

# HeadlineZ

Newsletter from the  
Independence Trust  
Mental Health &  
Wellbeing Services

Issue 14

## Well Being Gloucestershire



**As part of the wider Festival celebration lasting one month across Gloucestershire, Independence Trust in partnership with Encounter Church, Winchcombe and Inclusion Gloucestershire organised an event looking at mental health inclusion.**

Together with our own Simon Price (Peer Development Coordinator) and speakers from 2gether Trust, we had 4 speakers with Patrick Regan our main speaker talking about his own mental health journey. He represented this journey by the Japanese art of Kintsugi (rebuilding terracotta pots to show how we can repair our minds but coming back in a different form through Recovery).

We had an excellent lunch followed by some 16 market stalls representing various community groups. The afternoon concluded with 3 community workshops including one by Andrew Wood on "5 Ways to Well Being" and Patrick's "Kintsugi Hope and Mindfulness" photography.

We estimate some 80 people benefited from the day's events, and are hoping that a similar event can be organised for the future to continue the work of reducing stigma of mental health illness and encouraging inclusion for all.

*"There was a tremendous amount of energy, commitment and interest in the room to take forward the challenge of tackling mental health stigma. These successful events do not happen without a great deal of effort and expertise. A sincere WELL DONE for facilitating such a worthwhile venture."*

Prof Jane Melton PhD FRCOT  
Director of Engagement and Integration  
2gether NHS Foundation Trust

## Seen & Not Heard

**The Cheltenham Hub has been successful with their proposal to the Wilson Gallery in Cheltenham to run an exhibition.**

The exhibition will be entitled "Seen & Not Heard", and will include various mediums to run from **22 September to 4 November 2018**, incorporating World Mental Health Day. More information will be available on the website.



# FIRE.EARTH.ART

**Gathering around a fire to explore the natural world, landscape and connection to place through creativity.**

Fire, Earth, Art is an environmental arts-based intervention delivered in the Forest of Dean by artist and Rewild Project director Nichola Goff, in collaboration with Ruth Sidgwick, arts manager at North Bristol NHS Trust.

The project introduces people to a variety of creative processes using natural materials and traditional crafts to promote sustainable good mental health and wellbeing for participants.

We are pleased to announce that with the support of The Rewild Project, funding has been awarded from the National Lottery Awards for All and The Barnwood Trust to deliver a five week project to a group of local participants this summer 2018.

The project is in partnership with Independence Trust and Green Square housing support who are supporting participants to access the project with a view to establishing a longer term arts based, peer led mental health support network in Coleford and the Forest of Dean.

The five week project is due to start on Friday 13 July and will be based at Angus Buchanan VC Memorial recreation ground in Coleford. The sessions will take a closed group of eight participants on a journey of discovery, learning to make drawing charcoal in a camp fire, make paints from locally collected ochre pigment, make paper from plants and create wood block prints.



*"Intriguing, amazing, fulfilling, exciting, relaxing"*  
Quote from Fire Earth Art taster session participant

Read more about the project and see some of the outcomes from three taster sessions delivered in spring 2018 at:

<https://nicholagoff.org/portfolio/fire-earth-art/>

Follow the project on Instagram:

[www.instagram.com/fireearthart/](http://www.instagram.com/fireearthart/)

## Let's Talk "Hats"

**One of our very talented Gloucester ladies, told us she was stuck in a rut when she put in a self-referral to us, as suggested by Let's Talk. Through working with her Bridge Builder she recognised that she wanted to start her own business.**

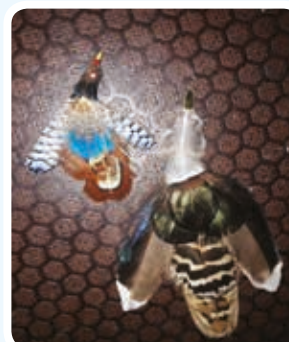
She put in an application to Barnwood to purchase some much needed equipment in order to produce the amazing hats shown in the photos and is eagerly waiting to see if she has been successful. EB says, "I want to produce something I can be proud of and bring joy to people who buy my creations. It would bring me much stability and ease the mounting pressure of city life to bring my dream into a reality and have a business of my own. I have been keen to start my own business and have been arty and creative since a child.

Making items for people is something I have loved doing (this proved popular and I have built up materials and designs over time to ensure I have a

substantial supply to get a business off the ground). I have utilised my position on a narrowboat by being in contact with many local bird keepers so I have a sustainable supply for the future.

If I am able to have the equipment to start my business, the impact on my wellbeing will be dramatic. I will be doing something that I have always loved, being creative, inspired and working to a timetable that my mental and physical health can manage. I am a hard worker and I know I can succeed in this if I am given an opportunity to do so."

**EB, Gloucester**



# Art for All

**Art for All, a group of artists who meet on Thursdays and Fridays at Gas Green, are having an exhibition for the second year running at The Gardens Gallery in Montpellier in Cheltenham. The Exhibition opens on Wednesday, 8 August and runs until Tuesday, 14 August, and is a showcase for the painting, drawing and printmaking that has been produced over the last year by the talented and dedicated artists that make up Art for All.**

The three main aims for the exhibition are:

- *to give the artists a platform to show and sell their work,*
- *to fund raise for art materials, and*
- *to help tackle the stigma associated with mental health illness, by showing the wider public, that just because a person experiences struggles in life, it does not mean that they cannot compete on the same level, because we are all equal.*

The photography group are also exhibiting their recent work and there will be a sample of Pottery on display by a member of the pottery group run by Vicky Hendzel.

We would like to welcome everyone to join us for our Open Day on Thursday, 9 August, between 11am and 5pm, to view our exhibition. Refreshments will be available, and much of the work will be for sale including greeting cards and prints. There will also be an art prize raffle. However if you cannot make that day the exhibition is on for a week, including the weekend.

The groups have gone from strength to strength over the past year, but have been given a great boost by



the recent and really successful move to Gas Green. The new art room is large and light, the facilities are far superior (for which we owe thanks to Alan Grist for doing all the hard work) to what we have had in the past, and these facilities mean that the groups are running smoother and calmer, with much more emphasis on creativity.

As an artist/tutor, art is always the primary focus of the groups, and my aim for anyone who joins us is always to help them achieve their personal goals and potential as artists, whatever that may be. But I have been witnessing that something far more important happens when a group of people with a common goal meet regularly, and that is the amazing support and friendships (some very unlikely friendships) that emerge from a safe non-judgemental environment, creating something that is far more than the sum of its parts. It is something that makes me very proud.

We welcome new members to our groups, so if you are interested in joining or know someone who is, please contact a member of staff at Gas Green for some information, and we look forward to seeing you at our exhibition.

A selection of cards are available from Art for All, tel: 01242 512812

**Shelley - Art for All Facilitator & Tutor**

# Brownhills Garden

**About 18 months ago we were approached by 2gether Trust to see if we were interested in developing a small piece of land behind the Brownhills Centre in Cheltenham. The land had been neglected for some time and parts were overgrown and were in desperate need of attention.**

Work started in the Autumn of 2017 and during a very short period of time the garden has become a place where those patients attending sessions at Brownhills can sit out and enjoy the little oasis.

The garden has been supported not only by clients and colleagues, but also families and friends who have

donated plants and equipment and shared a wealth of gardening knowledge with those developing the space.

Mike Jones (client) wrote the following about his experience, "I joined the gardening team at the end of 2017 following a family bereavement. It has been a beneficial experience for me and I am grateful for the opportunity to take part. It's a pleasure to see how the garden has changed over the past year and it's nice to know that people at the Brownhills Centre appreciate what is being done."





# Equine Therapy

The Gloucester Team & HHPDA (Horses Helping People with Depression & Anxiety) are excited to announce that after coming together to work as a partnership they have been successful in applying for a significant grant from the Gloucester Thriving Communities Fund provided by Gloucestershire County Council. This award means that individuals who may normally be excluded from accessing Equine Therapy due to the cost, will now have the opportunity to benefit.

The project aims to address some of the key issues raised in the Gloucestershire Community Wellbeing Survey and will support individuals to live independently from services for a longer period of time.

Additional benefits to participants will include:

- Reduction of symptoms of depression and anxiety
- Increased self-esteem and confidence
- Increased resilience
- Reduction of social isolation, increased sense of belonging to local community
- Increased friendship and support networks



For more information, or if you would like a referral form, please contact:  
[emma.royer@independencetrust.co.uk](mailto:emma.royer@independencetrust.co.uk)



# Jo, Stroud Peer Volunteer

**Hi. I'm Jo and I am a client with Independence Trust.**

I'm also a Peer Volunteer and have assisted with a few groups in Stroud. My latest foray in this area is helping our staff in working with staff from the Job Centre. Initially I felt totally out of my comfort zone. I need not have worried!

The concept is to work with the Job Centre in identifying any of their clients who may have mental health problems. We are there every Wednesday for two hours and talk individually to people they have referred to us. At this stage we are establishing what they may need/want and letting them know what Independence Trust is about and what it can offer them.

I'm finding it rewarding as it's drawing from my experience of my own mental ill health as well as my years of working with people. Being able to pass on even a small amount of what Independence Trust has



given me to people who may be struggling to find the help they need is so good.

My self esteem has taken a knock over the past 18 months and being involved in this way is helping me regain some of what I've lost and at the same time, hopefully, helping others.

**Jo, Stroud Peer Volunteer**

# HanDiCraft

**Hello one and all. My name is Damion. I am setting up peer support art projects in Coleford as part of a weekly group. There will be other people who will be teaching, running projects and showing different art techniques alongside me as part of Handicraft Art Projects.**

I am hoping to share with people the knowledge I have learnt over the years doing artwork. I have a teaching degree and am able to show different techniques and styles. My aim for the group is to teach people how to express themselves



in how they paint, draw or other. As I see it in my mind, from studying most of the great artists at college, there is no straight line in learning and painting and this is what I wish to try and help other people to experience.

We are about to start up our brand new Art Group based in Coleford at the 16 Café. We are planning to do many art projects with the opportunity to learn and create a unique style. The first session will be something I call Doodle Art - a fun creation of my own design. There will be all types of art each week, so please feel free to pop by and give us a try.

## Lucy's Experience

**Hi. My name is Lucy and I suffer with stress and anxiety. Life was really hard for me as I had body tremors so found it hard to connect with anyone.**

I was so scared the first time I met them with my leg bouncing on the spot and sweat dripping down my back.

But after the initial meeting, which was so laid back and made me feel at ease, I was able to feel more comfortable and openly discuss my problems.

After all if you don't tell someone then you're not going to get anywhere! Believe me I had some awful things I wanted to talk about.....

I tried to take my own life. I had lost everything I owned due to mental health and drug abuse. I was a precision engineer, a home owner and owned a car.

But I am glad to say I quit drugs on my own and with help I am sure I will succeed in getting the life I am wanting.

NO, I know it's not easy! I've missed appointments when I've been too scared to leave the house but I kept pushing myself.

These people do not judge or pull faces in shock if you tell them things. They are helping me and for that I am truly grateful.

Please let them help you like they are doing with me as you will feel like you are walking again instead of standing still.

Take a deep breath and repeat "I will do this" over and over and believe that you will get better in time or at least be able to cope.

I wish you all a great journey with Independence Trust.

**Lucy, Age 45**

## A bad day

Thoughts are like a Scatter gun  
A dandelion clock in full flight  
I am Hungry for life  
Foggy peaceful sleep brings Closure  
Wiped  
I blank out  
Switch flicked off before anxiety arrives  
I live Suspended

Pounding head, pounding heart  
pounding fists  
Adrift  
Small  
Lack of trust, my trust, my feelings  
There is a rhythm of nothingness  
I catastrophise  
I am negative  
Everything is like climbing a mountain with no oxygen

Agitated, restless, fight or flight, I have to fight.  
Disembodied  
Fury  
No motivation  
Others expectations of me leave me lacking, cold and feeling a failure.  
I peel my skin off to expose my grief  
I escape and run.

**Tom-Rita-Debbie-Sue-Mandy**

# Medicine Heads

**An exhibition was held at Museum in the Park, Stroud in conjunction with Mental Health Awareness Week May 2018.**

The aim of the exhibition was to tackle the stigmas attached to mental health and medication and to explore this through art and discussion. Using

recycled products, Sculptures, Paintings, Artists Books, Photograms and recordings of people's experiences made up this unique exhibition. The "Men's Shed" project at Weaver's Croft made all of the plinths for the exhibition. The Tackling Stigma group Stroud area, were also involved in the planning and the event.

*Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, Personality Disorder, Eating Disorder:*

*"I am able to socialise and not feel so isolated, I can be myself and not pretend, it is a "Safe Zone". I can use my creativity to share and to help others express themselves. I don't have to pretend here and mixing with my peers who understand how I feel is valuable to me".*



*Autistic Spectrum Condition:*

*"I get a day away from work to unwind and to not think about work. No one judges me, and I have made some friends and I socialise after sessions with some of them. I get support and people listen to me and they don't judge me. I have re-ignited my interest in Art and Carpentry since I have been going to Inde Trust".*

*"I couldn't talk about my Autism before, but this project has allowed me to think about how this affects me and to get help and support with my mental health"*



*BW: "Very powerful, illuminating, moving and inventive. I very much appreciate the bravery of those revealing their innermost thoughts. Thank you."*

*"I have realised that although I think of my medication in a negative way, if it wasn't for my meds, I wouldn't be able to function and probably wouldn't be joining in this project, as I wouldn't have the confidence. Medication is positive and negative".*



*MW: "An amazing exhibition in so many ways, so thought provoking. Thank you to all who put in so much effort and for sharing and for giving hope and inspiration."*

*CR: "Amazed, creativity and expressively, very expert by experts. A very overwhelming feeling when "alone" in this gallery."*

*SS: "Such a thought provoking and moving exhibition. Another example of Independence Trust at its best! Congratulations."*



*"I am a creative Person, and helping at the Exhibition was a great experience. I was able to take my hand-made jewellery and place this for sale. I helped people with purchases of art works and cards made for the exhibition and was able to sell my own designs too. I had many compliments as well as commissions which made me feel a little anxious. I am not used to this. Independence Trust supported me throughout and made me feel supported, and for a small amount of time this made me feel like me again. It was a flash of what I feel has been suppressed for many years".*

**Events & Exhibitions Officer Abigail Large from The Museum in the Park:** "We were honoured to show this moving, powerful and thought provoking exhibition here at The Museum in the Park and believe all the Artists should be very proud of what they achieved. The Museum is for everyone, and everyone knows someone whose life has been affected by mental health challenges even if they are lucky enough not to have experienced mental ill health themselves. The artwork made people think, ask questions, share stories, understand other people and their struggles a little more. Thank you Independence Trust Stroud and all the Artists for organising this incredible exhibition."

**What's next?** We are exhibiting in Tesco Cam, then Gloucester Resource Centre and we have applied to Gloucester Cathedral to exhibit there too. So, ...watch this space.



# 23 Take Exmouth By Storm

**I just wanted to say a big thank you. The holiday was both enjoyable and beneficial.**

It was the first time in 30 years that I had been away on my own. I suffer from severe depression and anxiety but I found that I could "cope" on my own. The whole weekend was very enjoyable.

For me it taught me that I could "COPE" with my medication on my own, find my own room, and manage my money.

This for me was at the core of Independence Trust, and has helped me now I am at home.

With the timetable set just right and "encouraged" behind the scenes to ensure everything went smoothly, I shall definitely be going next year.

**Peter, Stroud**



*"Wow I haven't played rounders since I was at school", though you would never have guessed - Paula knocking it out of the ball park first time*

*"What a holiday, sunshine, boat trips, rounders and so much laughter."*

**Having practically grown up in Exeter and Exmouth it felt like I had gone home.**

We arrived at the hotel about 2:30pm-ish and it was nice to see the people from Dursley who had also come to Ilfracombe last year, whom we had made friends with.

The hotel was right on the front and I had a lovely sea view from my room.

We went into the town to go to the indoor market. Some of us walked and others went by minibus. I was a bit nervous at first because I didn't know if I'd remember the way, but I needn't have worried - I led everyone straight there.

Instead of the trip to Sidmouth, I went on a fishing trip. I got two bites but no catches. I didn't feel too bad because out of the 20-30 people on the boat, only 2 had catches.

Definitely looking forward to next year - wherever it may take us!

**Sue C**



## Opening of the Sensory Garden at Marina Court

**Our Woodwork Group was invited to the Grand Opening of Marina Court's Sensory Garden.**

The group had spent several months working hard to produce the signs for the Garden, which they generously donated to the elderly people that live in the complex. The signs were very much appreciated by all.

We were able to see the signs in all their glory in the beautiful garden. The group also made a bird box and gifted this on the day.



We enjoyed a Barbeque and had a pleasant walk around the Gardens.

Everybody had a great time and felt very proud of their achievements - which indeed they should.

Well done guys from all at Inde!

# Adult Education in Gloucestershire

## 'Achieve & Succeed Awards 2018'

### Stroud receives Outstanding Partner Award

Partnership working presents various challenges – such as a mutual understanding of shared aims for users of the services, and an understanding of mutual obligations to ensure that Adult Education learning can take place. Engaging potential learners, who have to overcome more than the usual butterflies anyone feels when starting something new, is a challenge. And the challenge is intensified when you are working to engage people with additional barriers.

The Independence Trust works to support people suffering from a range of mental health issues, to engage with the 5 Ways to Wellbeing, in order to sustain their recovery. The remit for Adult Education Community Learning, is to support people with a range of complex needs into learning – to develop independent living skills, employability skills and health and wellbeing.

I began working with Independence Trust in Stroud in about October 2017. A colleague had done previous work with them. I was immediately struck by their pro-active approach. They clearly understand the benefits of learning for their service users, and have a good grasp of the way Adult Education works and what we have to offer. I had never experienced a partner organisation ringing me and saying: "We have 12 people on the list for 'Look Good, Feel Good' – when can you come and deliver it?" Brilliant!

Over the last few months we have worked together to put on a number of courses. Potential learners have been brilliantly supported to engage with learning.



Stroud Inde Trust is one of the few partners I know who contact everyone the day before the course, with a reminder. The good quality of relationships that staff and volunteers have with service users is plain to see. They provide a wonderfully supportive environment. This is so valuable when it comes to engaging people in learning. As a result, it is great to see how people have enjoyed and benefited from their learning. It is not only about practical skills, but about developing supportive relationships with each other, spending time meaningfully, and developing softer skills such as taking responsibility, time management, resilience etc.

It has been great to support some of the existing work that they are doing with some additional tuition – such as the allotment project at Weaver's Croft, and the Men's Shed initiative. I love working with an organisation when you know that after the Ad Ed funding finishes at the end of a course, there are continued and sustainable activities for people to participate in, activities where they can continue to apply what they have learnt on their Ad Ed course.

**Megan Thoresson**  
Gloucestershire CC Adult Education

### Our addresses are below:

Gloucester	1 Mill Place, Bristol Road	(01452) 317460
Cheltenham	Gas Green Community Centre, 6 Baker Street	(01242) 512812
Forest of Dean	Colliers Court, Latimer Road, Cinderford	(01452) 317460
Cirencester	Ashcroft Rooms, 21 Ashcroft Road and The Bothy, Ashcroft Road	(01453) 767999
Dursley	Tyndale Centre	(01453) 767999
Moreton-in-Marsh	50 Jameson Court	(01242) 512812
Stroud	Parliament Street	(01453) 767999

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