

23.10.25

### Report for Beer-Harris Foundation

Dear Miranda,

We are extremely grateful to all at the Beer-Harris Memorial Trust for the grant towards our Open Music Therapy Groups in Bristol and Bath. Please find below some information, as requested, on the work that has been enabled by the Trust's input so far at this 6 month point.

#### Details of project supported by BHMT grant

We have worked with 29 people across 2, face-to-face, monthly Open Music Therapy groups from 1<sup>st</sup> May 2025-30<sup>th</sup> October 2025; one in Bristol and one in Bath.

The Open groups are primarily improvisation based instrumental sessions. We use a range of high quality, accessible instruments from around the world (percussion, drums, keyboards, iPads/some music tech, guitars, xylophones, gongs). Music Therapists guide the group through active music making, for relaxation, lifting mood and building connections with others in a group (non-verbal and verbal). People leave feeling more energised, motivated and relaxed.

#### Areas of mental health addressed and profile of the recipients

People with a wide range of need have accessed this group. Everyone was isolated and were managing distress and various incidences of historical trauma and bereavement. Diagnoses included severe depression, features of dissociation, anxiety, OCD, mood disorder and psychosis. There were a range of additional needs, e.g. physical disability & illness, caring responsibility, experience of domestic violence, past experiences of alcohol and substance misuse.

#### Impact of the project

Of the 29 people who attended the groups

- 100% reported improved wellbeing
- 100% experienced reduced isolation and increased social connection
- 87% demonstrated increased resource and resilience

#### Participant feedback

*"I feel very happy after playing music and it helps me with my anxiety and depression"*

*"I get a feeling of belonging"*

*"The staff are well trained and are excellent in what they do"*

*"I get to play and create some excellent music with other people and explore a talent"*

*"I really enjoy coming to the group. The group is a very safe environment and is so supportive."*

*"I know if I was to experience a decline in my mental health, I could tell the therapists and they would support me and encourage me to go to my GP, which might not have been so obvious an action to me. The group is also a safety net for me as I know the therapists would notice if I was behaving differently to normal."*

*"I really enjoy playing the different instruments and playing with other people as part of a group. I don't have any instruments at home so this is the only time I get to do this. Coming to the group is therapeutic and a welcome break from everyday life."*

*"I also like the community of the group and seeing the other people and checking in with how they are"*

*"I really enjoy the sessions and feel uplifted and motivated afterwards"*

*"The group is important to me. Since I'm a shy type of person, being in a group gives me more confidence and a feeling of warmth. That's why when I go home, I bring that feeling of warmth with me."*

We are pleased to report that, as people's health has improved, several of our participants have gone on to find volunteering posts, have extended their hours in employment, have gone on to join other community music groups or other community activity.



Please do be in touch if you require further information on this project.

Kind regards,

Emma Weatherup

Director of Soundwell and Music Therapist

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