

cARTrefu

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CARTrefu—Age Cymru



cARTrefu - Age Cymru

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Workshop



The Baring Foundation



Cyngor Celfyddydau Cymru
Arts Council of Wales



cARTrefu overview



cARTrefu, which means to reside in Welsh, is a six year programme run by Age Cymru which aims to improve access to quality arts experiences for older people in residential care.

cARTrefu is Age Cymru's flagship arts in care homes project that has been running since 2015, with funding from Baring Foundation and Arts Council Wales. The aim of the project is to improve the provision of creative activity in care homes and develop artist's skills in running these sessions. Inspired by the Killick - Courtyard Mentoring Model which has been running at The Courtyard in Hereford since 2011, Age Cymru took this successful model of a mentor-led artists development programme and used it as the building blocks for our experimental arts in care homes project, cARTrefu.

cARTrefu has now grown to become the largest project of its kind in Europe. We've been invited to talk about the project at conferences in Copenhagen, Sydney, Edinburgh, Belfast, Barcelona and London. Wales truly is leading the way when it comes to the impact of arts on well-being, particularly for those living with dementia and we're proud that cARTrefu is a significant part of Wales' ambitions in this field.

Between 2015 and 2017 Age Cymru recruited 16 professional artists in four different fields: Performing Arts, Visual Arts, Words and Music. These artists each delivered 8 eight-week residencies across the length and breadth of Wales, introducing a mix of established art forms and new activities residents may not have had the chance to experience before.

In 2017 and 2019 cARTrefu re-launched with a brand new team of 12 artists, this time working in care homes for 12 weeks. With our second team of cARTrefu artists we wanted to push the boundaries of what had been attempted in care homes before, and to inspire bold and striking new art work from the residents our artists worked with.

cARTrefu Phase 1 and 2 was a huge success and over the four years we delivered 1840 two-hour art workshops in more than 25% of care homes across Wales. Age Cymru was able to offer these workshops for free due to the generous support from the Arts Council of Wales and the Baring Foundation.



Evaluation

Following the first phase of cARTrefu a full evaluation was conducted by the Dementia Service Development Centre Wales at Bangor University, to explore the impact of the art residencies on all involved. The findings were as follows:

Residents

- A statistically significant improvement in wellbeing scores after attending cARTrefu sessions.
- Residents rated 86% of sessions as highly enjoyable (4 or 5 on a 5 point scale).
- Wider impact such as socialising more and regaining skills such as using a knife and fork.

Staff

- A statistically significant improvement in attitudes towards residents, especially those living with dementia.
- A statistically significant increase in confidence to lead a creative arts session in the home.
- Statistically more likely to seek out participatory or spectator cultural experiences (i.e. arts classes, visiting gallery/theatre) outside of work.

Artists

- A statistically significant improvement in attitudes, including hope and recognition of personhood towards residents.
- Personal development and the development of new skills.



Survey results

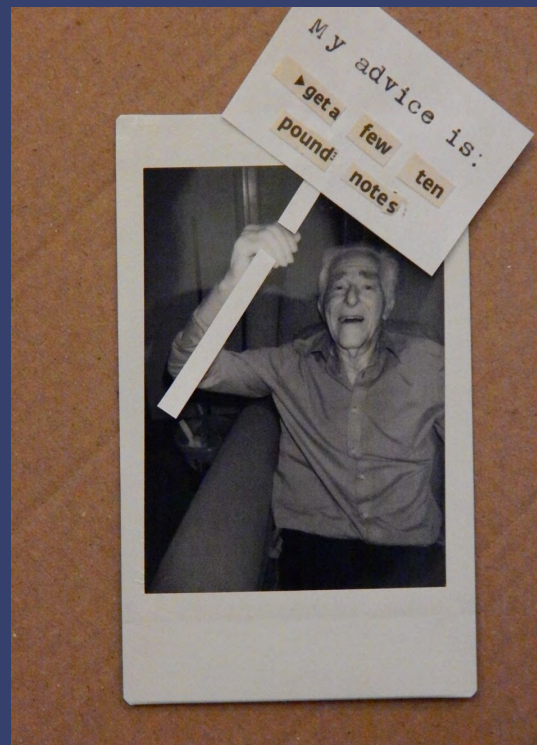
100% of care homes reported that their cARTrefu residency was a positive experience

100% of care homes reported that they continued creative sessions following their cARTrefu residency



4.6 Average rating

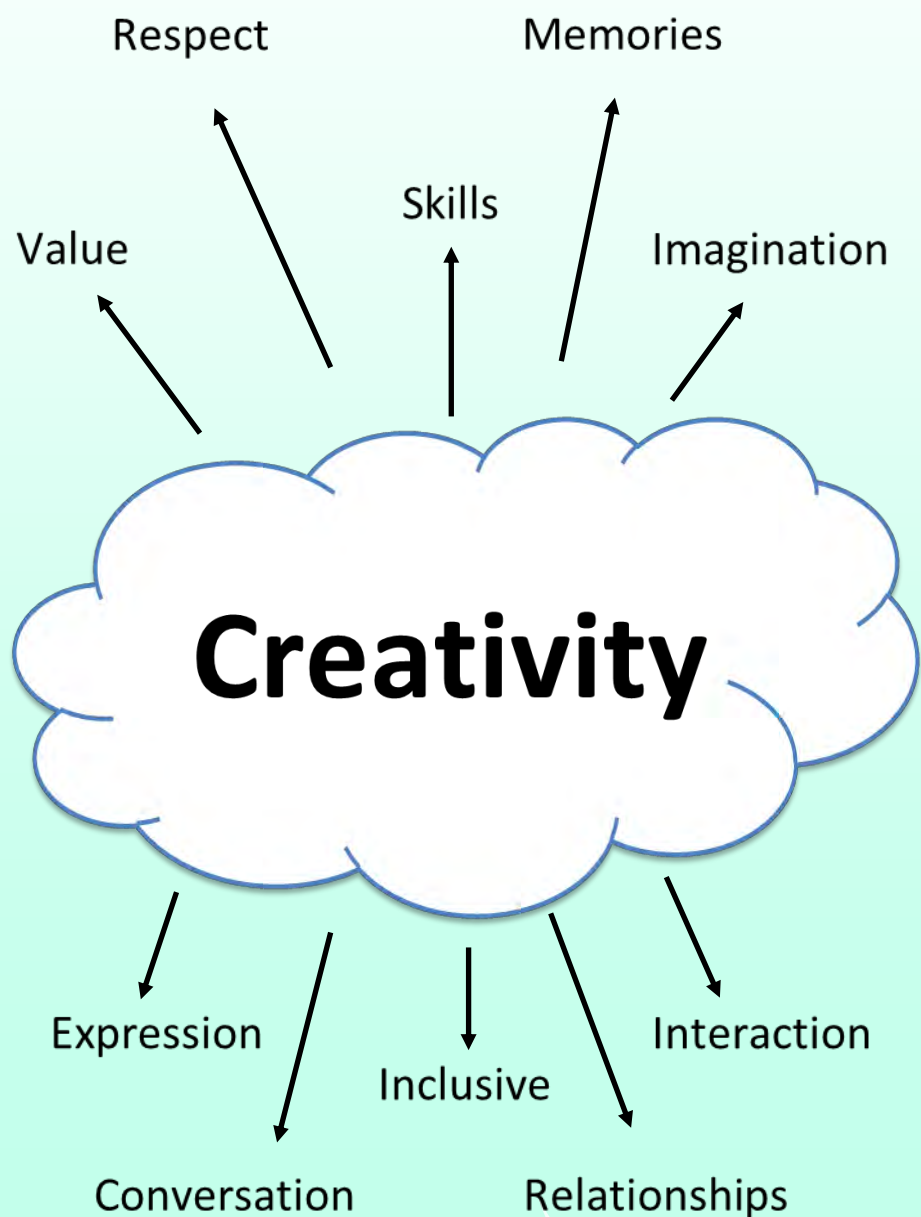
The estimated Social Return on Investment is £6.48 for every pound invested in cARTrefu.



cARTrefu benefits

The urge to engage in purposeful and meaningful activity is a basic human drive. As people we're all different with different needs and interests, the same as residents within care homes. Creativity is such a broad option for care homes, allowing care staff to offer activities which are varied and innovative, enabling person centred care and meeting the needs of the individuals.

Being creative is a gift that we all have, we just need the right tools to unlock it.



Activities need to be inclusive, residents need to join in, giving opportunities for interaction, conversation and relationships. Building relationships between residents, opening up conversation to build these friendships and become part of a community.

These workshops take residents out of themselves allowing them to express themselves, triggering imagination and memories.

Allowing residents to be creative enables them to sustain interests they may have had in the past, or develop skills and interests that they may never have known they had.

It's so reassuring for relatives to know that their loved ones' days are fulfilling and fun. Both planned and spontaneous activities lead to an active home life.

These creative sessions can often surprise care workers as residents often surpass all that's expected of them.

Parts of residents' personalities, that perhaps have not been seen since being in a care home, shine through.

These sessions are a break in the routine of the day for care workers, helping them to relax for part of their demanding job, and a great way for them to engage with the residents and find a common ground.

It's a simple way for relationships to be formed.

Proper engagement – see who they are, involve them and connect with them.

Understanding their needs and creating relationships. Residents feel valued and respected by the care workers.



Hints and tips

“Focus on the process and quality of engagement over outcome”

“There's no need to correct residents if they don't stick to the plan, just let them be creative”

“Go with the flow, share and work together”

“Don't rush the activity, just let things happen naturally”

“Don't focus on the word 'art', just enjoy the process and see it as stimulation for all involved”

“Talk with the residents about their hobbies and interests as a starting point for future workshops”

“Take the time to form relationships to find out who the resident really is”

“Focus on who the person is now, not who they used to be. People change when living with Dementia”

Inclusivity

There are ways to include all residents in sessions, no matter whether they are visually impaired or have severe dementia .

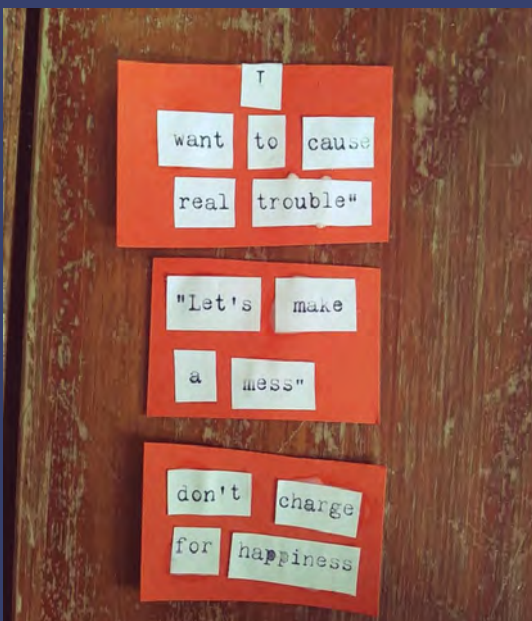
Our artists have developed methods to reach and include everyone.

“There are so many wonderful special moments when I spend time with people in care homes. Today Anne, who has severe dementia, and who I have been working with for the past few sessions, was having a good day and she talked to me properly for the first time, and rather than just see the sparkle in her eye and the smile, she could connect with words too.... looking through pictures of her family as a child and drawing a line on a page - a big achievement for her.”

One lady stayed right to the end, just colouring. “I’ve never seen her like this, Its great to see her absorbed in something.” Said Anne, the manager.

“Sandra was also using the pencil on her own!, which was amazing to see, the staff had never seen this before”

I hand it back and ask if I can visit again. She nods and says quite, matter of fact ‘yes, I’d like that.’ On leaving, Julia whispers to me, ‘Well that was amazing, she rarely communicates with people or engages in conversation, that was great.’



cARTrefu activity pack

We worked with the artists from the first phase of cARTrefu to develop activity cards.

20 simple but effective activities.

Designed to be delivered without any expert knowledge or specialist equipment, and no great expense to the care home.

The pack features colour-coded cards split into five sections

Blue: Introduction and instructions

Green: Visual Arts

Pink: Performing Arts

Orange: Words

Purple: Music

These activity packs are free for care homes

How do I use this pack?

This pack has a number of activities for you to try. The activities are split into four different art forms, each a different colour. The arts forms are:

Visual Arts

Performing Arts

Words

Music

The activities are designed so you don't need expert knowledge or specialist equipment. Take a look and have a go!

We've labelled the activities so you'll know if they're most suitable for:

an individual  or a group 

All of the activities are easy to do, but some may require a little preparation. We've labelled each activity ①, ② or ③; 1 being very easy and 3 needing a little more time to get ready.



cARTrefu



Website: agecymru.org.uk/cartrefu

For an Activities Pack, Evaluation Report or Application Form:

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