



Creativity Works



NETWORKS





FINAL EVALUATION REPORT ON THE NETWORKS PROJECT, 2013
Prepared for the Community Learning Innovation Fund

SECTION 1: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT (Pg 3-5)

- 1A. Project Information
- 1B. Summary of the project
- 1C. Summary findings:
 - The extent to which you achieved your overall aims and objectives
 - What went well
 - What didn't go so well
 - What factors for success you have identified
 - What challenges you met and how you overcame them

SECTION 2: CONTRIBUTION TO THE KEY CLIF THEMES (Pg 6-11)

- 2A. Learning for community
- 2B. Learning for digital inclusion
 - Digital inclusion
 - User-led
 - Peer support
 - Aesthetic Confidence
 - Community Development
 - Artists Reflection

SECTION 3: CONTRIBUTION TO CROSS-CUTTING THEMES (Pg 9-11)

- 3A. Community involvement and accountability
- 3B. Teaching and learning
- 3C. Supporting progression
- 3D. Partnership working:
 - Artist and Support Worker Partnership working
 - On partnership with Creativity Works and its' distinctive approach to creativity

SECTION 4: WHAT DIFFERENCE DID YOU MAKE? (Pg 12-18)

- 4A. The methods we used to capture evidence of impact:
 - Evaluating Impact on Participants
 - Evaluating Impact on Partners
- 4B. The difference the project made for learners – impact on mental health
- 4C. The difference the project made for learners – impact on agency
- 4D. The difference the project made for your own or other organisations

SECTION 5: CASE STUDIES / LEARNER STORIES (Pg 19-24)

SECTION 6: EXIT STRATEGY AND HOW THE WORK WILL BE SUSTAINED (Pg25)

SECTION 7: PROJECT IN A BOX AND OTHER RESOURCES (Pg 25)

SECTION 8: CONCLUSIONS (Pg 26)

SECTION 1: INFORMATION ABOUT THE PROJECT

1A. Project Information

Name of lead organisation: Creativity Works for Everyone

Name of the project and Project ID number: CLIF12645 Networks

Name of the person responsible for preparing this report and contact details:

Antonia Clews: info@creativityworks.org.uk

1B. Summary of Project

Networks, a Creativity Works project based in Bristol, integrated professional artists within five different service settings; Teign Ward (a women's medium secure unit), HMP Eastwood Park (mother & baby unit), One25 (reaches out to women trapped in street sex work), Rethink (women affected by mental illness), and Bristol Drugs Project. Partner settings engaged actively with the process by placing a support worker alongside the Networks artist, supporting spaces of informed understanding and safety alongside new ideas and skills.

Cultural partners Arnolfini and Light Box enabled connections to the city's culture.

The artist-facilitators delivered two sets of parallel arts courses of eight weeks to over 50 vulnerable women involved with the criminal justice system or facing mental health issues. The socially engaged artists' facilitation and contemporary community arts practice provided creative projects and opportunities tailored around participants' interests.

The project aimed for the creative process to improve the women's wellbeing and sense of self, enhance their skills and confidence and increase their engagement through a developed sense of community. A series of digital studios was central to each course, creating connections and communication between the groups and the city's culture, through the women's artwork.

1C. Summary findings

The extent to which overall aims and objectives were achieved:

- The Networks course successfully motivated a difficult to reach client group who often lack confidence to attend regularly, despite obstacles such as chaotic lifestyles and mental health issues. 35 out of 53 (66%) of the women attended the course regularly (over 60% of the course). In Phase 1 of the project, 13 of 21 (43%) were core attendees, whilst in Phase 2, it was 22 out of 32 women (68%). Both courses attracted an additional 24 women to the first session, who decided not to continue;
- Relationships established in Phase 1 sustained the women in pursuing their aspirations further. 11 women from Phase 1 went on to attend the course in Phase 2. This is a retention rate of 85%.
- Across both Networks courses, participants' initial aspirations centred on improving their mental wellbeing. Their main goals were to feel more positive about themselves/be more optimistic about their future. In Phase 1 the women also wanted to learn more about themselves/express themselves better through creativity, whilst in Phase 2 they wanted to feel more part of a group or community;
- The Networks course main impact was enabling the women to feel part of a community. It met participants' wellbeing aspirations, but also increased their broader skills and aspirations:
- 19 out of 23 (83%) of respondents reported that they now felt part of a group/community or more positive about being around other people after experiencing the Networks course;
- 17 (74%) felt participating in creative activities helped them learn about themselves or express themselves better;
- 61% felt as a result of the course that they were: developing skills and abilities, more interested in learning and trying new things and more positive about themselves;
- The Networks course meant the women became engaged with other activities within the community and raised their aspirations:
- 13 out of 18 respondents (72%) said that since attending the Networks course they were more active in mental and physical wellbeing activities;
- 11 (61%) said that they were more active in arts and cultural activities.
- 10 women (55%) had aspirations to go on and do another course, including two women who aim to go onto arts foundation.

What went well:

- Artist's partnership with support workers – both worked well together at each session with the support workers being committed and pro-actively involved in participating in the project and supporting both the women and the artist;
- Creativity Works partnership with settings – positive working relationships were achieved across the partners through good communication and flexibility;
- The design of the different courses and the artists' approach meant that nearly all the women participants reported benefits to their wellbeing, and in several instances led to individuals pursuing aspirations to further progress their engagement in the wider community through education and other community activities;
- The development of the digital resource was a success in terms of supporting the individual creative communities and furthering the women's confidence in their artwork, communication and connections with wider audiences.

What didn't go well:

- The emphasis on the CJS aspect of the project is difficult to distinguish from the mental health needs of participants, although the two are often strongly related and would not have made a difference to the course approach. This was rather undermined by the withdrawal of Eden House so we were only working in one explicitly CJS setting. Although HMP Eastwood Park were supportive of the course and local probation services were supportive of the need for this service for their clients it was hard during the short duration of the project to establish specific referrals for those at risk of (re) offending. Although we have a number of women who had at some time been involved with the CJS this is not something we recorded as a distinct demographic;
- Only one resident of Teign Ward attended the course consistently, and she attended both courses. Other women on the ward during this period were not interested in pursuing creative activity. This is just a timing issue but raised the issue of a resource intensive site for only one person. This experience did however raise her aspirations to apply for an arts foundation course;
- Securing the continuation of the project was not possible during the lifetime of the project. Partners were unable to contribute to further funding and at this time the outcomes of any funding bids are unknown;
- Giving the support worker the responsibility for the evaluation process administration meant unfortunately some data was not collected and that the final session was not used to review the course with the participants as planned.
- Although partnerships between Networks and individual settings went well, relationships across the settings were not effectively developed. Only a small number of setting managers attended partner forums.

Factors identified for success:

- Partnership between settings & Creativity Works;
- Individual working relationships between artists and support workers;
- Flexible and responsive artists responding to the needs of individual women;
- Group trust created over the duration of the course through the artists' facilitation enabled the women to develop a sense of community which supported both the creative process and individual sense of wellbeing;
- The digital resource enhanced the outcomes of the courses, women felt proud of showing their work and communicated outside of sessions;
- An IT mediator led to a successful integration of digital technology into both the creative process and the group development. It also led to individual women developing their IT capacity;
- A proactive involvement from the cultural partner Arnolfini meant that the women experienced the city's main art gallery as more approachable and inclusive due to the worker guiding their visits and talking the groups through the work.

What challenges were met and how they were overcome

- In Whase1, the key CJS partner, Eden House withdrew from the project. We researched and approached alternative agencies and created a very positive relationship with Bristol Drugs Project who became the fifth partner in the project for Phase 2;

- Recruitment of participants – as a hard to reach group this was always going to be a challenge but we put a greater emphasis on recruiting outside of the partner setting through referral, leading to higher numbers in Phase2;
- A variety of individual needs within the group of women meant the artist had to alter the structure of session plans to work with the different women to support individual development – the artists were all able to work in this way through the course emphasis on individual projects.
- Limitations to internet access in the secure environments of Teign ward and Eastwood Park prison meant there was limited capacity to connect these groups with the other digital communities in Networks. However artists uploaded images on the womens' behalf so they did have their own virtual studio, and showed them print outs which they were pleased to see. A further positive outcome was that the prisoners were able to show their work to friends and families by sending them the link.
- As participants progressed, it was difficult to represent the project in public spaces (flyers, exhibitions) in way which honoured this whilst still identifying some of the project's purposes; the term 'vulnerable' evoked anger. We omitted the word vulnerable.

SECTION 2: CONTRIBUTION TO THE KEY CLIF THEMES

2A. Learning for Community

The project contributed to the social renewal and the strengthening of the community of vulnerable women through:

- an equality of relationship between participant, artist and participating support worker and the de-stigmatising of mental health issues as 'illness';
- the ranges of creative opportunities facilitated by artists were tailored to participant need and interest and supported the learner's capacity to develop and strengthen aspiration;
- the creative process and the group context led to the groups developing a strong sense of their community, which raised the aspirations of women to be active within the wider community, through supporting them to learn and develop skills in new areas;
- One group has gone on to manage themselves and meet independently;
- a range of creative activities, including visits to the city's art gallery, ceramics studio and botanic gardens, which enabled the women to re-engage with the city's culture.

2B. Learning for Digital Inclusion

NETWORKS one25 the virtual studio



note@networksbristol.co.uk
email now and join the discussion



125@networksbristol.co.uk
email your pictures of the event



annotate
comments and filtered pix



2013-6-25 9:17:19



2013-6-25 9:16:38



2013-6-24 22:40:52



2013-6-24 22:37:46



2013-06-26 17:55:18

I love this pot, brilliant!

data from farm8.staticflickr.com...

A screen grab from the One25 virtual studio, part of the Networks Re|source

The Re|source is the virtual studio developed collaboratively by the professional artists and the women with an IT mediator and developer managing the prototyping. It is a unique approach to community arts development and a prototype for Creativity Works through the Networks project. The women worked alongside the artists to develop their own practice and build projects around their distinct interests and skills. They also worked with an IT Mediator to develop the Re|source interface to meet their own needs.

A series of distinct and discreet virtual studios allowed the women to work in stages:

- As a closed creative community, to upload images of their own and other artworks along with comments and ideas which built a visual narrative documenting their creative processes and progress.
- A chance to maintain contact with their art group between weekly sessions.

- Later on, sharing their virtual studios with women on other Networks courses to form a shared creative community.
- Finally, curating an on-line exhibition to share their artwork with the wider community.

The Re|source was evaluated as addressing the following:

1. Digital inclusion: the Re|source was designed to engage with a marginalised group. The women were trained in basic IT skills such as uploading images, making comments and emailing, alongside using various 'buttons' in order to make use of the website. This enabled the women to feel more confident with their developing IT skills.

"There was my own anxiety about the technology, but I did realise that the feeling I had when I managed to upload work and make comments felt good, so I saw other women feeling the same way, when they actually saw their work on the studio. I'm hoping that small step will lead to the next step if they are having to use technology, so there's not so much fear around it." **Bristol Drugs Project**

"I think as regards the technology, a lot of people feel inadequate, but the art making and using the resource, had to make you question the inadequate ways people described themselves – i.e. you say you can't draw, or use technology, but you've done a really beautiful drawing and you've uploaded it, so here's proof that that statement you're saying isn't helpful or true." **IT Mediator**

2. User-led: the Re|source was developed in collaboration with the women, using a series of prototypes and adapting websites in response to feedback. Consequently, each group created a distinct version of the Re|source to suit the women's needs and the technology they were comfortable with using.

3. Peer support: as the women became confident in using the Re|source they supported each other in:

- making comments on their own and each others' work, which in turn developed their communication skills;
- as each group had their own on-line studio it reinforced a sense of group ownership and community, through both the physical space of making but also the digital presentation of that process.

"It's spontaneous, people's reactions to seeing their work on the big screen has been really exciting. People were really impressed with the studio, loved to see their work up, it was nicely presented – adds a different dimension for people that are reticent about their work – they can see it from a different angle and the women were able to control what elements people saw – they could take a photo of just detail – "oh actually it looks ok up there". People being offered that choice... empowering. sharing. Once it was up on the website it often got positive comments from the group – being a supportive group, friendships formed, a real bond, encouraging comments about other work." **Rethink**

4. Aesthetic Confidence: through the process of putting work on line:

- the women were able to see it differently (through digital qualities) and take pride in their achievement through the concept of 'showing and sharing';
- they were able to look back at previous work, see their progress and reflect on how they were feeling at the time of creating the work;
- this gave the women confidence in themselves, as well as confidence in themselves as artists.

"It's really lovely to see, look at the whole process, to 'out that' in a space where you can look at every thing – you can easily forget what you've done already – at where we started and with the women what they've done now, seeing that develop and the quality of the work". **One25**

5. Community Development: when the women had developed trust in their own capacities and creative work within their group they could elect to:

- 'open their studio' to other groups of women by allowing the link to be shared;
- this ultimately led to them being able to curate their own on-line exhibition where they shared their work with the general public. This meant they took responsibility for selecting the work to be shown in a separate online gallery. Some groups also elected to open the whole studio to the public;
- this gave the women a presence in the broader cultural community of Bristol as the exhibition was projected at Arnolfini;
- in custodial setting the on-line studio enabled the women to share their work with friends and family.

"What's interesting is that it's digital, accessible. An archive that's visible. It's a clean way of showing the journey people make. The Resource and online studio is a fantastic idea. Seeing your work in a professional context, like framing a work. Not only about valuing the work, but also the quality it takes on". Arnolfini

6. Artists' Reflection: the Re|source was further developed with a parallel page, or blog space, to capture the artist-facilitators reflection on their own creative practice during the courses, as well as their observation on participants' development. This was designed to support the professional development of artists by:

- enhancing the artists' reflection skills;
- contributing to evaluation processes;
- creating an on-line community space for the artist-facilitators to share their experience with each other;
- connecting the two communities through the participants' creative work (the artists referred back to images in the women's virtual studios within their own blog space) **In its development, although there were two communities, the participants were not able to see the artists community, so they functioned in parallel.*

"Being able to look each week, being able to feel a little bit of responsibility for that. For me, I absolutely hate doing weekly evaluation things, this has worked really well for doing that, using their images, and their little comments helps me with writing about it." Networks Artist

The artists reported it had helped them learn new technology, engage with reflection/evaluation, and gain an insight into other settings and artists' practice – creating a community/conversation.

Evaluation of the Re|source (support workers, artists and IT mediator interview)

- gives participants value in the quality to the work, pride in seeing it on-line;
- capacity to see/judge their own work differently (less critically);
- engagement and enjoyment with using IT;
- a reflective tool as participants can see their progress;
- a capacity to create a portfolio, capture process;
- a useful presentation/editing devise, giving control to the participants in 'framing' and selecting their work;
- increased confidence with IT;
- one space/page where everyone can see everything (democratic/access).

SECTION 3: CONTRIBUTION TO CROSS-CUTTING THEMES

3A. Community involvement and accountability

Learners and communities were involved in project planning, management and evaluation:

- Learners were involved in the development of the Resource through testing the prototype and feeding back to the developers how they wanted to use the technology;
- Learners directed creative sessions, managed their own individual project development and managed the digital presentation of it;
- Learners were involved in the project evaluation process through a before and after questionnaire and dialogue with the group support worker;
- Partners were involved in project planning and review processes prior and post each phase.

3B. Teaching and Learning

The project supported participants to learn informally (non-accredited) through creative processes facilitated by professional socially engaged artists, with the support of health professionals in the context of small groups and peer support. Personalised learning was directed through participants developing their own project and interests. Where the participants identified a direction, the artist supported them to develop skills through introducing stimuli in the form of materials, new techniques and cultural references. This flexible approach to facilitating learning, responding to the participants' starting-point, enabled the women to explore and become more aware of their capabilities at their own pace. The social context and the 'making' by the women, alongside the artists and the health professionals, created the safe environment for the women to increasingly take the initiative and have their achievements recognised.

Benefits for learners: observations from partner setting support workers and artist-facilitators:

- 7x the course promoted the women's response and engagement through discussion about art and increased critiquing of each others' work;
- 7x benefits of social aspect and group bonding;
- 5x women increased in confidence and self-esteem - pride and surprise in recognition of achievement (in both creativity and also decision making and ownership);
- 5x time and space to relax on women's own terms through pursuing own project;
- 3x uncovering of previously unrecognised skills & capabilities;
- 3x women continuing to develop work and skills outside of course sessions;
- 2x the course provided an outlet for exploring and expressing emotions difficult to articulate;
- 2x women had a broadened outlook through art;
- 2x women had capacity to make own choices.

3C. Supporting Progression

Objective	What difference will it make?
<i>Increase opportunities for women to engage with their communities at different stages of their recovery</i>	<i>Women take a more active role in their communities and develop and progress towards opportunities to volunteer and employment.</i>
<i>Increase accessibility of cultural activity in the city for women undergoing challenging times of transition.</i>	<i>Include these women in the cultural life of the city, giving them voice and visibility Improve the vibrancy of cultural life in the city</i>
<i>Improve women's skills in managing projects and in decision-making.</i>	<i>Establish and manage the NETWORKS resource, potentially a mix of information, interactivity, creative expression and signposting to new opportunities, run by women for women in the CJS. The format of the resource will be informed and shaped by the women and could include peer support and development opportunities for women.</i>

Outcome: the evidence shows that the vast majority of the women reported feeling more part of a group/community than prior to the course.

- At least 18 of the 35 (50%) of the women who participated in the course evaluation had increased aspirations to engage more in community and cultural activities, through feeling part of a group.
- 13 of the 18 respondents to the community engagement questionnaire (72%) said that since attending the Networks course they were more active in mental and physical wellbeing activities;
- 11 (61%) said that they were more active in arts and cultural activities. 10 women (55%) had aspirations to go on and do another course and do more things with friends and family.

Workers observed that the women increasingly participated in and valued being part of a group:

- the women increasingly created and used the peer support developing in the groups, supporting each others creative process but also life situations;
- two groups of women describe plans for after the course to carry on meeting together (Rethink and Bristol Drugs Project) and using the digital Re|source;
- many of the women voiced a desire to carry on being creative after the course and some through other courses;
- some women said they would go back and visit the Arnolfini (art gallery) and Botanic Gardens which they had been introduced to through the courses, independently with friends and family;
- The Eastwood Park prisoners were keen to make connections with friends and family through showing their work by sharing the link to the digital Re|source.

“A great side-effect of the project. Women were motivated to be on time and to accommodate each others’ needs both during the journey to the workshop and moving around, sharing tools etc. They engaged with the tutor and other visitors and helpers with courtesy and increasing confidence. All expressed the wish to do something similar in the future.” One 25

“All the pottery sessions except one were held at Potstop. This is a small community ‘Pottery School’ in the centre of Bristol. Having the opportunity to come and be part of this dedicated workshop, which is shared with other members of the public is a significant element in feeling an equal part in the creative community of Bristol.” One 25

“Visiting the Arnolfini has offered the opportunity to debate the nature of art and its relevance to them and the wider community.” One 25

3D. Partnership Working

Creativity Works has a dual approach to partnership working – making connections between settings/organisations and building relationships between individual support workers and artists to build the capacity of both professionals through the insights each other gain from their expertise in both mental health support and community development.

Artist and Support Worker Partnership working:

Apart from Eastwood Park prison, all courses were run with the partner support worker taking part in the sessions alongside the participants. The partnership worked well through offering complimentary skills and the ‘checks and balances’ of ‘outside/insider’ roles.

- all artists felt the relationship with the support worker had a positive affect on their work by sharing the support of individuals with another professional (staff in the prison setting did not work alongside the artists) ;
- all artists said they learnt from working with the support worker - the professional could also support the individual artist through informal supervision (in most instances);
- the artists felt the support workers immersed themselves well into the process ‘modelling’ for the participants;

- all support workers felt that the collaboration was very successful - by working together the artist could concentrate on creative process whilst they had knowledge and space to build relationships and support individual needs of the service users;
- the support workers felt they had learnt facilitation skills from the artists.

On partnership with Creativity Works and its' distinctive approach to creativity:

All partners voiced the successes of the partnership with Creativity Works and wanted to continue working in collaboration

- Two settings highlighted the distinct value of Creativity Works socially-engaged professional artists as being beyond that of craft-based artists because of the distinctive set of facilitation skills they have for working with this client group, their engagement with the community through their knowledge of contemporary art (highlighted by all partners);
- A further two settings highlighted that Creativity Works artists are not art-therapists and therefore the value they bring is working with creativity outside of an agenda or therapeutic model – that they work with the integral value of the creative process for an individual's own discovery and recovery;
- Four settings recognised that Creativity Works artists create engagement with the participants through initially bringing cultural artefacts to them, engaging them through this stimulus – which creates emotional response and discussion between groups, furthering participants' engagement in their own creative development and responses to their own and other's original artwork and through engaging them with the city and cultural community as 'art consumers'.

*"The collaboration with Creativity Works is quite inspiring, having a whole project, carrying out it and then evaluating it at the end". **BDP***

*"It's essential to have experienced artists who can work with marginalised groups –the communication skills - it's all about engagement, without that, if you can't engage the person you fall at the first hurdle, they are two skills – to have the ability to be creative in their own right but to have the skills to engage marginalised groups – if you are missing one of those elements then that's no good. It needs to be accessible to people..[...] It's something Creativity Works does well – find artists that have those abilities". **One25***

*"Partnership working... That we're able to provide this opportunity for service users, to work together with people that are passionate about individuals that are often very stigmatised, this is very encouraging. This makes our work easier." **Teign Ward***

SECTION 4: WHAT DIFFERENCE DID YOU MAKE?

4A. The methods used to capture evidence of impact

Evaluation was focused on assessing whether there has been a positive impact on individuals and groups in three main areas:

- **Wellbeing and Health:** an increase in confidence; self-esteem; optimism and positivity;
- **Development and Progression:** an increase in, or learning of, new skills; a greater awareness of capacity; greater interest in exploring creative potential; an increase in trying new things;
- **Community Engagement:** a greater involvement in the group and engagement in activities; an increase in communication with others; more active in areas beyond the project.

This reflects the Creativity Works Outcomes Model 2013 (<http://www.creativityworks.org.uk/our-impact/evaluation-of-our-work/>).

- A combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches were used to collect feedback from the three key stakeholders; participant, support workers/partner managers and artist-facilitators.
- The project co-ordinators felt that the support worker was in the strongest position to administer the evaluation process with participants as they had established a relationship;
- Broad discussion facilitated by the support worker enabled the participants to reflect on their learning, development, further aspirations and general experience of the course.

Evaluating Impact on Participants:

- The Short Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale, which measures positive mental well-being, was adapted to include additional criteria to reflect the outcomes above. We piloted using a visual format, rather than a tick box questionnaire, on which participants were asked to indicate what they felt and their goals, and then again at the end of the course how they felt and which areas had been strengthened by the course;
- A Community Engagement Wheel questionnaire (a bespoke Creativity Works tool) was designed to encourage participants to think about the new connections with people, organisations and community that have been made or developed since the course;
- Both artists and support workers also completed questionnaires at the end of each course, which asked them to document their observations of changes in the participants over the duration of the course, against the three main outcomes areas. Since they were working closely with the participants, their record was essential to understanding the impact of the courses.

Evaluating Impact on Partners:

- All artists and support workers/managers were interviewed at the end of the project about the impact of the course on participants and what they had learnt through their experience of the project, including any changes to their service capacity/practice.
- Artists kept a weekly blog about their process, following prompt from the evaluator. Support workers and artists also made comments on the Re|source.

The data for the following sections concerns impact on 35 regular attendees from across both courses. 18 participants completed the community activity questionnaire at the end of Phase2.

4B. The difference the project made for learners – impact on mental health

Objective	What difference will it make?
<i>Improve the wellbeing of women within the CJS, in Bristol and the surrounding areas.</i>	<i>Increased self-esteem, confidence, skills and personal growth in the target group. Women will also be better able to manage their mental health and will become more involved in their communities, improving the quality of their lives.</i>

Outcome: the evidence supports that the women developed a better sense of wellbeing through exploring their creativity with the support of artists and professionals.

Four support worker & five artists completed questionnaires in both phase 1&2, on their observations of the course impact on participants:

Workers observations:

- participants felt motivated by the course to leave the house, commit to something long term and regularly attend despite personal issues and obstacles;
- participants felt able to stick with challenges through the creative process without giving up (some of the workers felt this helped build resilience);
- participants appeared calm and relaxed in session;
- participants expressed their feelings through their creative work and so had better insight into their mental health;
- participants felt more confident through their creative work – pride in their achievements;
- participants felt more confident in talking about themselves and their lives with others, in communicating and participating with peers in the group;

* Raised personal self esteem was harder for support workers and artists to identify and quantify on Teign Ward and in Eastwood Park Prison.

"[Participant X] concurred with others in saying 'my problem is getting out of the house, the group has given me something to get out of the house for'" **Rethink**

"The work each woman did on the course has lifted spirits and allowed her to feel assertive and happy and comfortable with herself. Many talked about or referred to her history with more confidence at recognising how to handle difficult emotions by working and being involved in the group of like minded and supportive women." **Bristol Drugs Project**

"By week 5 the women were seen to be working more cooperatively, sharing ideas, enthusiasm, encouragement and support." **Bristol Drugs Project**

"The joy and satisfaction of producing something solid she was pleased with, and others praised, was immense, and challenged her sense of being worthless. She wanted everyone, including friends and family, to see what she had achieved" **One25**

"The course has given the participants a real sense of validation and pride. There has been a palpable atmosphere of relaxed engagement and a belief that they can learn new skills and successfully achieve good results." **One25**

"Several participants were initially very doubtful they would get anything out of the classes: "All right, I'll give it a go," and some at first needed support to attend, but their increased awareness and security was shown in more independence and effort to attend; more confident and reasoned choices, more ambition, and a growing capacity for non-destructive self-criticism, with less fear of failure." **One25**

4C. The difference the project made for learners – impact on agency

Outcome: the evidence supports that the women showed increased aspirations and goal setting and became increasingly self-determined.

Workers observations:

The women showed increased aspirations and goal setting:

- some women had clear goals about other activities they wanted to carry out (see Section on Progression to Further Learning);
- all the women showed an increase in confidence in their abilities and their skills increased in a range of areas. At Eastwood Park this was not seen to such an extent apart from interpersonal skills;
- as their 'vocabulary of skills and possibilities' developed, the more motivated they became to try and learn new things and experiment with new processes;

The women were increasingly self-determined:

- more involved in making choices about the direction of their projects and taking ownership of session direction;
- seeing challenging creative processes through;
- more vocal about their opinions on what they did and didn't want to do;
- more active in the group, responding to peers' work and making suggestions;
- taking control of which artwork they wanted to show publicly through the on-line exhibition;
- this was particularly evident where women were not used to feeling able to make choices in their day to day life.

"[Participant X] thrived on goal setting and was prolific in her output. She discovered a love of collage and 3D work as well as managing anxiety through use of her sketchbook; "I don't know what I would have done without this group, I really love it."" **Bristol Drugs Project**

Participant X: "Lots of what I'm working on personally doesn't show up straight away, so I don't feel I'm getting anywhere, but when I did that plate I could see it was beautiful in an afternoon." "I've realised this is something I can do." **One25**

"[Participant X] was very much heartened by rediscovering talents (in design and execution) that she thought she'd had when younger. She was encouraged to aim ambitiously, trying something new, and was thrilled with the result. It was good to hear someone who tended to "survive" by being cynical, speak with such hope and enthusiasm. She hopes to do further courses." **One25**

"[Participant X], like most of the participants, was unused to making choices in her life (or felt she'd made bad ones). She constantly asked for instructions from the "expert," but was gently encouraged to make up her own mind, having been given some basic info about materials etc. She took a risk on a "mad" idea, and it worked! This mixture of learning from others and then selecting/putting ideas into practice as an independent, creative person, really built up her confidence." **One25**

Feedback from Participants: analysis of participant questionnaires

Across both Networks courses:

86% (19 out of 22) of the participants who attended regularly, reported that they now felt part of a group/community or more positive about being around other people after experiencing the Networks course. 77% (17) felt participating in creative activities helped them learn about themselves or express themselves better.

63% felt as a result of the course that they were developing skills and abilities and were more interested in learning and trying new things. They also felt more positive about themselves.

Course Impact by Phase

Phase1	Phase2
<p>At the end of the course:</p> <p>10/13 (77%) felt more interested in learning and trying new things</p> <p>10/13 (77%) felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>9/13 (69%) felt more positive about themselves</p> <p>9/13 (69%) felt they were developing skills and abilities</p> <p>9/13 (69%) felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves</p> <p>Total number of evaluations: 13 (100% of core attendees)</p>	<p>At the end of the course:</p> <p>9/11 (80%) felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>8/11 (73%) felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves</p> <p>Total number of evaluations: 11 (50% 11/22 of core attendees, 2 settings excluded)</p>

Breakdown by partner setting:	Breakdown by partner setting:
<p>Light Box 4 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>3 felt more positive about themselves 4 felt more able to deal with problems well 3 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 3 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>One25 2 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>2 felt more positive about themselves 2 felt more able to deal with problems well 2 felt more able to make their mind up about things 2 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 2 felt they were developing skills and abilities 2 felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves 2 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>Rethink 2 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>2 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 2 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>Teign Ward 1 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>1 felt more optimistic about their future 1 felt more able to deal with problems well 1 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 1 felt they were developing skills and abilities 1 felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves 1 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>HMP Eastwood Park 4 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>2 felt more positive about themselves 2 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 4 felt they were developing skills and abilities 2 felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves 2 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p>	<p>Bristol Drugs Project Did not administer post course questionnaire</p> <p>One25 Did not administer post course questionnaire</p> <p>Rethink 6/7 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>3 felt more optimistic about their future 3 felt they were developing skills and abilities 4 felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves 4 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>Teign Ward 2 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>1 felt more optimistic about their future 1 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 1 felt they were developing skills and abilities 1 felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves 2 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p> <p>HMP Eastwood Park 3 core attendees post course evaluations</p> <p>3 felt more positive about themselves 3 felt more interested in learning and trying new things 3 felt creative activities helped them learn about themselves/express themselves 3 felt part of a group/community/more positive about being around other people</p>

4D. The difference the project made for your own or other organisations

Objective	What difference will it make?
<i>Improve the CJS for women in Bristol and surrounding areas.</i>	<i>Reduce the pressure on existing services and support the integration within services of a creative approach to working with women at challenging times in their lives that is both nurturing and empowering.</i>
<i>Improve support worker and artists' skills in promoting personal growth and participant progression through creative learning opportunities.</i>	<i>Stronger facilitative model of working which supports on-going development and progression</i>

Course Impact on Stakeholders:

Post-project evaluative interviews held with stakeholders (6 artists, 4 support workers and 6 managers) identified:

Improved ways of working as a result of the Networks project:

Support Workers:

- 4x learnt new skills from artist's creative approach to facilitation;
- 3x influenced staff to be more creative;
- 3x value of a non-hierarchical approach with an external facilitator investing in participants 'without (authoritative) control';
- 2x value of creativity outside of an instrumentally therapeutic model (creating new skills and interests);
- 1x support worker adopting 'participant alongside service-user' approach in the future;
- 1x benefits on engaging in project evaluation to establish 'what works'.

"It enables us to think outside the box, as with service users, to think creatively... Consequently to provide for service users. It's very skilling." **Teign Ward**

"Choice, flexibility, empathy, enthusiasm and passion for people creating – some people were totally new to art but [the artist's] enthusiasm and flexibility for where people's starting point might be, people could relate to that at whatever point they could be." **Rethink**

"The artist does it very subtly – I've learnt a huge amount of skills, not everything we've done [in the pottery workshop] is transferable to here but it's been really nice to see how someone facilitates."
One25

Artists:

- all felt their understanding of the client group had increased;
- all felt they had a greater awareness of the skills required to support the client group – flexibility and resourcefulness particularly, given them greater confidence in their own facilitation skills;
- they felt the support given by Creativity Works enabled them to consider their own development, including the Creativity Works co|Create training offered (and networking), and peer meetings with other artists, and they felt supported in their work;
- the on-line blogging in the Re|source enabled artists to better reflect on their process and its' impact on participants;
- The work with the Re|source meant that 3 artists identified a need for further IT training to support their own creative practice.

Impact on Creativity Works (project lead)

- creative digital practice has been incorporated into the creative facilitation approach and will strengthen the existing creative development and progression process;
- artists & their reflective process has been comprehensively managed & supported;
- evaluation processes have been piloted, reviewed and have influenced the organisation's methodology and policy in this area;
- increased understanding of partnership working processes;
- increased engagement in Bristol networks; increasing the scope and confidence of the organisation, including commissioning potential;
- recognising the adaptability of our work to engage with different client groups;
- the development of artist's / evaluation tool kits have supported the organisation's methods.

Professional support of artists by Creativity Works

- greater resources enabled Creativity Works to deliver more Co|Create professional development workshops to its artists;
- feedback from artists enabled Co|Create sessions to be tailored to meet specific need identified by Networks artists;
- the role of the development worker was reviewed within the organisation so that artist supervision was shared with partners;
- the reflective practice which previously needed the development worker to support artists, was enabled using the alternative mechanism of the Re|source blog;
- feedback from Networks artists identified a need for artists to share their experience, met through peer group meetings and the Re|source as a shared on-line community space.

Impact on Partner Service Delivery & Opportunities for Service Users: (feedback from the five settings)

Key outcomes:

- a consensus on the value of incorporating creativity into service delivery;
- creative courses identified as a means to attract hard to reach clients;
- the Arnolfini (city art gallery) is considering how they work with diverse audiences and how to make the organisation more welcoming to hard to reach groups;
- HMP Eastwood Park re-evaluated the potential of the course to support women with identified mental health issues;
- Partnership working – a successful model whereby both support worker and artists learnt from each other.

Benefits of Networks project:

- 3x created additional opportunities for service users (additional resources and expertise that was required);
- 3x acted as a creative draw/gateway into existing services, attracting new clients;
- 2x capacity to work with clients away from core service spaces/in city based cultural venues;
- 2x capacity to cater for women only;
- 2x high quality professional arts provision (as opposed to non-specialist 'crafts');
- 2x benefits of working in small groups with individual attention to participants;
- 1x potential to link with other women and groups.

"It offered additional opportunities for our service users outside of their regular planned activities and structure. The value is having external facilitators, something that is owned by them and the facilitator, not owned by mental health services, the trust". **Teign Ward**

"It has allowed us to bring in really high quality, we can deliver activities but to actually have artists who can bring such experience, it's a real privilege – to be able to work with someone of such a high calibre and be inspired, rather than saying here's some jewellery making with a volunteer" **One25**

It takes the "being done to", "we are the professionals, you are the service user" away – which our women experience all so much". **One25**

"It encourages us to take a step to provide something for its own sake, like learning a new skill or interest that the women can take into recovery, [...] so I can see a place for bringing something skills based in."

Bristol Drugs Project

"It has directly fed into our key aims around audience development.. it's really made me think about how to introduce exhibitions to diverse groups [...] It's made us think about the whole idea about people feeling welcome in this building, which we are working on but still needs a lot of work." **Arnolfini**

Identified Need for Creativity within Service delivery:

- 5x Creativity enables service users to think beyond their situation, see themselves differently, provides them with respite, and gives them an outlet;
- 5x artists coming in 'from the outside' come with specific skills and links to contemporary art, are seen by service user as 'investing' in them as people, outside of mainstream activity or the therapeutic model.

Creativity "does provide opportunity for our service users to think outside of their situation and link with community and be part of that community, [so] identity is not in mental health in the sense of illness ".. [].. "Having artists invest in them as individuals long term, is validating for them and challenges their previous experiences of others abandoning them or not caring. This is very important for the women's sense of self and recovery and adds to our philosophy of care". **Teign Ward**

"A creative approach is really important in terms of providing an outlet for that creativity and an artist/community artist has been really beneficial. There will be continuing needs for our client...[.]".

Rethink

"Creativity is a key way that helps women get out of their circumstances that other things can't, it's accessible to everyone, it's a way to get out of one's self and your situation – it's a door everyone can walk through, everyone can always find something creative in them, can achieve. It's about discovering and healing in yourself and then you can deal with other things better". **One25**

*"It's different ... It gets them doing things off the wing. The benefits of someone coming in from outside, getting a touch of reality. They see us every day. So, providing a bit of the outside world. If you had a space it could be women from all over the prison – there are quite a few people who aren't doing education who could benefit ...[.]. Especially someone with self-harming behaviour, with anxiety." **HMP Eastwood Park***

"It is such a good model, it's so important to offer clients different ways for understanding themselves, finding an identity, find that sense of self which they lose through mental health and drugs. There is a need."

Bristol Drugs Project



One 25

Individual Background

What interested you about the Networks course?

Having the opportunity to be in the correct surroundings away from here (One25), and I'm creative and I wanted to find out if I was good at pottery, my first experience of pottery was a negative one, it was bad, the teacher put me off. Going to a different environment and being immersed in a proper pottery studio, having wheels around and seeing what other people had done and wondering "hey maybe I can do that"? and coming away from One25 'cause it can be mad in here. It feels more....focused, better. Hopefully you come away with likeminded people and when you do so you focus on other things other than the bitching and sniping and the chaos and drama. Being immersed in a creative environment and seeing and being inspired by other things and other peoples work is good for me. You come and solely focus on that, having [the support worker] around to encourage you helps too because she gets involved, makes mistakes, laughs about it, it takes the pressure off and its totally encouraging, another reason for coming out to Potstop is to do something and leave behind chaotic moments .. lifestyles.

When you first started the course, what did you hope to get out of it?

I hoped to get ... to tap into another creative outlet that I may get something from and I did.

Could you tell me a little about yourself and your life situation before you started the Networks course?

Not focused, closed, disconnected. Not content, I set myself goals but can't always get it together to meet them, I struggle with this, I'm better at meeting my creative goals.

Course review

Did you get what you wanted from the course?

*Yes, a sense of achievement, it made me feel valued and made me realise my creativity extends far past what realised I was capable of. It's made me see if I'm given opportunities I can go far, my capabilities go far wider than I ever thought and that's made me feel really good. "I'm so proud of my f***** bowl"*

Which parts of the course did you think worked best?

Things that worked best for me were leaving the environment of One25, working with others that also focused, working with [the artist and support worker]. [The artist] is relaxed but encouraging, she's brilliant, she's someone that loves what's she does and makes it accessible. It doesn't feel like a lesson because it's gentle and relaxed yet it's empowering, we all have learnt lots.

How did you find using the online studio?

I think it's a brilliant concept and fabulous, knowing that people can see your work is great. I don't use it myself though, none of us use computers and don't have the interest there, we don't have computers or access except at One25, it's not something we use in our day to day life.

How did you find working with a professional artist?

Working with [the artist] has been great, I found it encouraging, I felt I didn't have anything to prove but to myself.

Learning

Could you tell me a little about your previous experience with education and other courses you have been on?

Through the Nelson Trust, they helped me learn my art was valid, this slowly opened me to a sense of pride which then led me to go to college and get a pass in art and design BTec. The

pottery bit has been not great before.

What do you think you have learnt through the course?

I've learnt that my creative capabilities and potential if I'm offered opportunities have no limits, it gives me a sense of achievement and self-worth and growth. I don't want to get bitter, my creative abilities can be my high when I'm clean if you like my work that's great but if you don't that's ok too 'cause it's about my journey, my escape, my feelings.

I've learnt about boundaries more, it can get blurred and dysfunctional with the girls at One25 as there's lots going on, but at Potstop you're in a working studio away from it all.. Potstop helps you get into the mind-set of something it takes your mind of other things. Sometimes I feel anxious in One25 'cause of some of the girls, and when you're feeling vulnerable you have less compassion and empathy for others, when you're away and when you are feeling good about yourself you're focused on something else and its better. I'm trying to apply how I feel about my creativity and being creative to the rest of my life. I'm still need to learn and listen that I can do it.

Has being on the course made you think about going on to do something else?

I'd like to do more and more and love this to continue, since starting I've put a plan together about detoxing and moving out my flat, I just need to start believing I can do it.

Wellbeing

Could you tell me a little bit about any of the areas of your life you feel you may need support in?

The whole transition with making major changes again and tuning my life around. In Nelson I managed to get to college from the things I achieved.

Has the Networks course made any difference to how you feel? How?

I feel better about myself, its true at the moment I'm still so blocked and shut off but I know I have felt, I'm impatient, I want to feel love for myself and connected and have love in my heart as the person I know I am – but I'm not there at the moment. From this its helped me try and get through to the part of me which is alive and a light and ready to do my part and make things better for others. (I always think about that before myself) And myself... I need to focus on making myself better. This project and support at One25 has highlighted that its reachable but I'm not there yet.

Is there anything else you'd like to say about your experience of the Networks course?

I wish there was more and it could continue as it's been a fabulous experience. In such a short time I've achieved lots and it's a fabulous feeling so if it continued I wonder what I might be able to achieve... We didn't really connect with the Arnofini but it still made us have an opinion about things... even if we didn't like it.



Teign ward

Individual Background

What interested you about the Networks course?

The subjects, the way in which it is run and I got on well with the teacher.

When you first started the course, what did you hope to get out of it?

A sense of achievement, something solid, of my own work that I could take from it.

Could you tell me a little about yourself and your life situation before you started the Networks course?

I had an interest in art, which I've always had. I was rather bored and lonely.

Course review

Did you get what you wanted from the course?

Yes Thank you.

Which parts of the course did you think worked best?

When we were all sat down, drawing and colouring at the same time.

How did you find working with a professional artist?

Inspiring and good.

Learning

Could you tell me a little about your previous experience with education and other courses you have been on?

At school I achieved O Levels and CSE's. I also used to dress windows for shops. I also did some voluntary art projects including at a local hospital where I helped decorate for a Caribbean night using a large sheet of plastic to make hanging flower decorations.

What do you think you have learnt through the course?

That other people appreciate my art.

Has being on the course made you think about going on to do something else?

Yes, I have started a course in Floristry, which is more artistic than I first thought. I would like to go to college to pass my exams so I can become a florist. I would also be interested in doing more pottery.

Wellbeing

Could you tell me a little bit about any of the areas of your life you feel you may need support in?

Travelling and grocery shopping.

Has the Networks course made any difference to how you feel? How?

Yes, I try keep things tidy and together. I also like putting things together for example making portfolio's and scrapbooks. I also like working on canvas now, when I didn't before.

Is there anything else you'd like to say about your experience of the Networks course?

I thoroughly enjoyed it. [The artist] is a very inspiring person with a good personality and ability to make you want to join in.



HMP Eastwood Park

Individual Background

What interested you about the Networks course?

Different types of art.

When you first started the course, what did you hope to get out of it?

To just have fun.

Could you tell me a little about yourself and your life situation before you started the Networks course?

I suffered from anxiety and was nervous about meeting new people.

Course review

Did you get what you wanted from the course?

Yes

Which parts of the course did you think worked best?

Doing different and new things, such as felt-making.

How did you find working with a professional artist?

Great.

Learning

Could you tell me a little about your previous experience with education and other courses you have been on?

I haven't taken up playing the guitar and started going to 'Changing Tunes' [Prison course?]

What do you think you have learnt through the course?

How to do different collages.

Has being on the course made you think about going on to do something else?

Yes, I would like to do a foundation course in art.

Wellbeing

Could you tell me a little bit about any of the areas of your life you feel you may need support in?

Release from prison and being able to start an art foundation course.

Has the Networks course made any difference to how you feel? How?

Yes, more confident in meeting new people.

Is there anything else you'd like to say about your experience of the Networks course?

Thank you for giving me this experience, I have really enjoyed everything we've done. I have done things I wouldn't have tried out.



Bristol Drugs Project

Individual Background

What interested you about the Networks course?

It being a woman's group because I didn't want to join a mixed group at this point – it drew my attention. I've done other women's groups and feel comfortable in them. I love art, one of my passions – I like to be creative, but I don't think I'm very good at it, but I find it therapeutic, stretching my imagination.

Could you tell me a little about yourself and your life situation before you started the Networks course?

I had a drug problem – I wouldn't say I was an addict... I've been clean for four years, staying clean wasn't really a problem because I totally disconnected myself from everything and everybody but then you isolate yourself and I had to make friends all over again because the environment I was involved with wasn't good for me and I knew I had to do different things for myself and my own self recovery ... so that's why I came here. It was just a process – I joined a women's group at Barton Hill and then I came here... that's the reason I came here..

It's worked for me ... it's not just making new friends, it's something for me, to keep my mind occupied – I'm not working at the moment, I'm really trying to get back into the job market and being unemployed is the biggest obstacle for me at the moment and being employed would solve a lot of my issues ... but until I am employed this course has really helped me a lot ...gives me different interests.

Course review

Did you get what you wanted from the course?

I got what I wanted definitely – I didn't think about what was in it for me apart from stretching my imagination, it's given me a process where I think now I'm going to carry on being creative – I'm going to fill that gap – everything we've done here on this course ... it's something I've never really done, I can't remember having very done art – maybe with my son at primary school, but not really anything else

Which parts of the course did you think worked best?

Being in a group with women, really safe and peaceful – more than anything; the environment, calm and safe.

How did you find using the online studio?

I didn't try even try to do that myself because I'm really quite computer illiterate but once I was shown how to do it, I found it really good and enjoyed that part of the course... making comments and viewing others work was really interesting. I'm definitely going to try getting back onto the [virtual] studio and make more comments, I really want to make more and try and upload more images ... up until now I didn't have the time, it takes quite a lot of time to learn those skills.

How did you find working with a professional artist?

[The artist] is great and her ideas, she's brilliant, I loved going to Botanical Gardens the Arnofini and looking at the German artist's work it was really interesting. We don't really take enough time out in our lives to do those things, there is so much else going on in our lives, we just don't take time out for ourselves, so being part of it and going to those things I've really enjoyed..

Learning

Could you tell me a little about your previous experience with education and other courses you have been on?

I have done other courses, a basic first aid course, health & safety in the workplace .. I forget what I've done over the years and adult literacy... I'd like to do a creative writing course because I like writing but I've not used these courses. I didn't spend a lot of time at school and

I left quite young but I will admit I never liked the academic side of school anyway, I liked PE – I'm still not so keen now apart from adult literacy and creative writing.

What do you think you have learnt through the course?

To be flexible with art, to be imaginative.

Has being on the course made you think about going on to do something else?

I'd like to, I can't say what's next, but I'd like to - I'm not sure what direction to go in so it would be nice to get some ideas about what I could do, I'd love to – a job would be even better.

Wellbeing

Could you tell me a little bit about any of the areas of your life you feel you may need support in?

I left school and went straight into a factory job, care system, addiction..

My depression, because that brought me here in the first place and I would probably need help with my depression, and general wellbeing really – like I've said I've been clear for four years now and I've really challenged myself a lot and I'm in a good place so I don't worry about that anymore, it's gone and not coming back. My depression I'm trying to manage - if I hadn't forced myself to getting out and doing something it would have been a problem ... I'd recommend it [the course] to anyone that suffers from depression to do something like this because it definitely helps, it helped me and I'm sure it helped a lot of the other women who came ... when I first came I was very quiet, just do my work, and the same with everything I do it takes me a little while to come out of my shell ... I've come to every single week, if I enjoy it and it's productive I'm committed – I like to give it a go, I will give anything a go, I don't give up on the first hurdle.

Has the Networks course made any difference to how you feel? How?

Yes, when I am being creative it helps my mental wellbeing. It's made me realise that I'm quite artistic, it's made me think about what I'd like to work with – as yet I like to put stuff together but I'd like to do something with clay, I like to work with my hands so it's made me think about doing different courses, I'd like to work with different materials.

Is there anything else you'd like to say about your experience of the Networks course?

It's been important for me to attend an interesting and crucial course for women like myself. I'd like to say thank you and for giving me the opportunity to be spontaneous and show my creative side and give me the freedom to do that, it's been great.

SECTION 6: EXIT STRATEGY AND HOW THE WORK WILL BE SUSTAINED

- Creativity Works is now registered on the Clinks Partnership Finder, the Directory of Offender Services and the Transforming Rehabilitation database with the Ministry of Justice;
- Creativity Works is now part of the Community Learning Partnership network;
- Networks explored opportunities to deliver courses as part of the Community Learning contract in Bristol, but it was agreed that this would not develop anything meaningful beyond individual artists being employed to run courses;
- The Networks project identified a core group of artists who have proved to be excellent and will be a valuable resource for further projects working with these settings and learners;
- Creativity Works will maintain contact with the Networks artists, offering access to training and networking opportunities;
- The Networks Re|source has been developed into a tool which can be embedded in the existing Creativity Works creative progression model, enhancing learning opportunities, documentation, reflection and evaluation mechanisms;
- The Networks Re|source enables Creativity Works to pursue different funding streams and develop new partnerships with interested organisations. Conversations are underway with new partners who are interested in the tool;
- Further potential to work with the Arnolfini to explore audience development has been identified;
- Commissioning meetings have been attended in Bristol as a result of the Networks project and early indications are that these may lead to future partnership consortia with key organisations in the wellbeing field;
- One of the groups has chosen to continue meeting for weekly creative sessions together, independently of the setting. They have found an affordable city centre venue and access to reasonably priced materials. To optimise their continued meetings and creative activities, Networks commissioned the artist who worked with them to provide small projects via the online studio and the IT mediator to provide some technical support for continued use of the Re|source. It is hoped that these two interventions will help the group's transition to independence;
- Challenges: Partners not pro-actively identifying funding sources or being able to support the project themselves;
- Through its evaluation findings the project has reinforced the validity and benefits of the Creativity Works model and approach;
- Creativity Works has also been able to develop an Evaluation Toolkit for use on future projects;
- Strengthened Creativity Works' resolve to establish training opportunities, both for Creativity Works Artists and the participants involved in various projects. Currently exploring SEPE (Supporting Employability and Personal Effectiveness) training in conjunction with other local arts organisations;
- All partners; One25, Rethink Bristol, Bristol Drugs Project, Teign Ward and HMP Eastwood Park have expressed enthusiasm about a continued relationship with Creativity Works and furthering the potential of this work.

SECTION 7: PROJECT IN A BOX

<http://creativityworks.org.uk/what-we-do/for-mental-health/networks/project-in-a-box/>

SECTION 8: CONCLUSIONS

- The Networks project identified that there is need to support women offenders, ex-offenders and service users who have mental health needs, or who are living chaotic lives and who are disadvantaged or marginalised in the community, more holistically.
- It was identified with Community Learning teams that there is a need for the Networks approach to support those that are not ready to access mainstream education or community learning services, and who need extra support before they are ready to do so.
- In the context of the Criminal Justice System it was identified by HMP Eastwood Park that those women prisoners who need extra support because of mental health needs would benefit from the Networks approach. Probation services identified clients who would benefit from regular respite from their chaotic lives as a means to support their personal development.
- Networks evidenced that creative opportunities can meet this need through enabling participants to achieve an improved sense of wellbeing and personal development, but most importantly to increase their aspirations.
- Creative opportunities, when delivered by professional socially engaged artists, enable individuals to pursue their own interests, from whatever their starting point, and self-direct these in a safe, relaxed environment which supports a wide range of skills development.
- A professional socially engaged artist also brings specific skills by linking isolated individuals to community and culture. The community arts approach has a crucial role to play in crossing the boundary between wellbeing and education.
- The 'gateway' (or informal learning) approach is an effective way to engage individuals with both their potential, and further activities in the community.
- Artist-facilitators bring specific skills by linking individuals to communities and culture.
- There is place for digital technologies at the heart of participatory work, in terms of supporting a sense of community, communication, quality of artwork presentation and IT skills.
- The group context and peer support shows that small groups are an effective means to support individuals in feeling part of a community, reducing isolation and increasing their engagement in broader community activities.
- It is evident that a partnership approach between artists and health professionals combines different approaches to individual and group development.
- Partnership working between and across agencies is essential for the integration of further opportunities for service users, which allows an emphasis on individual need. Partnerships are vital for sustainability, both with referring community partners and with artistic/cultural organisations;
- Without the type of investment and resource that Networks has afforded, service partners are limited in exploring alternative and innovative approaches to supporting service users. This limits the capacity of services to fully provide for the needs of individuals;
- This project was only 11 months. Without the opportunities afforded by longer term projects than this, there isn't sufficient time to integrate these validated ways of working into settings and enable users to experience progress in a sustained and managed way towards recovering their sense of self.
- The quality of these creative interventions and the significant impact they can have relies on consistency and long-term relationship building. Where time allows, this is the relationship between artist and participant, but also in a wider context Creativity Works is keen to develop partnerships with appropriate settings.
- It is important to recognise the value of creativity as a catalyst. Where participants exhibit complex needs, the re-building of aspiration and development of confidence and self-esteem forms a solid base on which other issues in their lives can be addressed. The wider implications of creative intervention can be farther reaching and longer lasting. There was significant impact on Networks' participants' ability to try new things and feel part of a group (77%, see pg.13). The new found skills of creativity may develop new and wider interests, which break cycles of behaviour and open new opportunities.
- The long-term value of Networks and any similar project, may not be realised until several months or years after the end of the workshop sessions. Only through prolonged developmental work with community settings and supported groups can these be fully evaluated and understood. A range of evaluation techniques are required, in order to gain a full insight into the wider impact of creative interventions. Finding new methods for communication and information sharing, by way of the Re|source was a critical strand of this project, which Creativity Works will be developing as a community development tool for future use.