

# CARE CREATIVELY

MARCH TO JUNE 2023

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## SUMMARY

# CARE CREATIVELY

Care Creatively is an artist led project led by Making Sense CIC targeting the health and wellbeing of people living with dementia, by encouraging creativity between care sector staff and individuals at different stages of their dementia journey.

We aim to Enhance the wellbeing and creative outcomes for staff and carers and the people they support

The project has been funded by RIF - The Regional Integration Fund and ran from March to the end of June 2023 and was split between Conwy and Denbighshire working with care homes and dementia supporting community groups.

*40 Artist led workshops*

*100 Creative and reminiscence resources*

*Work with local organisations and groups*

*Connecting with local culture and heritage*

***“When are you coming back?”***



## Promoting Care Creatively

*We took part in the following events to let Dementia practitioners know about the project and to find out more about their needs*

DVSC Dementia aware Denbighshire event at Oriel House

Engage event for artists in Ruthin

Dementia Engagement Pathway event North Wales

Dementia Action week - Llangollen, Prestatyn, St Asaph, Colwyn Bay,  
Denbigh,

Prom Xtra

***Reaching 160 Dementia practitioners, carers,  
volunteers and people living with dementia***

## Care Creatively team

### Katie Levy

Project Coordinator Main contact for artists  
Katie is a historian and brings a wealth of experience with reminiscence objects and how they can benefit people living with dementia

Contacting and coordinating 40 artist led sessions with care homes and community Groups

Providing reminiscence objects when needed

Attending and supporting artists at workshop sessions



### Tara Dean

Lead Artist

Tara is an experienced artist working in care homes having worked on Age Cymru's cARTrefu project and many other projects working with older people living with Dementia including Dementia and the Imagination, Lost in Art for DLL Community Arts.

As a lead artist on the project Tara has mentored our other artists as well as running creative sessions herself, managing the project and developing resources





## **Ticky Lowe**

Lead artist and Director of Making Sense CIC

Ticky is an experienced creative practitioner

Past projects include Lost in Art, and multi- generational projects with communities in Denbighshire as part of DLL Community Arts.

She has worked with Conwy Museums and Archives Service to develop reminiscence resources for Llandudno Hospital to help dementia support staff to connect with patients living with dementia and subsequently developed 15 reminiscence object handling collections for loan to Conwy's Care homes via their library service.

She was one of 16 artists working in care homes as part of Age Cymru's cARTrefu project.

Tara and Ticky worked together to establish Care Creatively through a joint passion to support the wellbeing of both care staff and their residents especially those living with Dementia.

## Artists Fakhra Richardson - Textiles



*“I have learned so much, to start with I was anxious as it is my first time working in a care home, (i normally work with college students) I have learned above all that you have to have a plan a, b, and c. I had to adapt my style completely. “*

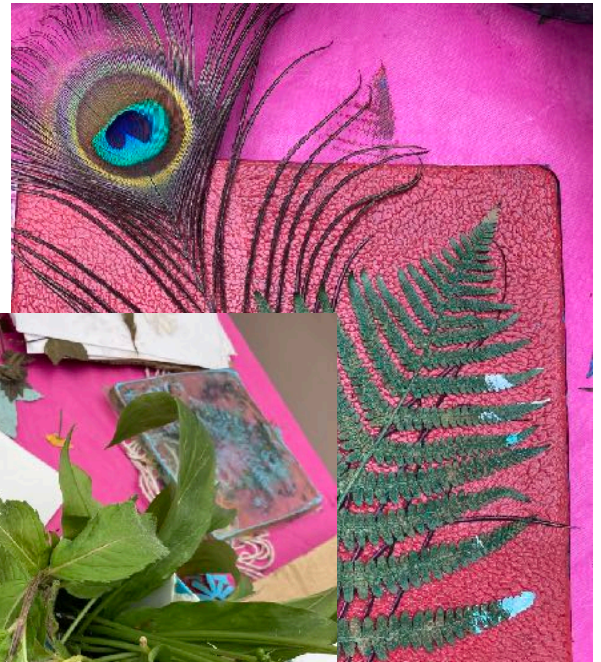
## Nerys Jones Textile Artist



*“You have to be really versatile and listen to the residents, just go with it and build it around the people that are there. Every session is different even if the same person on a different day is variable.”*



## Eleri Jones Print Maker



*“Welsh flower names lead to fun conversations. Sharing language connects people “*



*“Some staff called the sessions a lesson or teaching and refer to if they are and residents are good at art. Concept of not being artistic or bad/good is embedded in older generations from school.”*

*“Staff need to be provided with resources so that they can feel supported when we are not there. We have to emphasise how they can confidently do creativity anytime. We have to try and build confidence.”*

# Lisa Heledd Jones Reminiscence



*“Being able to speak to residents in English and Welsh seems really important”*

*“Reminiscence collections work regardless of people's needs, you can approach them so differently with the same objects. I found that Staff would pick up on that and see how people reacted to objects”*



## Jess Cunningham - Hair



*“ I've got so much out of doing this, it's really helped with my anxiety, a few years ago I wouldn't have been able to do this. “*

## Honor Pedican Multi Media Artist

*“We have hit upon something, people are receiving Care Creatively so well and we have drawn attention to a form of support that is lacking.”*



## Pauline Merrix- Dance



*"You have to be flexible. I take my music toys, but it's all about what they want to hear. One lady brought her own music that she had written, I have also learned not to be put off by hesitancy and verbally aggressive behaviours. It was amazing to be supported and go as a team."*

## Care Homes

**20** sessions in Care Homes  
(10 in Denbighshire and 10 in Conwy)

**51** staff in care homes and community groups  
(35 in Denbighshire, 16 in Conwy)

**182** Residents and family members  
(89 in Denbighshire, 93 in Conwy)

## Community Groups

**20** sessions with community groups  
(10 in Denbighshire and 10 in Conwy)

**26** volunteers  
(18 in Denbighshire, 8 in Conwy)

**79** Participants  
(51 in Denbighshire, 28 in Conwy)

**100** Reminiscence and Creative resources designed and created

**50** already distributed to Care Homes and Groups across both counties

As part of Care Creatively we collected reflections from each session from the artists and feedback from activity coordinators and volunteers. We have created a valuable resource which will help us plan our next steps. Here are just a few examples.

### Activity Coordinator

*“The session gave me great ideas to be able to do different projects with the residents and gave me new ideas of materials to use. I have had great feedback off the residents after the session they really enjoyed the reminiscence side, it was useful to have all the objects you provided.*

*Residents that are normally more quiet joined in and it was lovely to see them enjoying the project. As a care home we would love to work with you more I feel its great to have creatives come in as it gives the residents someone new to communicate with and a new material to use also someone new for me to bounce ideas off.*

*We have really enjoyed our last two sessions and hope we can continue the residents seemed more engaged as the session went on and interested in all the materials on the tables”*

**Amy at Coed Craig**



## Care Home Resident

*“I usually dread Wednesday morning arts and Crafts but I am really enjoying this”*

### *Artist Reflection*

*“Dei , the only man in the session , really engaged with the activity from the start , he wrote all about his day , going to get the news paper in the morning etc . he completed 3 tasks ,, collaging colour chart cards , writing , and decorating an envelope that I drew on , colouring in the drawings with the crayons. He was the only Welsh speaker and mentioned that he didn't get a chance to speak Welsh much in the home . He was very talkative and was obviously missing the language and we talked a lot about Tanygrisiau, where he is from and his work in Blaenau Ffestiniog”*





## *Artist Reflections - impact on family and carers*

*“It was brilliant to have a daughter working together with us and her mum.*

*She said she felt it was great to have something happening when she came in.*

*What was greater still was that she stayed on the table with Ticky and everyone for the afternoon.*

*“Having Alun’s wife with us was interesting. It was so good that she stayed with us. She said Alun couldn’t see now and couldn’t hold a pencil so well, but he loved classical music - music was his thing, they were going to watch the television together so it was great news they decided to stay together.*

*I felt that it was quite good for Estelle (Alun’s wife) to sit with us and just take some time ....I did think she wouldn’t show any interest in what we were doing but as we went on she encouraged Alun with the roller and looked in on what Natalie and Wilma were working on.”*

## *Activity Coordinator Reflections*

*“It’s the reminiscing and bringing to the forefront a memory that the ladies in our home may remember, it’s vital to their well-being, emotional health and stimulus. Whenever Care Creatively attend Llys Meddyg it always opens up a room for discussion and memorabilia, these sessions are valuable to all our residents who are living with Dementia”*

## Dementia Support Group, Volunteer feedback

*“So often things like this can seem patronising to our members like being back at school, but this was the opposite, it was so adult and yet also fun as an activity and really engaged everyone's minds on a personal level' and 'I have tried reminiscence with pictures, but something seemed flat and lifeless, holding things in your hands brings them alive'. Handling the seaside collection gave me the idea to do more reminiscence, bringing in cigarette cards and things I had lying around the house'”*

Pictures from Tara and Eleri, Rhoslan Care Home Rhos on Sea, May 4th 2023



## *Carers Support Group, Artist Reflection*

*“One man was very gruff and seemed standoffish and didn’t want to talk and kept looking at his watch and didn’t want to look at objects - I wanted to find a way in with him as he was having an impact on the others. I took him the box brownie and asked him if he knew how it worked because I didn’t... he enjoyed showing me and telling me how he was a photographer of football in his youth and how he now takes photos of a seagull who comes to eat in his garden each day. He’s named him Georgie and feeds him water from an upturned dustbin lid! He took out his phone to show me photos. He was very engaged after that, luckily! It was clear that his life with his wife now is so so different to quite a glamorous life they used to have and he was quite disconnected from the others. Later in the session, he actually narrated a poem to the room all about how we are all connected thanks to shared memories called ‘Links and Links’. It was very moving.”*



## Extra project outcomes

Positive feedback from all care homes and groups

At least 4 community groups have invited us to deliver regular sessions through out the year

We raised the profile of the project by attending and networking at 9 events

Other North Wales Counties have been in touch to ask us to work with them

Valuable feedback and reflections on sessions from artists and activity coordinators which will help us to plan our next steps





## Next Steps

Forming a steering group including the voices of people living with dementia, families, carers, staff and managers, dementia support professionals and artists.

Partnerships and collaborations with other organisations

Building strong relationships with care homes and groups

Providing ongoing support for care home staff, carers and volunteers through workshop sessions led by creative practitioners

Wellbeing and Creative training days for activity coordinators

Mentoring by artists for activity coordinators, offering a tailored approach to support

Artist residency programme for care homes

Working to increase opportunities for Welsh conversation in groups and care homes through work with creative practitioners

## Acknowledgements

The regional Integrated Care Fund who supported the project to take place in Conwy and Denbighshire  
Denbighshire Voluntary Services Council wellbeing Denbighshire  
Leisure Ltd Community Arts  
Conwy County council and The community wellbeing team

## Care homes and groups that took part in Denbighshire

Cysgod y Gaer, The Old Vicarage, Llys Meddyg, Dolwen, Llys Awelon, Abbey Dingle, Plas Eleri

### Groups

The revellers, Young onset group at Denbigh Library, Llangollen Coffee morning, resource cafe, Gorwel Newydd, Carers Trust in Rhyddlan, Canolfan Ni Cawl a Chan

## Care homes and groups in Conwy

Coed Craig, Llys Elian, Rhoslan, Kimmel Lodge, Cartref y Borth, Ty Cariad,

### Groups

Carers Trust - carers corner Mochdre, Llys Elian day centre, Llandudno Museum, Colwyn Bay Library, Colwyn Bay hospital, Llanrwst wellbeing cafe