

Beer Harris Memorial Trust - interim report (January 2023)

Brief history of the charity

“Since 2008, **Arts and Minds** have demonstrated a role for the arts in maintaining positive mental health and wellbeing through creativity within local communities,” writes Emily Bradfield, Charity Director. “Our mission is to use the Arts to support the positive health of individuals and communities. Each year we support 150+ individuals through our portfolio of creative programmes, including Arts on Prescription; pottery group; community choir and drop-in creative café.

Details of project supported by BHMT grant

The BHMT grant has been used towards administrative costs of delivering our creative programmes in the Autumn term (September - December 2022).

One Arts on Prescription programme took place in Arbury (one of the most deprived wards in Cambridge), led by a new artist who joined Arts and Minds in summer 2022 and was mentored during this programme by our Programme Manager, and a qualified counsellor. Six adults with depression and/or anxiety took part in the programme.

We worked in partnership with the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology, who provided a handling collection bringing Roman artefacts relevant to the locality of Arbury. The participants responded to this by producing images using sgraffito; a method the Romans used to decorate pots.

Areas of mental health addressed and profile of the recipients

43% of Arts on Prescription participants in the current year of programming are not currently in paid work and all are experiencing anxiety and/or depression. Participants are referred to the programme by their GP, social prescriber or other healthcare professional.

Impact of the project

The artist brought to the programme a new set of skills and method of delivery. Each session was different with the focus on improving mental wellbeing through creativity, for instance, ‘weaving a memory’ where the artist presented a slideshow showing a brief history of weaving and illustrating how a weave can tell a story or be a form of communication, through knotting. All participants self-reported low to moderate levels of wellbeing at the start, with 2 participants reporting a meaningful positive change to their wellbeing having completed the 12-week programme.

Personal anonymised examples

‘I don’t trust anybody. I either take flight or freeze but attending the Arts on Prescription programme has been really positive as it is such a safe space. I was not able to access my creative side as a child as I was put in front of the television, so it has been a great joy to attend this programme and I am upset that it is the final



**arts
and
minds**

session today. I might attend the Creative Cafe as I now know the volunteers who run this.'

'That art can be useful to help cope with my symptoms. It can be therapeutic in releasing emotions or expressing them if it's hard to verbalise them.'

For more information about the charity please visit their colourful website [link](https://www.artsandminds.org.uk/)
<https://www.artsandminds.org.uk/>

Photographs of creations by our Arts on Prescription participants

