplasticity can be used to overcome trauma through psychological or talking therapies, medication or more physical ways of retraining the body. In his influential 2014 book, *The Body Keeps the Score*, he devotes a chapter to theatre. He starts by noting the therapeutic effects on his son of playing in *West Side Story* when he was experiencing chronic fatigue syndrome and goes on to look at the large-scale use of theatre by the US military, including the Greek classics, and American theatre initiatives such as Urban Improv. Several of these projects have been positively evaluated by the Trauma Center he runs in Boston.

Torrissen and Stickley in 2018 published a 'narrative inquiry' showing positive effects on the mental health of 12 participants of Teater Vildenevi in Oslo.<sup>28</sup>

There is an ever growing number of new theatre pieces explicitly about the experience of living with a mental health problem. This has led the Mental Health Foundation to run

a competition with *The Scotsman* for the best mental health show at the Edinburgh Fringe each year. Whilst acknowledging the importance of this work, such pieces are usually individual works and this section is more concerned with ongoing initiatives.

There are a small number of theatre companies solely concerned with participatory work around mental health. Established in 1997 in Bristol, Stepping Out Theatre has since then had over seventy productions. Without Theatre focuses on young people. Theatre Nemo has been running in Glasgow for over ten years, born out of the tragedy of the suicide of a family member. May Contain Nuts is a company formed more recently in Watford which began life on the wards in a psychiatric hospital and now has its own identity in the community. Fluid Motion Theatre Company is based in Basingstoke and uses an autobiographical approach to devising theatre pieces on mental health topics, such as eating disorders. It has held a weekend festival for several years running.

There are also several theatre companies dedicated to working with people who have a higher risk of experiencing mental ill health than the general population. Examples of these include Geese Theatre, known for its masked style of practice used in the criminal

**28** Torrissen, W., & Stickley, T. (2018). Participatory theatre and mental health recovery: a narrative inquiry. *Perspectives in Public Health*, 138(1), 47–54.

Photo courtesy of esc films, Northern Ireland.



"If my film stops one person  
getting killed -  
I'd be happy"  
- Participant SCFC

## esc films

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esc started life in 1999 as the Educational Shakespeare Company, a spin-off from the charity run in England by Michael Bogdanov, who had asked his Assistant Director, Tom Magill, to set up a branch in Belfast. Tom Magill's approach was deeply marked by Augusto Boal who made him his representative in Northern Ireland.

In 2003, esc started moving into film making and worked extensively in prisons. A landmark moment was the production of Mickey B, the first film to be made in a maximum security jail with a cast exclusively of prisoners. This led to an invitation to work in forensic settings. This opened up a new chapter of what

esc calls 'therapeutic film making' with people who have been involved in crime who have severe and enduring mental health problems. This stream of work has been called Second Chance for Change. Since 2018 the company has worked more broadly on films with people with mental health problems and changed its name to esc films to represent a new stage on their journey. Tom Magill remains a co-director. Now esc has a large number of films using a pioneering technique which they believe can rebuild lives through group work and creative storytelling. A visualisation of their user journey can be seen on their website at [www.esc-film.com/film-as-therapy](http://www.esc-film.com/film-as-therapy).

justice system but increasingly working in mental health settings, including in forensic institutions. Re-Live Theatre in Wales has expanded its work to a strand working with former soldiers including those with PTSD. Around 40% of Cardboard Citizens' members who have experience of homelessness identify as having lived experience of mental health problems (see a case study on page 48). Outside Edge in London exclusively focuses on people recovering from alcohol and substance addiction.

Specialist mental health arts organisations working across art forms may have a theatre company or run drama workshops as one aspect of what they are doing, for instance darts in Doncaster.

There are also interesting examples of work by major producing venues. Chichester Festival Theatre is famous for the strength of its work with young people. It has now initiated drama work in a local forensic institution. The Birmingham Rep has been a key partner in four editions of the cross art form festival Bedlam, as well as running a highly successful company for young Black men with mental health problems, all of whom have subsequently found employment or gone on to higher education. Nottingham Playhouse has used its role as

a civic arts organisation to become the local hub for Time to Change, a national initiative to destigmatise mental health problems. It also used a highly successful production of Alan Bennett's *The Madness of King George*, for a community discussion around mental health.

Film is well represented in several festivals, including in Northern Ireland and especially in Scotland where there are International Film Awards.

## Creative writing and spoken word

It was interesting that in a series on arts and mental health on Radio 4's Front Row, author and radio presenter Stig Abell chose reading fiction as his way of coping with mental distress in his twenties. There is a huge range of self-help books, memoirs and fiction revolving around every aspect of mental health. Matt Haig's *Reasons To Be Alive* has not only sold in the millions but has been made into a play. The Reader charity, based in Liverpool and operating nationally, has for over a decade run shared reading groups on mental health wards.

Creative writing is one of the most common art forms used by participatory or arts and mental health organisations. Among the many examples are Arc in Stockport, Art Care in

## The Scottish Poetry Library: Prescribe culture

Social prescribing is less prevalent at the moment in Scotland than in England, but an interesting pilot is being developed by the University of Edinburgh's Museum Services Team in partnership with the Scottish Poetry Library. The first stage will exclusively seek to engage University students though it is envisaged this might later expand to the city as an element of Edinburgh Council's Delivering a Healthier City for all Ages project. It will seek to support students experiencing

low-level mental health problems and isolation. Funding has been secured from the Lottery. Prescribe Culture will involve Student Support Officers and primary care services at the University 'prescribing' non-pharmacological cultural activities involving the Scottish Poetry Library and the museums. More broadly, the Poetry Library wants to be a centre for wellbeing. It has developed lists of poems around mental health and run related initiatives such as Death Cafés.

Wales, Art Angel in Dundee and Creativity Works in Somerset. Many local branches of Mind offer a creative writing group. The research organisation and think tank, the Centre for Mental Health, has successfully experimented with having a Writer in Residence with lived experience, though their focus has been on non-fiction essays.

Storytelling is a prominent aspect of the Welsh arts scene and has seen some interesting approaches when it comes to mental health. The Swansea Bay University Health Board runs an annual international Storytelling for Health conference. It has appointed a psychiatric nurse/storyteller who has run sessions on forensic mental health wards.

The Arts Council England supports a series of regional writing development agencies but targeting mental health does not seem to have been a major feature of their work.

There is a long-standing stream of poetry by survivors which investigates mental health and in particular the experiences of being in the mental health system. Survivors Poetry is also a survivor-led organisation born in the 1990s. Poets continue to collect and support each other with public performances. In another aspect of spoken word, the social enterprise Real Talk in Scotland encourages storytelling for wellbeing. Apples and Snakes, based in London but working across England, is a spoken word poetry organisation and has done

work on mental health including *Crowded*, an immersive spoken word piece on young people's mental health.

Mental health has been explored extensively in recent years by stand-up comics, including at the Edinburgh Fringe. Several high-profile comedians such as Ruby Wax (who has set up the Frazzled Café) and Stephen Fry have written and spoken widely about their mental health.

### Dance

The Alchemy Project used dance as a form of early intervention in psychosis and was developed by Dance United Yorkshire, Cultural Utilities & Enterprises and the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust. Two cohorts of 12 patients aged 18-35 with no previous experience of dance showed clinically significant improvements in their wellbeing.

It would appear that there is relatively little use of dance made outside dance therapy. This would seem a shame as dance can be such a powerful form of expression. This can be seen in performance pieces such as *The Elephant in the Room* by dancer Lanre Malaoku about the experience of mental ill health as a black working class man and in *The Box* by Scottish dancer Julia James-Griffiths. Other examples include *Weight/Wait* by Caldonia Walton and Katharine Richardson and *RockBottom* by Stuart Waters.

An exception is Mean Feet Dance in Somerset which specialises in dance, wellbeing and mental health. In 2009, it developed a programme called Step Forward for recovery, resilience and self-management which has worked with 600 participants in the county.

The Manchester-based Company Chameleon has not only developed work in Leeds primary schools and an ongoing relationship with the Horsfall Centre, part of the charity 42nd Street, but artistic director Kevin Edward Turner has created a piece about his own experience of bipolar disorder.

In Scotland, the annual Mental Health Arts Festival has a strong strand of dance and workshops, and Scottish Dance Theatre

has investigated mental health issues and is based at Dundee Rep, the only theatre in the UK to employ drama therapists.

In London, East London Dance entered into a strategic partnership with Sadler's Wells and Headstart, Newham, in 2017, to provide classes around mental health for 150 10- to 16-year-olds. Interestingly Sadler's Wells also signposted the audience for Matthew Bourne's new *Romeo and Juliet* to organisations such as Mind and Samaritans (given the theme of distress and suicide).

**Company Chameleon in Manchester. Photo © Joel Chester Fildes.**



## Festivals

“ Seeing moments of your own feelings that you can’t verbally express or see elsewhere on stage, from somebody else, is hard but makes you feel less alone. ”

**Audience member, Bedlam**

Festivals can have a celebratory air, often bringing together different art forms and giving profile to an issue or community. They also tend to come and go making this a hard art form to track.

As mentioned elsewhere, there are a number of festivals overseas including Toronto, Sydney, Dublin, Greece, Spain, Finland and Lithuania.

At the national level, it appears that there has never been an England-wide festival but Scotland (see case study on page 18),

Wales and Northern Ireland have all had successful events. The latest edition of the Wales Festival was called Walls and happened in 2016, championed by a small group of charities. The Northern Ireland Festival has been taking place since 2013 and has a strong film strand, not least through the involvement of esc films. The theme for 2019 was Body Image and included burlesque for the first time. It largely operates in Belfast and takes place each May with a modest grant from the Arts Council of Northern Ireland. Its institutional home is Queen’s University Belfast.

There have been a number of festivals in England, including *Changing Minds* in 2016 at the Southbank Centre, *Normal? Festival of the Brain*, an arts and science festival in Folkestone led by Living Words which last took place in 2018, and the *SICK! Festival* in Manchester in 2019 which covered mental and physical health.

## Bedlam

The Bedlam Festival held its fourth biennial edition in 2019. The festival is led by Birmingham & Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust with partners Birmingham Rep, Midlands Arts Centre and SAMPAD South Asian Arts and produced by Sabra Khan. In 2019, Geese Theatre Company joined the partnership. It is funded through tickets sales, a Project Grant from Arts Council England, and funds from each partner. This year the Festival used the priorities of the Trust as a framework. The Festival is a mixture of newly commissioned work and programmed work, which can promote audience discussion after events or symposia. The 2017 festival reached an audience of over 34,000.

Highlights of the 2019 programme included

- three new theatre commissions – Les Enfants Terribles’ *The Thing*, a new work on male suicide; SAMPAD Arts’ production of *No Bond So Strong* by Olivia Winteringham about perinatal mental health; and Geese Theatre’s *Playing the Game*, a theatre of testimony play exploring the experiences of mothers in prison;
- a visual arts commission from Midlands Arts Centre which saw Jenna Naylor turn the public gallery into ‘The Botanical Menagerie’ as part of its focus on drawing for wellbeing;
- a city-wide programme of dance, visual arts workshops, wellbeing walks, film, children’s performances and a Death Café;
- a symposium bringing together trainee psychiatrists, GPs and artists to explore the use of arts in suicide prevention;
- a range of partnerships with varied organisations including Birmingham City University, Birmingham Museum & Art Gallery, the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance (West Midlands), Rural Media Company, Time to Change and West Midlands Combined Authority.

Photo courtesy of Bedlam Festival in Birmingham.



Sadly, the Liverpool Mental Health Consortium had to close due to lack of funds in 2019 and with it its annual festival. The festival was in its fourth edition and had moved to commissioning new work with funding from Arts Council England. During the City of Culture in 2017, Artlink Hull joined forces with Mad Pride in the City to run a festival called *Maybe it's the World that is Mad?* The Creative People and Places lead for St Helen's, Heart of Glass, commissioned disabled artist, The Vacuum Cleaner (a.k.a James Leadbitter), to curate an arts and mental health festival throughout November 2019 called *Mad Love Takeover*, which took place in a former Argos store. It included work from a number of artists with mental health problems and saw several hundred visitors a day.

## Multi-art form

*“Coming to Core to do music has been a saviour for my brain.”*

**Music class member, Core Arts**

The great majority of the arts organisations included in this report work in more than one art form, described as multi-art-form or cross arts. This has the obvious example of attracting more participants who might prefer or feel more confident in one artform rather than another.

Examples of multi-art form activity can be found across all four nations and in each of the categories of types of organisation.

## Core Arts

The story of Core Arts begins in 1992 when artist Paul Monks was using some vacant space as a studio in what was the old Hackney Hospital. He attracted the attention of some patients on the psychiatric ward enthused by the possibilities of visual arts. In a couple of years this developed into an open studio, some exhibitions and by 1994 registration as a charity.

Today Core Arts continues to use as its base a nearby former school but has expanded enormously into a social enterprise with around 2,000 NHS referred members per year who have experience of mental health problems. This may well make it the largest arts and mental health specialist programme in the UK. The four main pillars of provision are a very extensive arts programme, a sports programme and a design and a landscaping/ horticulture project.

Core Arts describes its offer as a 'college like' environment that combines, education, employment and training opportunities, and creativity. It particularly seeks to attract

women, people with disabilities and BAME students. It largely works through utilising personalised budgets charging £50 per day. It holds over 80 arts classes a week across a huge range of visual, digital and performing arts, with over 60 professional creative tutors and 120 volunteers. There are a number of open studios and music rooms allowing for the possibility of self-directed projects and frequent exhibitions.

*“People welcome you here. People you have never met before. No one pressures you or challenges your needs. No one puts you down. I feel very supported. I have learned lots. [...] I will continue to develop the skills that I learned [...] in the outside world too. I will buy my own machine and I can make clothes at home. This might develop into a career [...]. I just feel like I can do lots of things in the future.”*

**Fashion and textile class member, Core Arts**

## ORGANISATIONAL TYPES

This section offers a simple taxonomy of arts organisations, mental health organisations and other types of organisation, including universities and housing associations.

Arts organisations are then split into six categories:

- arts organisations specialising in arts and mental health;
- recovery from addiction;
- disability arts;
- participatory (or community) arts organisations;
- arts organisations specialising in groups at increased risk of mental health problems (such as refugees, asylum seekers and migrants; people in the Criminal Justice System and people experiencing homelessness);
- 'mainstream' arts organisations.

## Specialist arts organisations and mental health

The number of arts organisations which have specialised in working with people with mental health problems is possibly surprising when put in the context of the challenges of working in this area, including regarding sustained, reliable funding. Doubtless there are a number of reasons but staff typically display a sense of vocation, commitment and sometimes personal experience. A number of organisations have been born out of activism by people with lived experience of mental ill health and the mental health system.

Most organisations tend to specialise in an art form. For the visual arts, examples include: Art Angel in Dundee, the Bethlem Gallery in South London, and Studio Upstairs in London and the Bristol area. START Inspiring Minds in Salford was running social prescription arts projects for people with mental health problems from the late 1990s and has gone on to become one of the larger organisations in the country with 400-600 participants per year, largely in visual arts and crafts,

### Key Changes

Key Changes is based in Islington, North London. It provides music engagement and recovery services in hospitals and the community for young people and adults with mental health conditions, including depression, anxiety, bipolar disorder and PTSD. It draws on both expertise and connections in the music industry and in psychological recovery to provide services that knit together music, education and vocational opportunities. Activities include song writing, composition, production, recording and performance. Key Changes has a fully equipped professional rehearsal and recording studios with specially trained music industry mentors.

Key Changes has been running since 1997 and was set up by a group of patients at Highgate Mental Health Centre. It intends to respond to concerns from mental health

professionals that some patients do not find value in conventional therapies or medication. Participants are referred through mental health services as well as self-referral. The organisation works closely with multi-disciplinary health and social care teams.

The charity has grown to work with over 3,000 people per year in London as well as other locations throughout England. Characteristics of their approach include pre-start assessment, one-to-one and group work promoting peer support and social inclusion, and signposting to other services and progression routes. A key feature is live performance at concerts and events to promote artists' confidence and self-esteem and as a way to challenge stigma.



Photo courtesy of START Inspiring Minds, Salford.

supported in part by CCG funding with multiple progression pathways beyond the arts. For music and singing we can mention the Birmingham Wellbeing Community Choir, Key Changes and Sound Minds both in London, and Tonic Music for Mental Health in Portsmouth. Some organisations that have focused on theatre include Theatre Nemo in Glasgow, May Contain Nuts in Watford and Stepping Out Theatre in Bristol.

There are also arts organisations that deploy a wider range of art forms, such as Arts and Minds in Cambridge, Creative Alternatives on Merseyside, Inside Out Cymru in Gwent, Common Wheel in Glasgow, Creative Works in the Bristol and Somerset area, Dragon Café in London, Four in Four in Wales and Hoot in Huddersfield. A number of these will take part in local social prescribing or arts on prescription schemes.

## Recovery from addiction

*“If it wasn't for Outside Edge I would keep relapsing, but I love Outside Edge more than drinking or drugs.”*

**Service user, Outside Edge Theatre**

As has been previously stated, the relationship between mental health and addiction, though not identical, is so close that the NHS specifically recognises dual diagnosis. It is thought, at least anecdotally, that there is a higher incidence of addiction problems among people working in some sections of the arts and this can be seen in the genesis of several of the small number of arts organisations specialising in this field. In addition, some addiction recovery charities will run arts programmes, for instance, Phoenix Futures.

## Outside Edge Theatre

An actor who was a recovering heroin addict founded Outside Edge Theatre Company, based in Fulham in London, in 1999. The core of its work is offering free, peer-led drama activities to people in recovery and touring professional theatre productions about issues related to addiction. The theatre has also devised work to train professionals across a range of services. It is supported by a number of major philanthropic foundations and public health departments in three London local authorities. Some work is devised and performed by service users and their latest production, *A Very Happy Scrappy Sackler Family Thanksgiving*, tackled the American opioid crisis.

Working from an asset-based approach, they offer a range of weekly drama workshops, including a writing workshop and a drop-in group for people with little experience of drama. The company has

also run workshops for people with dual diagnosis, delivered a women's group and created projects in prisons.

An example of Outside Edge's impact is a story from when they toured a play to treatment facilities about a woman whose child was removed by social services due to her addiction. In the production's final moments, a client stood up and said, *"That's me! That's my life!!"* She started attending the company's drama workshops and eventually began to write plays. Eight years later she remains sober and is now an award-winning playwright with commissions from major theatre companies. She is also the company's Associate Theatre Facilitator and leads their writers' group. She said of her time as a service user, *"Outside Edge, more than anything, has given me the greatest gift ever. Belief. Belief in myself and in the wonder of life itself."*

Music Support in London is provided by people from the music industry for people in the industry with addiction problems and works across the UK. New Note Orchestra in Brighton uses music to strengthen recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. Also in Brighton, We Are Not Saints is the UK's first recovery record label. Though not confined to addiction and the arts, the Amy Winehouse Foundation has a strong interest in this area, especially with young people. Fallen Angels Dance Theatre in Chester both runs workshops to encourage participation in safe, caring environments and has public performances.

Recovery is a concept that has grown in importance across mental health services, not just as regards addiction. However, it would be wrong not to mention that it has its critics (like so much in mental health) as can be seen from the *Recoverist Manifesto*<sup>29</sup> developed by Clive Parkinson and others in Manchester.

## Disability Arts

As already described, disability arts and disability arts organisations can be seen as a relatively distinct field with a particular history. Disability includes physical, mental and learning disabilities. Therefore, at least some disability arts organisations have streams of activity working with people with mental health problems. A distinction is sometimes employed whereby disability arts organisations are led by disabled people in governance and staffing, while arts and disability organisations may not be.

It is probably even more important to remember that people with learning disabilities have a higher risk of also experiencing mental health problems, and that in general people with either a physical disability or illness or a learning disability are more likely to experience other health problems as well including mental illness (co-morbidity).

<sup>29</sup> [www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7KKG89YVmA](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7KKG89YVmA).

Check-in/Check-out at the Outside Edge VAULT Festival 2019. Photo © Ali Wright.



The question though arises as to how likely someone with, for instance a severe and enduring mental health problem, is going to self-identify as having a disability and to join a disability arts organisation unless it has a specific mental health project?

There are many organisations in the arts and disability field. Graeae Theatre is probably one of the best known, which is based in London and works with D/deaf and disabled actors. However, innumerable others could be mentioned, such as Hijinx Theatre in Wales. Some will specialise in working with people with a physical disability such as Candoco which is a physically integrated dance company. There are a number of organisations that specialise in working with people with learning disabilities such as Flute Theatre. (Creative Minds has a good list of organisations working

in this field.<sup>30</sup> Another excellent resource is Disability Online which includes a magazine and a directory of artists<sup>31</sup>). Describing them all is beyond the scope of this report. Rather, only disability organisations that undertake specific work with people with mental health problems will be included.

Artlink Central in Scotland is running a weekly visual arts workshop for people with mental health problems in the Stirling Region as a social prescribing initiative commissioned by the local authority and the NHS. Artlink Hull ran a festival with Mad Pride during the City of Culture in 2017. Artlink West Yorkshire is an active member of the Arts and Minds Network in Leeds and employs one of its part-time workers. One of the activities of the Network is a monthly Connect and Create group for people with mental health problems.

## Artlink Edinburgh

Artlink has been working with community mental health services since 1992. In the early days this involved short-term creative projects but thinking quickly changed to preferring a longer term person-centred approach. This change began with a Mental Health Specific Grant from the Scottish Government. This core support led Artlink to being able to do one-to-one work enabling greater insight into people's individual situations.

This led to what Artlink describes as 'Curious Routes' exploiting individual passions. This laid the groundwork for a partnership with residents at Link Living, supported accommodation for adults with enduring mental health problems. The first stage was to transform a neglected communal garden into a visually stimulating and cared for environment. These connections led on to a project with the Scottish Beekeepers Association and Chippendale International School of Furniture that was showcased in the Royal Highland Show display tent!

A further phase of work was called 'Common Play' and started as a series of discussions at the Tent Gallery in Edinburgh College of Art and led on to a very varied programme of work in a number of locations. Artlink note that 'rather than being a straightforward linear pathway to recovery we continue to cater for the cyclical nature of an individual's mental ill health. This gives the individual the opportunity to develop their own ideas, enhance their skills and determine the pace at which they need to progress'.

*“ Among the many ways Artlink has had a positive effect on my life, the most important is probably the supportive personal relationships forged within the group. I have also felt valued for myself without the sometimes somewhat reductive labels and categories surrounding other groups and projects. ”*

**Peter, Artlink participant**

<sup>30</sup> See: [www.carousel.org.uk/accessible-resources](http://www.carousel.org.uk/accessible-resources).

<sup>31</sup> See: [disabilityarts.online](http://disabilityarts.online).

## Groups at higher risk of mental health problems

“It’s been one of the best experiences of my life.”

Kazzum Arts Pathways participant

This section describes three groups of art organisations: those working with refugees, people in the criminal justice system, and homeless people. It should be seen as illustrative of the point that specialist participatory companies need to consider how they include people with mental health problems, rather than a comprehensive description.

### Refugees, asylum seekers and migrants

In 2015 it was estimated that there were 123,000 refugees and asylum seekers in the UK. It is thought that they are at increased risk of conditions such as anxiety, depression and PTSD, as a result both of pre-immigration experiences and their situation post-migration. One estimate is that they have five times the mental health needs of the general population, while being less likely to receive support (The Mental Health Foundation).<sup>32</sup>

The sector support body for arts and refugees is Counterpoint Arts which has as its strapline: ‘changing how we see migration and displacement’. Clini, Thomson, and Chatterjee (2019) have written in the British Medical Journal on the impact of artistic and cultural activities on the health and wellbeing of forcibly displaced people.<sup>33</sup> It would appear that there is more emphasis on the use of therapists, for instance, by Art Refuge UK, New Art Studio and by Psychdelight Project with their production, *Borderline*. Not all projects are delivered by arts organisations. For instance, The Grounding project for people with PTSD at the South London and Maudsley Foundation Trust employed artist Julie Nelson to lead workshops of refugees to make clay migratory birds for an exhibition called *Flock*.

Some organisations combine participatory arts and qualified therapy, for instance Play for Progress, which offers music making and educational music in workshops for unaccompanied minors, but also employ drama therapists. Freedom from Torture has an activist approach and is concerned with survivors’ voice. This includes the longest running refugee creative writing group in Britain called Write for Life.

### Kazzum Arts

Kazzum is London based and dates back to 1989 when it was founded to take high-quality theatre for children and young people into non-traditional spaces. Now they are taking a broader approach to creativity and work across disciplines. Their Apollo project works with children and young people on health and psychiatric wards in hospitals. The Pathways programme specifically works with young migrants and refugees and has three strands (right).

In addition, Kazzum works with Praxis Community Projects to facilitate ‘Brighter Futures’ in which young migrants challenge negative perceptions.

The Pathways programme strands are:

- **Training:** in partnership with John Ruskin College, Croydon, Kazzum works with ESOL students who receive accreditation through a recognised reward scheme and can participate in professional work;
- **Wellbeing:** a partnership with refugee community groups across London in which young people are encouraged to share their experiences through the visual arts. This work is then exhibited and screened across the UK;
- **Education:** young refugees consider their experiences with creative writing and assemblies in Refugee Week.

<sup>32</sup> See: [www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-refugees-and-asylum-seekers](http://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/statistics/mental-health-statistics-refugees-and-asylum-seekers).

<sup>33</sup> Clini C., Thomson LJM., and Chatterjee HJ. Assessing the impact of artistic and cultural activities on the health and well-being of forcibly displaced people using participatory action research. *BMJ Open* 2019;9:e025465.

## Criminal Justice System

*“It felt like being part of a team – can you come back next year too please?”*

**Participant, Geese Theatre Company, Farndon Unit**

There is an intimate and deeply important relationship between mental health and the criminal justice system. At the extreme end

of a much larger system, the Prison Reform Trust estimates that 72% of male prisoners and 70% of female prisoners have two or more mental disorders. The spend on mental health in prison is three times that for a similar number of people in the community.

Although not identical to mental ill health, there were over 40,000 instances of self-harm and 120 suicides in prison in 2016.<sup>34</sup>

## Geese Theatre Company

Geese Theatre Company is based in Birmingham and was established in 1987 by Clark Baim, who had previously toured the US with Geese Theatre Company (USA). Geese is one of the longest-standing arts organisations using theatre and drama in prisons, secure facilities and wider criminal justice contexts in the UK. The company works nationally and internationally and, to date, has worked in over 150 custodial institutions with over 250,000 people. It also offers training programmes designed specifically for people working in criminal justice and wider social welfare contexts, which are informed by the work delivered directly with service users.

Geese Theatre Company is known for its use of both full- and half-faced masks. Its methodology acknowledges that everyone wears ‘masks’ either consciously or less so as a coping strategy. Audiences are encouraged to ask actors to ‘lift their masks’ and be questioned about what informs their behaviour and attitudes. Fundamentally, their approach is to use drama to invite participants to examine their behaviour and to act as a catalyst for change.

The amount of work that Geese is undertaking in forensic mental health institutions is expanding. Their work is underpinned by a recovery model which highlights the key themes of hope, identity, meaning and responsibility. Projects are delivered in collaboration with patients, with an emphasis on building confidence and setting goals. They usually take place

over four to 12 weeks rather than on a one-off basis to allow time to process thoughts and build trust in the group. Instances of work have included Thrive at St Andrews Hospital in Birmingham, Arnold Lodge, Cheswold Park and Broadmoor Hospitals.

*“This project took place at the Farndon Unit in Newark which provides low secure care for women with mental illness, personality disorders and/or mild learning disability. Working with a group of seven women and local filmmaker Rachel Gillies, we created a film exploring a fictional character’s two-year journey through the unit. The character of Lucy invited the participants to make connections with her journey as she worked towards discharge from the hospital. [...] The group engaged brilliantly with the process – bringing new ideas for the film and even making props in their spare time. The impact rippled beyond the core group as they took exercises from the sessions back to the wards and invited staff and other patients to the screening on the final day.”*

**Practitioner Team Manager, Emma**

**34** ‘Mental Health in Prisons’, National Audit Office website, [www.nao.org.uk/report/mental-health-in-prisons](http://www.nao.org.uk/report/mental-health-in-prisons).

Therefore, it is important to note that artists working in the criminal justice system, while rarely providing mental health specific programmes, need to be highly skilled and sensitive to mental health issues.

The National Criminal Justice Arts Alliance has over 900 individuals and organisations in its membership providing creative opportunities in prison, on probation and in the community. The Alliance has an online Evidence Library and emphasises the effectiveness of the arts in rehabilitation. One of its best known members is Koestler

Arts which works across a range of art forms and shares the work of prisoners through exhibitions. Established by the writer Arthur Koestler, the first awards took place in 1962.

### Homelessness

There are around 320,000 homeless people in Britain, according to Shelter<sup>35</sup> and street homelessness is also on the rise, increasing ten-fold over ten years in London to today's figure of over 5,000. Exact figures are hard to verify but it is universally agreed that mental health problems and substance abuse are much more likely for homeless people than

## Cardboard Citizens

Based in London but working nationally, Cardboard Citizens has been in operation for over 28 years. Its approach is rooted in the methodology of Augusto Boal's Theatre of the Oppressed (TO), of which they are the UK's leading practitioner and internationally recognised for. The practice seeks to empower and liberate the most vulnerable in society, which is central to their programmes of work. Forum Theatre, the most practised of TO methods, is a form of interactive theatre that enables participants and audiences to explore relevant issues and rehearse new ways of tackling them. Cardboard Citizens' work can take place anywhere – the stage, street, hostels, day centres and prisons. In addition to workshops and performances, Cardboard Citizens also uses its techniques to train a variety of workplaces. 40% of participants in workshops identify themselves initially as having a mental health problem. All staff working with them have been trained in trauma-informed practice. The theatre practitioners work hand in glove with the programme staff who are concerned more directly with the pastoral or wellbeing side of Cardboard Citizens services. A mental health advisory group for the charity includes clinicians. The welfare and mental health of staff is important and includes regular clinical supervision for programme staff.

*“I was very ill before I came to Cardboard Citizens, struggling with serious mental health issues. I started rehearsals just a week after I was referred to them. I just wanted something to do during the day and get the mental health people off my case. Surprisingly, I started to love it. I never had confidence, and I couldn't sing – but I can now! I'd never accomplished something, never been the full way with anything before I did this. After ACT NOW, Cardboard Citizens referred me to the National Youth Theatre and I did their Playing Up 2 course which then enabled me to get into uni. I'm now into my 2nd year at Birmingham School of Acting to do a degree in Community Applied Theatre. It's all thanks to ACT NOW. I now have a dream of working in prison theatre. And courage, I never had any of that. Cardboard Citizens has taught me a lot. ”*

**Chrisi, Cardboard Citizens participant**

<sup>35</sup> '320,000 people in Britain are now homeless, as numbers keep rising', Shelter website, 22 November 2018, [shelter.org.uk/media/press\\_releases/articles/320,000\\_people\\_in\\_britain\\_are\\_now\\_homeless\\_as\\_numbers\\_keep\\_rising](https://www.shelter.org.uk/media/press_releases/articles/320,000_people_in_britain_are_now_homeless_as_numbers_keep_rising).

the general population. In 2014 Homeless Link put self-declared mental health problems at 80% and diagnosis at 45%,<sup>36</sup> with Crisis estimating that two thirds of homeless people cite drug or alcohol misuse as a reason for first becoming homeless.<sup>37</sup>

There is a very vigorous arts sector specialising in engaging with homeless people, and across art forms. Streetwise Opera is among the best known along with the Choir with No Name which now has choirs in a number of major cities. Raised Voices in Edinburgh specifically refers to itself as a homelessness and mental health charity and provides performance and creative writing opportunities. Café Art in London brings visual arts by homeless people to cafés for sale, Open Cinema has been

telling the stories of homeless people, and the Holburne Museum in Bath had a specific engagement programme. Arts venues like the Southbank Centre are creating good practice codes of how to respond to local homeless people. There are also creative responses among homeless charities with Homeless Link offering online resources and the Booth Centre in Manchester runs creative projects.

## Participatory arts organisations

*“I wouldn't be here without darts.”*

Although not always an explicit description, ‘participatory arts organisation’ is used here in a similar sense to a community arts organisation.

### darts

darts has been offering community arts in Doncaster for thirty years. Its home is ‘The Point’ in central Doncaster where it offers a wide range of participatory sessions and events, e.g. for people living with dementia and creative workshops for families. The Point has a café, various workshop and meeting spaces and a gallery that offers a programme of regularly changing contemporary art exhibitions throughout the year. Creative Directions takes place every Wednesday at The Point and is for adults aged 18+ with a wide spectrum of diagnosed and undiagnosed mild, moderate and severe mental health issues. The morning session is self-directed and participants can use art materials at their own pace and own direction, with regular volunteers and an experienced Participation Co-ordinator on hand to support. The afternoon session is led by professional artists who tend to deliver 10 week blocks so that participants experience a wide variety of art forms. No experience is necessary to take part and members pay what they feel able. Additional funding has allowed two extra sessions per week for

Creative Directions to take place outside The Point, specifically focusing on music. The programme has a close relationship with a range of local health partners, with particular support from the Director of Public Health for Doncaster. darts also chairs the Doncaster Arts & Health Board, enabling cultural and health partners to collaborate to develop arts on prescription models for the borough.

*“I can see the positive change in my confidence and my involvement in Creative Directions, alongside other agencies, are having a huge impact on my life. I continue to be clean and sober, nearly five months now, and I am so grateful that this wonderful service continues. It enables me and others to continue to grow and have hope that we can live a wonderful life no matter what. Art is such a huge part of that.”*

**darts participant**

<sup>36</sup> *The unhealthy state of homelessness, Health audit results 2014*, Homeless Link, 2014, [www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/The%20unhealthy%20state%20of%20homelessness%20FINAL.pdf](http://www.homeless.org.uk/sites/default/files/site-attachments/The%20unhealthy%20state%20of%20homelessness%20FINAL.pdf).

<sup>37</sup> See: [www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/health-and-wellbeing/drugs-and-alcohol](http://www.crisis.org.uk/ending-homelessness/health-and-wellbeing/drugs-and-alcohol).

Maintaining a strong bond with the local community, especially sections of it that face discrimination and marginalisation, these companies can have different histories and flavours, but they generally work across art forms and will employ professional artists who are skilled at engaging with different groups of people to create art.

There are a number of participatory arts organisations in the East Midlands. In Nottingham, City Arts holds weekly workshops for people with a mental health diagnosis and people with learning difficulties. Nearby in Leicester, Soft Touch Arts was commissioned by the local Child and Adolescent Mental Health Service (CAMHS) to work with young people to create a permanent mural for a health centre

where they access therapeutic services. Soft Touch also works in a Youth Offenders Institute and in a prison with prisoners with mental health diagnoses.

Also nearby in Loughborough, Charnwood Arts has undertaken group work on a weekly basis with a group called RAW for people with long-term mental health problems and living in social isolation.

On the Isle of Wight, Independent Arts runs Anxiety Cafés in two locations with day time and night time classes covering a number of art forms and activities. In Bridgend, Valley and Vale Community Arts runs the Breathing Space project where two artists work with people with anxiety, depression and other

**Art session at darts, Doncaster. Photo © darts/James Mulkeen.**



mild to medium mental health issues, as well as a weekly session at Chapter Arts in Cardiff called Getting the Message Across for people with eating disorders. Tees Valley Arts in Middlesbrough runs weekly Phoenix Arts sessions in Stockton. The Hive community arts organisation based in Shipley, Bradford, has for a number of years offered classes to people with mild to moderate mental health problems.

### **‘Mainstream’ arts organisations**

‘Mainstream’ arts organisations is clearly a problematic term but is meant as a catch-all for organisations not primarily known for their participatory arts work or reaching out to specific parts of the community. Having said that, it is interesting and possibly concerning that there appears to be so little interest in engaging people with mental health problems in their activity compared with, say, the burgeoning field of arts and dementia (with many offering dementia friendly performances and gallery tours for example). Where this does happen, it is often the case that more specialist

projects like Portugal Prints in London take their service users to an institution such as the Royal Academy.

There are examples of mainstream organisations doing this work. Most notable is the Royal Liverpool Philharmonic (see page 32), but others include City of London Sinfonia, the Nottingham Playhouse, a number of museums and galleries and the Chichester Festival Theatre which runs workshops in a forensic mental health setting. The Birmingham Rep has worked with its local Mental Health Trust for over ten years, producing four editions of the Bedlam festival and running a company called Lightpost for young Black men with mental health problems.

These examples give models which could be explored and adapted by many more arts organisations, for instance Arts Council England’s National Portfolio Organisations.

## **Royal College of Music (RCM)**

Postnatal depression (PND) is thought to affect at least 13% of new mothers, with symptoms including persistent low mood, fatigue, insomnia, feelings of guilt or hopelessness, and anxiety about the baby. While there is evidence that psychosocial and psychological interventions are an effective treatment option for PND, there remain challenges with pharmacological treatment models. Consequently, research into promising psychosocial interventions such as music is critical to developing new paradigms for treating PND and supporting families.

RCM’s Music and Motherhood project investigated the effectiveness of creative interventions, including singing and play, as a psychosocial tool to reduce the occurrence and effects of PND symptoms. It combined psychological and biological data in a randomised controlled design to provide a comprehensive insight into how

and why creative activities may support postnatal wellbeing. The intervention study was supplemented by a cohort study of over 2,000 women tracking the interactions between mental wellbeing, symptoms of PND, and involvement in creative activities in women during pregnancy and the first year of motherhood. The programme engaged 134 mothers in ten weeks of singing sessions with their baby. It received funding support from the Arts Council England. 67% of women taking part with moderate to severe symptoms of PND were no longer displaying these at the end of ten weeks. The RCM also has guidelines for its approach to the mental health of students. It is part of the Healthy Conservatoires Network and is part of a £1 million study into the mental and physical health of students with the Centre for Performance Science at Imperial College.

## Mental health voluntary sector organisations

*“I know that despite feeling low and unwell I can come to Portugal Prints and do some art. I always feel better when I leave!”*

### Portugal Prints participant

The largest and best known voluntary sector mental health organisation is Mind which covers England and Wales. It has a headquarters for a number of central functions such as national campaigning and support of around 130 local organisations. Mind’s online advice section emphasises the effectiveness of the arts in promoting mental health and wellbeing.

Local branches of Mind offer a variety of services depending on local circumstances and resources, but these often include supported housing, support into employment and talking therapies. Many local branches offer arts programmes, especially the visual arts, music and creative writing. These are offered in a number of ways but may often employ professional artists on a freelance basis. Some branches have more ambitious projects such as the Inkwell Café run by Mind Leeds.

There is no overall assessment of the quantity and quality of arts opportunities offered by Mind through its local branches. Mind has sought to further promote the arts through a pilot small grant scheme to branches in Wales.

## Portugal Prints, Mind in Brent, Wandsworth and Westminster

Originally based on Portugal Street in Holborn, Portugal Prints has been running for over 40 years and is now based in Arlington House in Camden, North London.

The project is a collective of artists and offers a warm, innovative programme of creative workshops, commercial design and work experience, gallery visits, training, volunteering and work opportunities.

Partner organisations include The Royal Academy, TATE, National Portrait Gallery and the V&A Museum. The project is managed by Mind in Brent, Wandsworth and Westminster but accepts referrals from any London borough. As with other arts projects, the form of funding has changed over time moving from a block grant from the local authority to the use of personal budgets and some participants are self-funders. Free taster sessions are run on the first Wednesday of every month. Participants need to be currently in contact with mental health services.

Workshops take place Tuesday to Friday, with two sessions each day and three on Fridays. They are for people aged 18 and over. Classes are run by a multidisciplinary

team of artists and mental health professionals. Sessions are 2.5 hours and there are currently 40 artists attending.

All members are empowered to have a sense of ownership over what happens in the sessions, and many of the workshops are a co-creation of ideas from attendees, volunteers and staff.

*“Knowing that I have a space where I can go when I am not too well helps me a lot because it gives me a sense of security and stability. At Portugal Prints I have key working sessions regularly and I feel that I am part of a group of people that understands me and that are here to support me and help me if I need it.”*

*“Coming to Portugal Prints gives a structure to my week. I’ve been able to meet people again and make new friends.”*

### Portugal Prints participants



Art studio at Portugal Prints, London. Photo courtesy of Portugal Prints.

## Other organisations

Blackfriars Settlement in South London has a strong arts and mental health programme and a relationship with Roehampton University to provide arts therapy. As well as running workshops, the Settlement hosts a graphic design social enterprise Art2Print. Peabody Housing Association runs arts workshops for people with mental health problems in partnership with Social Material at some of its supported accommodation in North London.

As has been seen already, universities seem fertile environments for arts and activities. There are doubtless a number of factors at play including that many universities will include arts and psychiatry faculties of different natures. Awareness of the mental (ill) health of students has also grown. Queen's University in Belfast hosts the annual Northern Ireland Mental Health Arts Festival. The Institute of Psychiatry at Nottingham University has a long-running programme of work in association with City Arts Nottingham and Edinburgh University has begun an arts and mental health programme for students in conjunction with the NHS and a number of cultural organisations.

## SETTINGS

### Health settings

Hospital Rooms is a relatively new charity set up by Tim Shaw and Niamh White in 2016 with the explicit aim of bringing world class visual arts into mental health hospitals. It commissioned a number of artists in 2019 to work in six hospital environments who were selected after a competitive process.

Largely it is the more specialised arts and mental health organisations which work on psychiatric wards, for example Sound Minds or Art Angel. Indeed both these organisations grew out of service users' arts or music projects in psychiatric hospitals. There are a few more mainstream cultural organisations working in mental health settings though, such as Liverpool Philharmonic (see page 32) and Chichester Festival Theatre.

Primary care is also relevant. The Brighton Health and Wellbeing Centre was set up by a GP practice and has a broad offer of arts activities through the Hera programme run by the Robin Hood Foundation with funding from Arts Council England.

### York St John University: Converge

Converge is the brain child of academic and former psychiatric nurse Nick Rowe, starting in 2008. It is a partnership between the university where he teaches and the NHS. It addresses two sets of needs: real world expertise for university students and good quality, non-stigmatising courses for people with mental health problems. Key to the approach is that it is framed as education, not therapy, and therefore participants are students.

Although it has a strong basis in theatre, Converge is multi-art form extending to storytelling, music, movement, film and visual arts, and creative writing. Most courses take place at the University and are taught by academic staff, students and people with lived experience of mental

health problems. Courses are free of charge and open to adults over 18. Students are supported by a Converge mentor. Beyond the courses, the local NHS Trust connects students to Learning Access Workers through its Discovery Hub. Culture Guides connect students on Converge courses to a number of activities in the city to enrich their experience.

Converge led to the establishment of the Out of Character Theatre Company in 2009 as a company of artists and performers who use or have used mental health services. Work has been devised and performed locally and nationally since then. Out of Character has a sister company called In the Moment which acts as an entry point for new members.

## Arts and cultural settings

*“It was lovely having an opportunity to go to the different museums. Good for my mental health to participate in a group/social situation.”*

### Fresh Art @ participant

The majority of the work described in this report comes from specialist arts and mental health organisations or participatory/community arts organisations. Most of these have their own venues and some also take activities such as workshops out into community venues.

Some more general or civic local arts organisations have begun initiatives to provide mindfulness classes or spaces in their venues. These can be for anyone and so are seen as preventative or might attract people with undiagnosed or relatively low level anxiety and depression. However, there has been little in the way of work for people with more severe and enduring mental health needs in arts venues.

Museums and sometimes galleries are sometimes the exception to this. Museums play an increasingly important part in civic life as one of the few free (and beautiful) indoor spaces. There are around 2,000 museums in the UK. A study by Professors Paul Camic and Helen Chatterjee looked at the role of museums and galleries in public health interventions.<sup>38</sup> Museums have a number of important characteristics in this context, including as places of rest and sanctuary but also human capital and belonging.

Many museums are thinking hard, therefore, about their accessibility. When the Wellcome Collection opened a gallery called Being Human, it wanted to consider disability access including for people with mental health challenges. Part of this consideration was around representation and included commissions of two artists identifying as having lived experience of mental illness.

Museums which have run projects around creativity and mental health include the Yorkshire Sculpture Park, Dulwich Picture Gallery in London working with the local Recovery College, Whitworth Art Gallery,

## Bath Museums Partnership: Fresh Art @ Bath & North East Somerset

Creativity Works is a socially engaged arts organisation based in Radstock, North East Somerset. It runs Fresh Art @ Bath & North East Somerset, which is an innovative partnership with Avon & Wiltshire Mental Health Partnership NHS Trust (AWP), The Holburne Museum, No. 1 Royal Crescent Museum, The American Museum and Virgin Care to harness the power of creativity to make a difference to the lives of people who have been experiencing mental health challenges and social isolation. The project gives participants a unique opportunity to explore creativity for two hours a week over 12 weeks in museums around Bath and create artwork inspired by the museum collections using the expertise of museum staff and a socially engaged artist

facilitator. Some of the artworks created are exhibited during Fringe Arts Bath festival and some are donated to AWP to enliven clinical environments. The project promotes positive wellbeing by building beneficial connections between health and social care services, museum settings, local communities and the arts.

*“Creating the artwork, donating it and having it displayed in AWP buildings, as a service user is awesome! It's giving back, it improves the environment for others and there is a sense of real value. The Fresh Art@ project is a very powerful concept.”*

### Fresh Art @ participant

<sup>38</sup> Camic, Paul & Chatterjee, Helen. (2013). Museums and art galleries as partners for public health. *Perspectives in Public Health*. 133. 66-71.

De La Warr Pavilion working on a project called Mother Lode, and the King's College London Science Gallery which had an exhibition on anxiety at the end of 2019.

There are several museums in the UK with connections to former or current psychiatric hospitals. The Mental Health Museum in Wakefield is run by the South West Yorkshire NHS Foundation Trust. Similarly, the Glenside Hospital Museum in Bristol is located in the grounds of an old psychiatric hospital. The Bethlem Museum of the Mind is located within the grounds of the Bethlem Royal Hospital in an art deco building which reopened in 2015. The museum cares for an internationally renowned collection of archives which starts with the hospital's foundation in 1247 as well as art and historic objects. It has regularly changing temporary exhibitions drawing on this theme, frequent lectures and events such as recent one to make protest badges as part of the annual Big Draw.

Beyond museums, the Restoration Trust in Norfolk is a rare example of the inclusion of heritage into the realm of mental health and creativity. Describing its work as 'culture therapy', the Trust works in partnership with several universities and NHS Trusts. Examples of work include the Change Minds project where people in North Norfolk researched the lives of people with mental health problems using 19th century case books and the Human Henge project exploring Stonehenge's ancient landscape.

### Community venues

Arts activity does take place outside hospital, primary care and cultural settings. For instance, many Mind branches will run arts activities in their offices, especially creative writing and visual arts and, to a lesser extent, music making and singing.

**Poetry & music session with poet David Neita at the Dragon Café, London. Photo courtesy of the Dragon Café.**



## The Dragon Café by the Mental Fight Club

The Dragon Café began over a kitchen table eight years ago, when Sarah Wheeler, founder of Mental Fight Club the charity that runs the Café, invited two friends to share her vision of a new approach to mental health. The title Mental Fight Club pays tribute to two poets, William Blake and Ben Okri, though only the latter has been able to appear in person!

Each Monday from 12 pm to 8.30pm Mental Fight Club 'takes over' the space of the Crypt of St George the Martyr Church (hence Dragon), in South London. Members are called 'patrons' and membership is free. A modest charge is made for vegetarian food. Around 190 people participate in the Café every week. Almost all of them will have had contact with mental health services. Most will live nearby but people come from far and wide across London. The atmosphere aims to be comfortable, safe, warm and relaxing.

A wide range of participative arts are on offer, including dance, music making and singing, creative writing and spoken word. There are also mindfulness sessions, massage, Tai Chi and yoga on offer. The day builds to an evening event that can take the form of a performance, film screening, presentation, panel discussion or participatory activity. Conversation and a chance to respond by the audience are always incorporated.

Funding comes from various funding streams including Guy's and St Thomas' Charity, Maudsley Charity, Southwark Council, Southwark CCG, The London Community Foundation, the Tudor Trust and most recently, the Wellcome Trust.

In addition to the weekly café, Mental Fight Club has other projects. There is Dragon Café in the City on a fortnightly basis over the river in Shoe Lane Library, occasional pop-ups and the RE:CREATE Psychiatry project that facilitates creative conversations between people who use mental health services, and people working within the healthcare system.

During the next two years, Mental Fight Club is working in partnership with a group based in Oxford to pilot activities there inspired by The Dragon Café.

Patrons told the author of this report that they valued the following about the Dragon Café:

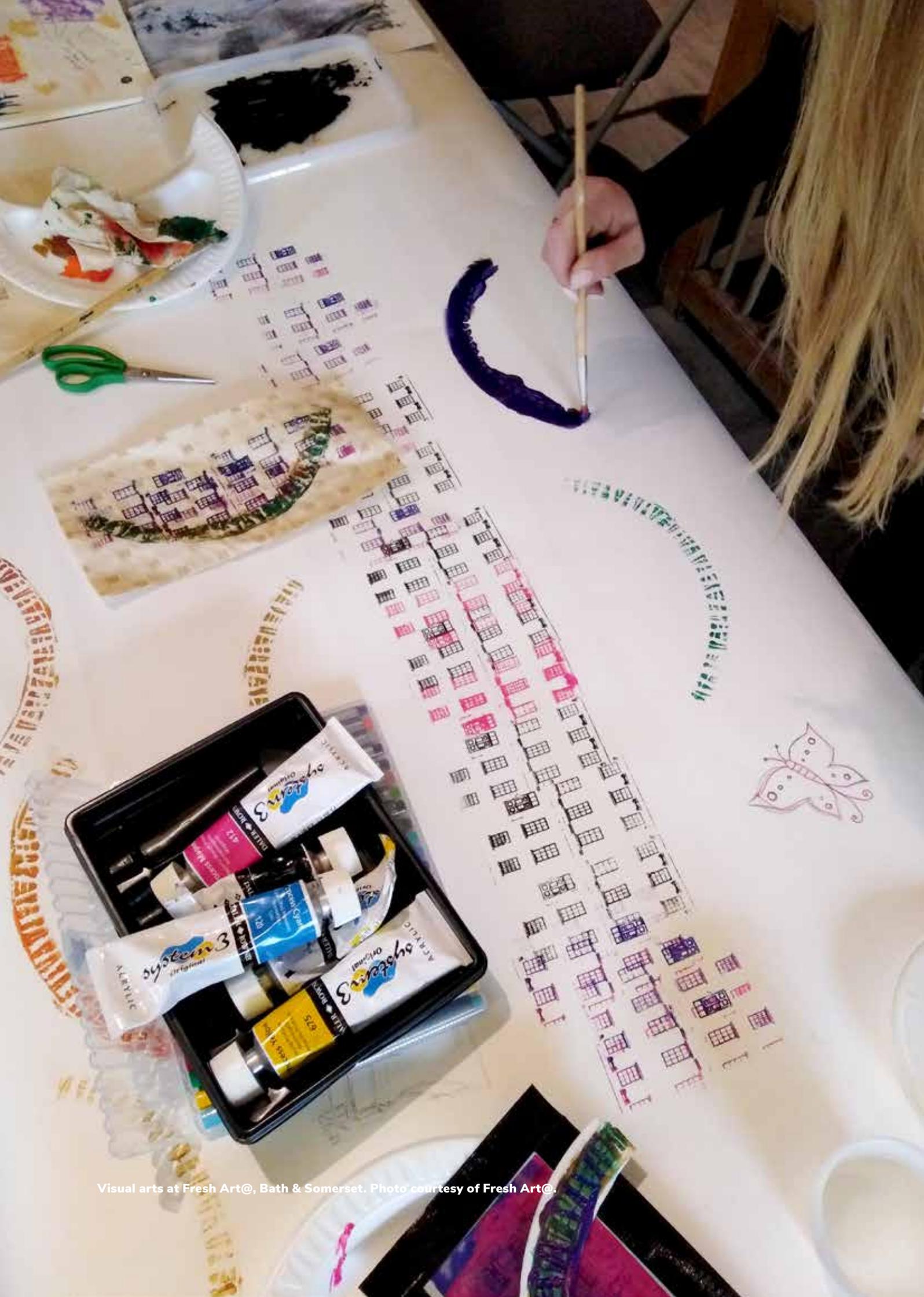
- It's on Mondays, which can be a low mood day
- It starts before lunchtime and ends in the evening so you stay out later
- There's a big variety of activities not just the arts
- It's part of a larger network of organisations and there are visits out to them
- It's easy to get to with good transport links
- There's no labelling of people but common experiences.

*“I see The Dragon Café as a big table where different people come to share their lives and creativity, and ensures that it is a feast for all – for the volunteers, the guest artists and the patrons. As both a patron and artist that has known The Dragon Café since its inception, it [...] nourished my soul, my hope and my creativity, and contributed to me being able to be a full-time artist.”*

**Dolly Sen, artist, activist and patron of The Dragon Café**

*“Running Writing Works each week has been one of my most significant achievements, mostly from what I have learned from the patrons' ideas and thoughts and to providing a safe supportive and long lasting space.”*

**Philip Baird, artist, patron and creative writing workshop co-facilitator at The Dragon Café since 2012**



Visual arts at Fresh Art@, Bath & Somerset. Photo courtesy of Fresh Art@.

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## Beginner's mind<sup>39</sup>

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It has been a huge privilege over the last year to visit some of the projects mentioned here to talk to participants and artists. One of the things that was most noticeable in researching this report was the quiet passion with which artists worked in this field, often for many years and sometimes with experience of mental health problems themselves. It was particularly moving to hear how central creative activity often was to the lives of participants.

The Baring Foundation is a newcomer to this world, so it is with some trepidation and hopefully humility, that these preliminary observations are offered. However, sometimes a beginner's mind can be useful.

### Complexity and hybridity

The arts and mental health sector as it stands today is the result of a complex history which includes individual passion and commitment, as well as larger movements including disability arts, participatory arts, a whole series of related fields such as arts and the criminal justice system, as well as arts and health. This has led to an organic, responsive pattern across the UK, rather than a coherent development. This has been evident in the lack of specific national policies and organisations. It also means that organisations can operate in the field with rather different priorities and emphases. Overall, this is a strength giving diversity of provision and choice.

### Longevity but constant change

Arts and mental health work in the community dates back until at least the early 1980s and in psychiatric institutions long before that. There are a number of arts organisations, and some artists, that can encompass that entire journey and need to be valued for the wisdom they can bring to the field. However funding is highly uncertain. Major players in arts and mental health have recently closed.

Notable recent examples have sadly included CoolTan Arts and the Liverpool Mental Health Consortium. This may partly be due to the ever greater pressures on local authority and health budgets. There are some, but not many, new entrants to the field too.

### Supply and demand

This has not been in any way a quantitative survey but it is interesting to ask how many participants are engaged in these and other projects around the country and how this relates to the potential demand. This might sound too managerial, but with the advent of social prescribing in England it will become a more active consideration. The 2007 study by Hecker et al estimated that 4,000 people were engaged with the work they found. Given that Core Arts in London alone has 2,000 members and Liverpool Philharmonic has engaged with over 10,000 people, this feels like a significant underestimate.

### Quality

A number of artists in this exploration raised the issue of 'quality'. This is a fraught area in the arts and it was not always clear what was being alluded to. It is probable that this is partly a concern about the quality of the participatory experience for people with mental health problems. This is a matter of the skills of the practitioner at being person-focused and would apply to any group involved in participatory arts. But it is also about a degree of knowledge and experience about the complex area of mental health including safeguarding. It may also be a concern about the ambition of the work being made, the quality of the environment in which it is being made, and how it is being exhibited.

<sup>39</sup> 'Beginner's Mind' is a phrase sometime used in Buddhism and mindfulness teachings. When a novice starts the practice of meditation the process feels to have boundless possibilities. It is state of openness, curiosity and non-judgement, which should be retained. This feels appropriate for arts and mental health as it acknowledges that the Baring Foundation is entering this field for the first time and seeing a myriad of opportunities.

## Lived experience and co-production

Given the prevalence of mental health problems, especially Common Mental Disorders, it is inevitable that a number of practitioners in arts and mental health projects have themselves had experience of the same mental health problems as participants. Indeed, a number of artists raised this as part of their motivation for contributing to this field. This is likely to influence, for the better, the approach taken by artists and give a deep understanding of what they are doing. Beyond this, many of the examples in this report would state that their intention was to pursue an approach of co-production with participants.

## Inclusivity

It may well be a function of both how this study was researched, as well as likely sources of funding, but it is noticeable how few projects were about people with mental health problems working alongside other members of the community. There are strengths in specialisation including as regards safeguarding, but there is also a case to be made for how inclusion reduces stigma and might promote socialisation.

## How is work funded?

There are many different ways that arts projects are funded. Many raise funds from local communities and a mixture of arts funders and general funders such as the National Lottery. In some cases, people with Personal Independence Payments use these to meet class or tuition fees. This can be difficult to administer and a number of organisations mentioned how they had had to change the way they delivered work in order to meet changing funding approaches. What was marked was how rare and negligible health funding is for this work, though in England the demand for provision will certainly increase through social prescription.

## Two worlds, two languages

There are a number of areas of arts provision, such as arts and the criminal justice sector, where arts practitioners need to be adept at working with complex systems that are also under great strain. This is probably especially

true in the arts and mental health field which, at least to some extent, needs to navigate a field of knowledge that can feel confusing and rarefied, as well as interact with strained NHS systems. It is often the case that the last thing that people with mental health problems engaging with the arts want is to be reminded of the mental health system. The arts can be a welcome escape and treasured home. But it is necessary for arts organisations to have some understanding of the NHS especially if seeking funding from Clinical Commissioning Groups.

## Under-researched

In the course of this study, it was often stated that there was plentiful research about the psychological effects of participating in the arts for people with mental health problems but we failed to find many academic papers and these tended to be regarding small scale projects. The Baring Foundation has not in the past funded arts as a 'treatment' for an 'illness' but rather because everyone has a right to express themselves creatively and to access culture. However, there is likely to be more interaction with health services in this field and if funding is expected at any scale from the NHS it is inevitable that there needs to be a stronger evidence base. This is likely to emerge given the advent of the MARCH network.

## The diversity of the creative workforce and the communities they serve

As stated earlier in this report, some sections of society are very highly over-represented among people living with mental health problems. The composition of the creative workforce and the degree to which it is representative of wider society is, quite rightly, a subject of intense debate. It is probably unsurprising therefore that this would appear also to strongly apply overall to practitioners in the arts and mental health field. A specific instance of this is the over-representation of Black and Minority Ethnic people using mental health services but the relatively few practitioners from these communities employed by arts organisations.

## Partnership working

Most of the examples included in this report include some type of partnership working. This might be a specialist arts and mental health organisation working with health service providers or a specialist participatory arts organisation working with larger arts institutions, for example museums. Good communications and an appreciation of each other's cultures are therefore key to success.

## Role in reducing stigma and challenging prejudice

It might be easy to overstate the role of arts organisations in changing social attitudes. The recent shift in public willingness to talk about mental health problems is hard to trace back to the actions of individual arts organisations. However, it is inevitable that the process of exhibiting the artistic capability of people with mental health problems should be a part of this welcome societal shift.

## Coverage of art forms

Overall, there is a wide representation of art forms in the field of arts and mental health but this is by no means evenly spread. For instance it would appear that rather little work is taking place in dance but that there is a preponderance of work in the visual arts.

## Where are the mainstream arts organisations and does it matter?

Over the last ten years it has been striking how the broad church of arts organisations have started to take an interest in creative ageing, not just specialist or participatory companies. This doesn't seem to be the case with arts and mental health to remotely the same degree. Where it does happen, and Liverpool Philharmonic is a notable example which deserves study and replication, great results in terms of scale and quality can be achieved.

## Variable geographical coverage

This rapid survey is most certainly incomplete so it is not possible to be clear how uniform coverage is in the UK. However, it would appear quite varied from a rich array in Brighton and Hove to relatively few projects for instance in parts of Scotland. This may be due to

inadequate information but it is more likely to be a function of how this work has come about, without any centralised policy or funding strategy and with very great variations for instance in the level of support by individual CCGs and Mental Health Trusts in England. Initiatives largely come about through the drive and commitment of individuals and are subject to chance when it comes to funding opportunities.

## By, with and about

Baring Foundation arts programmes have tended to be arts by and with a section of society who face discrimination and disadvantage. It is up to those people (whether refugees, people living with dementia, or people with mental health problems) to choose what they want to create work about. It is noticeable that festivals, such as the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival or Bedlam in Birmingham, will largely curate work by people with mental health problems about these experiences. As well as the often very impressive creative quality of this work, they also provide a great platform for discussion and improved understanding. But it would be a mistake to think that the field needs always to be about the experience of having a mental health problem.

## Children and young people

*“There are not a lot of services in the area, lots of sports stuff around but not a lot of Arts.”*

*“I felt really nervous coming into a group but meeting the staff then coming to the drop in helped me feel welcome and now I love it.”*

### 42nd Street participants

A small minority of the work considered has been directed towards children and young people. Mental health services are reluctant to label children and young people for good reason and great skill and care is needed to undertake this type of participatory work, but it is also apparent that the number of young people with mental health problems is rising.

## 42nd Street/Horsfall

42nd Street is an organisation for young people aged 11-25 throughout Greater Manchester to support their mental health and emotional wellbeing. It provides a range of individual therapeutic services as well as various group sessions.

42nd Street has a strong link to Mental Health and Arts work through its onsite gallery and creative space, The Horsfall. The gallery aims to reach out to those young people facing additional pressures in society who may not be accessing either arts based projects or mental health support. It offers drop-in sessions to increase confidence of young people and has a model of work which ensures that all creative sessions with young people are supported by a mental health practitioner. The gallery undertakes intensive work with young people in a supportive and constructive manner which gives insight into the lives of the young people in a powerful and dynamic way. The organisation is youth led and as such often uses the arts to give voice to young people in aspects of their life that effect their mental health. Recently responding to a rise in self referrals stating loneliness as a need for support, the

organisation commissioned peer research in the topic (supporting young people in the charity to research other young people). From this they made film, theatre, music, public realm and immersive exhibition pieces linked to the themes of 'being alone and being together', exploring our time alone in positive and creative ways and exploring coming together working with others in new groups.

The organisation provides regular mental health training for artists and arts organisations working with young people. Its recent symposium 'Mental health and the Arts' brought mental health managers, NHS staff, academics, artists and youth workers together to explore the role of arts and mental health.

*“ We use art for calming and have a lot of those colouring books, but it's hard to keep between the lines and can be frustrating. Free drawing is better but it's having the imagination and some direction as well, and a calm atmosphere that the gallery offers. ”*

**42nd Street participant**

### Challenging work

Although the commitment of artists in this field is undoubted, the precariousness of funding is a wearing factor. Sometimes interactions with a participant are sensitive or fraught. This is on top of the challenges of being an artist in the first place. Many organisations talked about the need for more resources and time for support and self-care, and a few thought there was more need for clinical supervision.

### Isolated practitioners

Most of the arts organisations visited were aware of very few of their peers. There are doubtless many reasons for this including the day-to-day pressure of delivering work, often in precarious, underfunded situations. There

will be more opportunities for exchange in the future including through the Culture, Health and Wellbeing Alliance (though this only covers England).

### The workshop model

Most projects said they operated a weekly workshop either with a membership or open classes where one or more artists will work with a group they grow to know well. For some people this is undoubtedly a welcome form of stability and purpose in their lives. Is there room or indeed any need, for greater experimentation and innovation?

### **Under the radar**

Although awareness of mental health seems to be rapidly increasing along with its presence in the media, this does not seem to be the case for arts organisations supporting people living with mental health problems.

### **A time of opportunity**

This increased public awareness and alongside it a greater interest by the NHS and the Arts Councils, suggests that the next decade could be a highly positive time for arts and mental health, where its value might be better acknowledged. This will require more funding as well as greater appreciation and recognition. Such an expansion will need analysis including the active involvement of people with mental health needs and existing providers.

The Baring Foundation hopes to be part of this overdue appreciation of the role and value of arts and mental health.

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# List of organisations

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## [ APPENDIX ONE ]

This section lists organisations which have been drawn to our attention and have delivered participatory arts activity over the last two years in the UK specifically with people with mental health problems. It should be emphasised that it is by no means a complete picture of activity.

**20 Stories High** makes theatre with young people in Liverpool and has a partnership project on mental health with the local CAMHS.

**42nd Street** is a major centre for young people with mental health problems in Manchester and runs a range of creativity projects through the Horsfall Centre.

**64 Million Artists**, the everyday creativity digital platform, has recently undertaken a clinically evaluated project for people with mental health problems called Creativity in Mind.

**ACAVA** began life in Hammersmith but now has a portfolio of managed studios across the South East of England and runs several visual arts projects for people with mental health problems in London.

**Apples and Snakes** is London based but with a national programme of spoken word poetry which has included work on mental health.

**Arc** (Arts for Recovery in the Community) is a specialist arts and mental health charity in Stockport with a range of projects including Arts on Prescription.

**Arcola Theatre** in East London has a series of community companies including one for mental health which devises work and runs two projects per year.

**Art Angel** is a long standing specialist arts and mental health organisation in Dundee offering visual arts activity and creative writing.

**Art in Healthcare** based in Edinburgh and covering Scotland aims to transform the physical estate of the NHS with art and runs a number of participatory arts mental health workshops.

**Arts Care** works across Northern Ireland and has used artists to work in a number of mental health settings.

**Artcore** is a visual arts agency in Derby with a strong interest in arts and health which runs weekly workshops called Art Enhancing Life including for people with mental health problems.

**Artisan Studio CIC** in Poole and Dorset offers a wide range of creative workshops including around mental health needs.

**Artlift** in Gloucester is probably the best known arts on prescription scheme with a wide range of options for people with mental health problems.

**Artlink Central** runs a weekly visual arts workshop for people with mental health problems in the Stirling region.

**Artlink Edinburgh** is an arts and disability agency with a long running strand of work with people with mental health problems.

**Artlink Hull** is a disability arts charity which worked with Mad Pride on a festival in 2018 called 'It's a Mad World' and has also done work with the local Recovery College.

**Artlink West Yorkshire** is a disability arts organisation that employs one of the Arts and Minds Network workers (see below) and runs a fortnightly visual arts studio.

**Arts and Minds** in Cambridge runs initiatives in a number of art forms such as a choir and arts sessions in local museums.

**Arts and Minds Network** in Leeds is largely funded by the Mental Health Trust and employs three part-time staff to deliver workshops and a festival, but chiefly to coordinate and link work.

**Arts Care/Gofal Celf** was established in West Wales in 1987 as a specialist in arts and mental health and has run numerous projects since then, including the Creative Communities project recently.

**Arts Network (SELAN)** in Lewisham, London, is a project for anyone with mental health problems to participate in arts and crafts activities.

**Art Shape** is a county-wide social inclusion and disability organisation based in Gloucester which has run many arts and mental health projects for a number of years.

**Artspace** in Brighton is a studio space for people with mental health problems.

The **Ashmolean Museum** in Oxford as part of its 'Ashmolean for All' strategy engages with a wide range of community groups including Mind, resulting in a recent exhibition of participants' visual art works in the museum.

**Avant Cymru** is a Welsh based theatre company which has created work around Hip Hop, breakdancing and mental health.

**Bath Museums' Partnership** has worked with Creativity Works on a programme called @Freshart.

**Bethlem Gallery** co-located with the Museum (below) is a visual arts space with many activities and professional, high-quality exhibitions.

**Bethlem Museum of the Mind** in South London draws on the internationally significant archive of the Bethlem Hospital with a wide-ranging events programme.

**Big Blue Drum** is an arts and health CIC working across art forms and in different settings and uses the visual arts with people experiencing anxiety and depression.

**Birmingham Rep** is the theatre and performance partner in the Bedlam Festival and also runs Lightpost, a theatre company for young black men with mental health problems.

The **Birmingham Wellbeing Community Choir** for people with mental health problems meets weekly in several locations and stages performances.

**Blackfriars Settlement**, a community charity in South London, runs a wide visual arts programme for people with mental health problems.

**Breathe ahr** (arts health research) in London has run a music project for mothers with postnatal depression, Melodies for Mums, which will be scaled up with funding from the Wellcome Trust.

**BrightSparks** is a community of mental health service users, volunteers and supporters using the arts in Leicester. A number of arts forms are used including comedy.

**British Ceramics Biennial** based in Stoke-on-Trent has run a number of arts and mental health projects including with Mind and with people recovering from addictions.

**Cardboard Citizens** in London engages homeless people in forum theatre pieces, many of whom have mental health problems.

**Cartwheel Arts** based in Lancashire has been using participatory arts for over thirty years and has a strong strand of work across art forms for arts and mental health.

**Cathja** delivers visual arts workshops for people with mental health problems from a barge in West London.

**Cascade Creative Recovery** in Brighton is a volunteer-led initiative with a café and creative workshops.

**Charnwood Arts** is a participatory arts organisation in Loughborough which holds regular workshops for people with mental health problems called RAW.

**Chichester Festival Theatre** has a renowned youth and community team which has begun to work in forensic mental health settings.

**Chilli Studios** is based in Newcastle and Gateshead and uses a range of art forms. Projects include 'Heads and Tales' which used archives to reclaim the voices of local people with mental health problems.

**City Arts** in Nottingham runs a mixed membership weekly visual arts workshop and partners with the Institute of Mental Health at the University of Nottingham on its arts programming.

The **City of London Sinfonia** has had a three-year residency at the Bethlem Maudsley Hospital School.

**Common Wheel** in Glasgow is a music organisation working with people with mental health problems, including on the wards of the Gartnavel Royal Hospital.

**Community Music Wales** is based in Merthyr Tydfil. In 2019, it ran three week-long courses at different locations in Wales to equip community musicians with the skills to work in mental health settings followed by an opportunity for a six-week placement to shadow experienced musicians in these settings.

**Core Arts** began life at the old Hackney Hospital and is now an educational charity with 2,000 members and a wide ranging arts programme, as well as sports and horticulture.

**Creative Alternatives** in Merseyside is an arts on prescription service with a longstanding commitment to people with mental health problems.

**Creative Future** in Brighton works in the visual arts and creative writing to increase recognition for 'outsider artists' including people with mental health problems.

**Creative Minds** is a charity hosted by the South West Yorkshire Partnership NHS Trust. Launched in 2011 it has run over 150 arts projects, often in partnership with arts organisations.

**Creative Recovery** in Barnsley uses creativity to boost recovery and wellbeing across Yorkshire. The Open Art studio welcomes people with experience of alcohol and drug abuse and mental health problems.

**Creative Response** was established in 1993 and is based in Farnham, Surrey. It works with vulnerable people, mainly with mental health problems, using the visual arts and performance.

**Creativity Works** is a community arts organisation based in Radstock in the West Country which focuses on arts and mental health and has a number of programmes running.

**Culture&**, over its thirty years of work on culture and diversity, has recently commissioned two works by composer Jocelyn Pook: *The Anxiety Fanfare* and *Hysteria: A Song Cycle for Singer and Psychiatrist*.

**Cymaz Music** is a music and singing organisation which has worked in Cornwall for over 20 years often on arts and health, and is currently working with children around mental health.

**Daily Life Limited** is an arts organisation based in London which produces Bobby Baker's work. Bobby's work tackles discrimination and stigma in everyday life, and her diaries were recently exhibited at the Wellcome Collection.

**darts** is the community arts organisation in Doncaster with long-running programmes for mental health and creativity, currently called Creative Directions.

**De La Warr Pavilion** is a modern arts gallery in Bexhill-on-Sea and has been running a creative writing project called 'Mother Lode' for mothers with postnatal depression.

**Double Elephant Print Workshop** based in Devon has provided its 'printing on prescription' service for over a decade and also worked on psychiatric wards.

**Dulwich Picture Gallery** has a programme running with the South London and Maudsley Recovery College for older people with mental health problems.

**East London Dance** entered into a strategic partnership with Sadler's Wells and HeadStart Newham in 2017 to provide dance classes for 150 10- to 15-year-olds with mental health problems.

The **Empathy Museum** is a touring participatory arts organisations encouraging people 'to walk in others' shoes' including the shoes of people with experience of mental health problems.

**esc films** based in Belfast describes its approach as therapeutic film-making working with marginalised people including in forensic mental health.

**Fabrica**, the visual arts agency in Brighton, works with Men in Sheds in Kempton.

**Fallen Angels Dance Theatre** is based in Chester and specialises in recovery from addiction with classes in safe spaces as well as public performances.

**Flying Fish Artists** based in Barnstaple, Devon, uses art as therapy for people with mental health problems.

**Foundling Museum** in London ran the Tracing Our Tales project with care-experienced young people.

**Four in Four** in Wales is a cross-disciplinary arts organisation specialising in mental health. A recent example of work is *Gods and Kings* performed at the Sherman Theatre.

**Fluid Motion Theatre** in Basingstoke uses an autobiographical approach and specialises in mental health issues.

**Freedom from Torture** runs a number of creative activities for survivors, including Write for Life, the longest running refugee creative writing group in Britain.

**Freud Museum** in London is engaging a series of local community groups through participatory arts including members of Mind.

**Geese Theatre** based in Birmingham uses masks for making forum theatre and is increasingly working in forensic mental health settings.

**Glenside Hospital Museum** uses the resources of a former psychiatric hospital in Bristol.

**Hampshire Culture Trust** runs the ICE project with the local CAMHS drawing on the resources of a number of arts organisations across the county to work with vulnerable young people.

The **Harmony Choir** in Edinburgh is for people with mental health problems.

**Heart of Glass** is a St Helens/Merseyside based collaborative and social arts agency which delivers the Arts Council England Creative People and Places project for St Helens. In 2019 it commissioned the artist The Vacuum Cleaner to run an arts and mental health festival called *MadLove*.

The **Hearth Centre** in Birmingham uses the arts to animate key issues in mental health and humanities and promote wellbeing. Their new piece *Revolving Door* was commissioned for the Bedlam Festival 2019.

The **Hive** community arts organisation based in Shipley, Bradford, has for a number of years offered classes to people with mild to moderate mental health problems.

**Hoot Creative Arts** is based in Kirklees, West Yorkshire, and specialises in arts and mental health working across art forms.

**Hospital Rooms** have commissioned award-winning artists to enliven psychiatric hospitals with new work across the UK.

**Independent Arts** is a participatory arts organisation on the Isle of Wight which runs the Anxiety Café with a visual arts offer.

**Kazzum Arts** based in London began life specialising in theatre for children and young people and now specialises in young refugees. They run several specialist programmes including Apollo with young people on mental health wards.

**Key Changes**, based in North London but operating more widely, links people with mental health problems with music making and the music industry.

**Inside Out Cymru** is an arts and mental health charity delivering arts workshops and activities across the county of Gwent.

**King's College London's Cultural Community** is an interdisciplinary team which has arts and health as one of its areas of focus and has run a number of mental health projects.

**Leeds Mind** runs the Inkwell Arts Café which has a wide range of courses, events, screenings and exhibitions.

**Lime Art** in Manchester is an arts and health organisation which has a number of projects around mental health including an artist in residence in a secure mental health unit.

**Live Music Now** operates across the UK including taking trained early career musicians onto mental health wards.

**Living Words** is a creative writing charity which has staged several festivals around brain science, mental health and the arts at the Quarterhouse in Folkestone.

**LouDeemY Productions** in the West Midlands works with the Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Trust.

The **Mac (Midlands Arts Centre)** is the visual arts partner of the Bedlam Festival in Birmingham.

**Magic Carpet Arts** is an arts and health charity in Exeter which runs a variety of visual arts, singing and theatre sessions including around mental health.

**Magna Vitae Trust** in Lincolnshire was commissioned by the Lincolnshire Partnership Foundation NHS Trust to work with people with mental health problems resulting in a theatre piece called '1 in 4'.

**Manchester Metropolitan University Arts and Health** is a long running interdisciplinary centre.

**Maslaha**, a social justice initiative of the Muslim community based at Free the Word in London, has included the arts in some of its mental health projects.

**May Contain Nuts** is a theatre company in Watford which started life on the psychiatric wards and has continued into the community.

**Mean Feet Dance** is based in Somerset and specialises in dance and mental health.

The **Mental Fight Club** runs a weekly all-day creativity session using multiple arts at the Dragon Café in South London.

The **Mental Health Foundation** has run the Scottish Mental Health Arts Festival since 2007 which now takes place each May, as well as other arts initiatives related to the Edinburgh Festivals.

The **Mental Health Museum** in Wakefield is in a former psychiatric hospital and run by the NHS Trust.

**Moodswings** is a mental health organisation based in Manchester with a number of arts projects in its repertoire, including singing, drama and visual arts.

**Moving Memories Dance Company** is a participatory company which ran a mental health project called Moving Minds in Medway.

**Museums Northumberland** has run a creativity programme for Syrian refugees with mental health problems.

**New Dance** in North East Wales has run a series of dance workshops in the Heddfan Adult Mental Health Unit in the Maelor Hospital Wrexham.

The **New Note Orchestra** in Brighton is for people recovering from addictions.

**Noise Solution** is a social enterprise which runs a music mentoring programme focused on music technology and beat-making with young people in the East of England.

**North Tyneside Art Studio** is based in North Shields and has been in operation since 1991. It offers a free Monday – Friday studio for people with mental health problems.

**Nottingham Playhouse** is the regional hub for *Time for Change* and used its production of *The Madness of King George* to initiate discussion.

**Nottingham University Institute for Mental Health** has a particular interest in the arts, with a number of projects including an annual open exhibition in collaboration with City Arts.

**Oakleaf Enterprises** has operated in Guildford for over twenty years providing services to people with mental health problems including arts classes, singing and guitar playing.

**Odd Arts** in Manchester uses theatre, dance, film making and visual arts and includes mental health as one of its four areas of expertise, with three ongoing initiatives in this area.

**Open Arts** in Essex is run by the NHS Trust with a strong suit in visual arts and was recently evaluated.

**Orb Community Arts** in Knaresborough runs a number of workshops with people with mental health problems from across Harrogate and North Yorkshire. These include using creative IT, cabaret and writing.

**Outside Edge** is a theatre company in West London which specialises in work with people in recovery from addiction.

**Outside In** which has expanded from its origins at Pallant House in Chichester represents 2,000 artists, around a third of whom have mental health problems.

**Paintings in Hospitals** is a national charity which combines an extensive art collection with creative activities. These take place in many health and social care settings including on mental health wards.

**Peabody Housing Association** has worked with arts organisations including Social Material CIC to run creative activities with residents in supported housing.

**PEAK – Art in the Black Mountains** – runs creative writing classes for young people often referred to by CAMHS in their Caban Sgriblio project.

The **Perspective Project** is a digital arts project which in two years has displayed work by over 200 artists and writers with the purpose of tackling mental health stigma.

**Pioneer Projects** operates from a community hub in High Bentham, North Yorkshire and runs art groups for people with mental health problems.

**Place2Be** is a national mental health charity for children, largely working in schools but which also has the Art Room, a studio based project working with schools in London, Edinburgh and Oxford.

**Plantation Productions** is an arts organisation based in Govan, Glasgow which has run workshops called Creative Steps for people with mental health problems since 2014.

**Playing ON** is a socially engaged theatre company with a particular interest in mental health which has toured plays, including 'Hearing things' and 'Can I Help You?'

**Play for Progress** based in London provides arts and music opportunities to isolated and unaccompanied young refugees.

**Project Ability** is a Glasgow based visual arts agency working with people with disabilities and lived experience of mental health problems, and runs an open studio called ReConnect.

**Queen's University Belfast** runs the annual Northern Ireland Arts and Mental Health Festival.

**Quench Arts** is a West Midlands based community arts organisation which runs the Wavelength music making programme for young people with mental health problems.

**Raised Voices** is an Edinburgh based charity which delivers performing arts and creative writing opportunities to homeless people in the city.

**Raw Sounds** in Brixton, South London, is a music organisation which includes a mental health strand called Raw Materials.

**Reachout with Arts in Mind** is a participatory arts organisation based in Alloa in Scotland specialising in arts and mental health.

**The Reader**, based in Liverpool and operating nationally, runs reading groups on mental health wards.

**Real Talk Theatre** tours workshops and interactive theatre pieces to schools to challenge stigma around mental health issues.

The **Recovery College Collective** is a recovery college in the North East of England offering creativity workshops to members.

The **Robin Hood Foundation** runs the Healing, Expressive and Recovery (Hera) programme at the Brighton Health and Wellbeing Centre.

**Re-Live Theatre** in Cardiff has produced several participatory shows with ex-service people around PTSD.

The **Red Earth Collective** is based in Birmingham. It uses the arts to inspire stories, stimulate thinking and to create conversations that support and improve the mental health and wellbeing of marginalised and racialised communities.

**Restoke** is an arts organisation in Stoke-on-Trent which produced a play about men and mental health called *Man Up*.

The **Restoration Trust** in Norfolk is a heritage organisation providing 'culture therapy' in partnerships with NHS Trusts and universities.

The **Richmond Fellowship**, a national mental health charity, runs a community arts studio in Redhill, Surrey, called Art Matters.

The **Royal College of Music** in London runs the Music and Motherhood programme for mothers with postnatal depression which is being academically evaluated.

The **Royal Liverpool Philharmonic** has worked with the NHS Trust since 2007 engaging 10,000 service users.

**Rhythmix** in Brighton is a music organisation with a strand of work around mental health and young people.

**RT Projects** based in Durham runs the Open Art Surgery, a studio space, primarily for visual arts, for people with a mental health problem.

**SAMPAD**, the South Asian arts and heritage company based in Birmingham, is a partner in the Bedlam Festival as well as integrating mental health into a four-year project for women.

**Sheffield Flourish** is a mental health charity which includes among its programmes Connected Worlds courses which use storytelling and visual arts.

**Soft Touch** is a participatory arts company in Leicester which has run a number of mental health projects with young people.

**Soundcastle** is a music-making social enterprise, based in London but operating beyond, which runs a programme around resilience for people with mental health problems called the People's Collective.

**Sound Minds** is based in South London and is primarily a music agency whilst also running a wider programme including film and visual arts.

**Space2** in East Leeds is an arts and community organisation running several arts and mental health projects.

**Spread the Word** in London has run a poetry project for young people to share their mental health journeys.

**START Inspiring Minds** has been working for over 25 years in Salford with its own creative hub with a focus on visual arts and craft and mental health including progression pathways.

**Stepping Out Theatre** in Bristol has specialised in mental health since 1997 with over seventy productions under its belt.

**Studio Upstairs** has locations in North London, Croydon and Bristol running an artistic therapeutic community.

**Sydenham Garden** in South London provides arts and crafts to people with mental health problems and has published evaluations.

**Synergy Creative Community** in Brighton is a peer led community organisation with weekly sessions in multiple art forms.

**Take Art** based in Somerset ran poetry workshops called Word/Play for young people around their mental health experiences.

**Tees Valley Arts** in Middlesbrough is a community arts organisation which runs the weekly Phoenix Arts sessions in Stockton.

**Theatre Nemo** in Glasgow has been running workshops and devising work for over ten years.

**Tonic for Mental Health** is a music agency based in Portsmouth, working across the South Coast.

**Valley and Vale Community Arts** in Bridgend runs the Breathing Space project for people with anxiety and a weekly session at Chapter Arts in Cardiff for people with eating disorders.

**Venue Cymru** in Llandudno runs a project called Creu/Create delivering fortnightly creative sessions for 12- to 16-year-olds experiencing mental health problems, referred by health practitioners.

**We Are Not Saints** in Brighton is a record label for people recovering from addictions.

The **Wellcome Collection** ran an exhibition in collaboration with the Bethlem Museum of the Mind called Bedlam: the Asylum and Beyond and has commissioned new work around mental health for its Being Human gallery.

**Westminster Mind** has been running Portugal Prints for over 35 years with a number of workshop sessions per week, outings and exhibitions.

**Without Theatre** is a theatre company for young people experiencing mental health problems.

**Women & Theatre** based in Birmingham provides workshops in mental health settings in exchange for office space provided by the Birmingham and Solihull Mental Health Foundation Trust.

**York St John's University** runs the Converge programme with the NHS Trust to offer people with mental health problems a drama programme as students.

**Yorkshire Sculpture Park** has been running monthly sessions called Subject to Change with Creative Minds.

**ZooFish Arts CIC** in Dorset runs a weekly group called Zap Arts in Poole which joined forces with the Richmond Fellowship to conduct a public engagement project as part of the *Time to Change* campaign on mental health.

# Map of organisations

## [ APPENDIX TWO ]

The number in red refers to the location of the counties on the map (right). Please note that this is by no means a complete picture of activity.

### ENGLAND

#### 01 London

ACAVA  
 Apples and Snakes  
 Arcola Theatre  
 Arts Network (SELAN)  
 Bethlem Gallery & Bethlem Museum of the Mind  
 Blackfriars Settlement  
 Breathe ahr  
 Cardboard Citizens  
 Cathja  
 City of London Sinfonia  
 Core Arts  
 Culture&  
 Daily Life Limited  
 Dulwich Picture Gallery  
 East London Dance  
 Foundling Museum  
 Freedom from Torture  
 Freud Museum  
 Kazzum Arts  
 Key Changes  
 King's College London's Cultural Community  
 Maslaha  
 The Mental Fight Club/Dragon Café  
 Music Support  
 Outside Edge  
 Peabody Housing Association  
 Play for Progress  
 Raw Sounds  
 Richmond Fellowship  
 Royal College of Music  
 Soundcastle  
 Sound Minds  
 Spread the Word  
 Studio Upstairs  
 Sydenham Garden  
 Wellcome Collection  
 Westminster Mind/Portugal Prints

#### Midlands East & West

#### 02 Derbyshire

Artcore, Derby

#### 03 Leicestershire

BrightSparks, Leicester  
 Charnwood Arts, Loughborough  
 Soft Touch, Leicester

#### 04 Nottinghamshire

City Arts, Nottingham  
 Nottingham Playhouse  
 Nottingham University Institute  
 for Mental Health

#### 05 Staffordshire

British Ceramics Biennial, Stoke-on-Trent  
 Restoke, Stoke-on-Trent

#### 06 West Midlands

Birmingham Rep  
 Birmingham Wellbeing Community Choir  
 Geese Theatre, Birmingham  
 The Hearth Centre, Birmingham  
 LouDeemY Productions, Birmingham  
 The Mac (Midlands Arts Centre), Birmingham  
 Quench Arts, West Midlands  
 The Red Earth Collective, Birmingham  
 SAMPAD, Birmingham  
 Women & Theatre, Birmingham

#### North East & West

#### 07 Cheshire

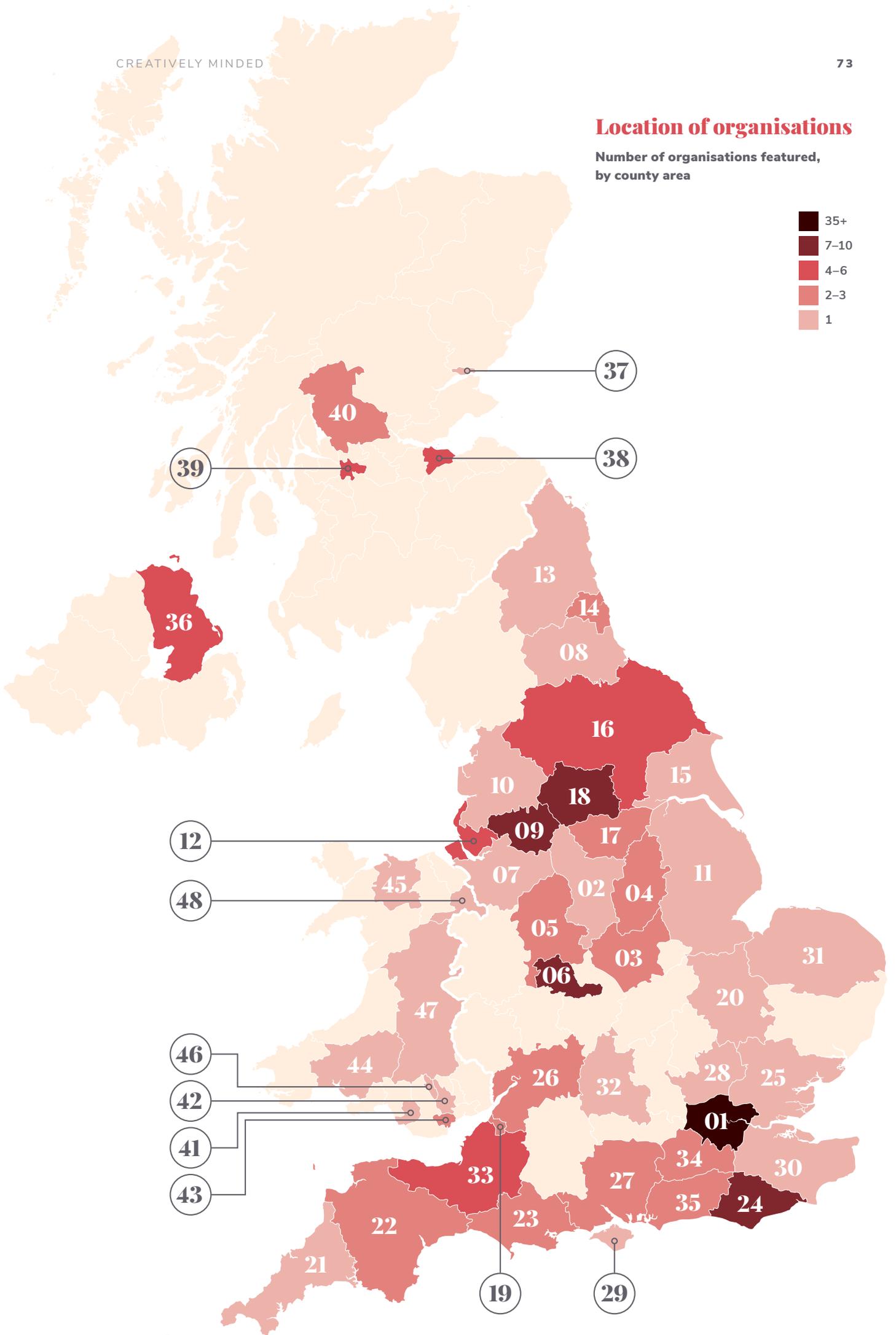
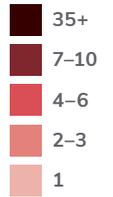
Fallen Angels Dance Theatre, Chester

#### 08 Durham

RT Projects

### Location of organisations

Number of organisations featured, by county area



## 09 Greater Manchester

42nd Street, Manchester  
 Arc, Stockport  
 Company Chameleon, Manchester  
 Manchester Metropolitan University  
 Arts and Health  
 Lime Art, Manchester  
 Moodswings, Manchester  
 Odd Arts, Manchester  
 START Inspiring Minds, Salford  
 Whitworth Art Gallery, Manchester

## 10 Lancashire

Cartwheel Arts, Heywood

## 11 Lincolnshire

Magna Vitae Trust, Louth

## 12 Merseyside

20 Stories High, Liverpool  
 Creative Alternatives, St Helens  
 Heart of Glass, St Helens  
 The Reader, Liverpool  
 Royal Liverpool Philharmonic

## 13 Northumberland

Museums Northumberland

## 14 Tyne and Wear

Chilli Studios, Newcastle and Gateshead  
 North Tyneside Art Studio, North Shields  
 Recovery College Collective, Newcastle

## Yorkshire & Humber

### 15 East Riding of Yorkshire

Artlink Hull

### 16 North Yorkshire

Orb Community Arts, Knaresborough  
 Pioneer Projects, High Bentham  
 Tees Valley Arts, Middlesbrough  
 York St John's University

### 17 South Yorkshire

Creative Recovery, Barnsley  
 darts, Doncaster  
 Sheffield Flourish

### 18 West Yorkshire

Artlink West Yorkshire  
 Arts and Minds Network, Leeds  
 Creative Minds, Wakefield  
 The Hive, Shipley, Bradford

Hoot Creative Arts, Kirklees  
 Leeds Mind  
 Mental Health Museum, Wakefield  
 Space2, Leeds  
 Yorkshire Sculpture Park

## South East & West and East Anglia

### 19 Bristol

Glenside Hospital Museum  
 Stepping Out Theatre

### 20 Cambridgeshire

Arts and Minds, Cambridge

### 21 Cornwall

Cymaz Music, Saint Austell

### 22 Devon

Double Elephant Print Workshop, Exeter  
 Flying Fish Artists, Barnstaple  
 Magic Carpet Arts, Exeter

### 23 Dorset

Artisan Studio CIC, Bournemouth/Poole  
 ZooFish Arts CIC

### 24 East Sussex

Artspace, Brighton  
 Cascade Creative Recovery, Brighton  
 Creative Future, Brighton  
 De La Warr Pavilion, Bexhill-on-Sea  
 Fabrica, Brighton  
 New Note Orchestra, Brighton  
 Robin Hood Foundation, Brighton  
 Rhythmix, Brighton  
 Synergy Creative Community, Brighton  
 We Are Not Saints, Brighton

### 25 Essex

Open Arts, Hadleigh

### 26 Gloucestershire

Artlift, Gloucester  
 Art Shape, Gloucester

### 27 Hampshire

Fluid Motion Theatre, Basingstoke  
 Hampshire Culture Trust  
 Tonic for Mental Health, Portsmouth

### 28 Hertfordshire

May Contain Nuts, Watford

**29 Isle of Wight**

Independent Arts, Newport

**30 Kent**

Living Words, Folkestone  
Moving Memories Dance Company, Faversham

**31 Norfolk**

Restoration Trust

**32 Oxfordshire**

Ashmolean Museum, Oxford

**33 Somerset**

Bath Museums' Partnership / Fresh Art @  
Creativity Works, Radstock  
Mean Feet Dance, Glastonbury  
Take Art

**34 Surrey**

Creative Response, Farnham  
Oakleaf Enterprises, Guildford

**35 West Sussex**

Chichester Festival Theatre  
Outside In, Chichester

**NORTHERN IRELAND****36 Antrim**

ARTiculate, Belfast  
Arts Care, Belfast  
esc films, Belfast  
Queen's University Belfast

**SCOTLAND****37 Dundee**

Art Angel  
Dundee Rep

**38 Edinburgh**

Art in Healthcare  
Artlink Edinburgh  
The Harmony Choir  
Mental Health Foundation  
Raised Voices  
Scottish Poetry Library

**39 Glasgow**

Common Wheel  
Plantation Productions  
Project Ability  
Theatre Nemo

**40 Stirling**

Artlink Central  
Reachout with Arts in Mind, Alloa

**WALES****41 Bridgend**

Valley and Vale Community Arts

**42 Caerphilly**

Inside Out Cymru, Gwent

**43 Cardiff**

Four in Four  
Inspire Choir  
Re-Live Theatre

**44 Carmarthenshire**

Arts Care/Gofal Celf, Carmarthen

**45 Conwy**

Venue Cymru, Llandudno

**46 Merthyr Tydfil**

Community Music Wales

**47 Powys**

PEAK – Art in the Black Mountains

**48 Wrexham**

New Dance North East Wales

**UK-WIDE, TOURING  
OR DIGITAL**

64 Million Artists  
Avant Cymru, South Wales  
Big Blue Drum  
Empathy Museum  
Hospital Rooms  
Koestler Arts  
Live Music Now  
Mind, various  
Noise Solution (East of England)  
Paintings in Hospitals  
Perspective Project  
Place2Be  
Real Talk Theatre  
Streetwise Opera





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