

real arts workshops

Working with



Interim User Group Consultation Report November 2019



Alex and Gary (RAW tutors) on the left with some of the RAW COMMUNITY ARTS CLUB participants at the 60th Anniversary celebration event June 22nd 2019.

R.A.W. VALUES

**COLLABORATION • CREATIVITY
PARTNERSHIPS • INCLUSION**

Introduction

This project report sets out the social value **Real Arts Workshops** and **One Walsall/ Mossley Big Local** create while providing high quality innovative art and music workshops to the residents of Mossley, Walsall. These are marketing under the name **RAW Community Arts Club**.

The group is a mixed group of adults and young people who work in harmony and encourage each other in educational, creative and recreational activities including: **visual arts; 3D sculpture; craft; music; and British Sign Language**.

As well as a regular Spring, Summer and Autumn programme of activities it was our real pleasure to oversee activities suitable for celebrating Mossley's 60th Anniversary.

Participants have enjoyed and learnt from a wide range of activities including:

- Wild animal art
- Portrait painting
- Landscape drawing and painting
- Photography
- Drawing using the 'grid method'
- Making a 3D frame
- Learning British Sign Language (BSL)
- Music and Sign Song
- Needle-felting
- Dream-catcher creation
- Creating small cardboard sculptures
- 60th anniversary trolleybus sculpture making
- Performance
- Halloween themed crafts
- Planning and writing a script for a pantomime
- Handmade calendars to sell at the Christmas Fayre



Context and Social Value

Real Arts Workshops (RAW) are sponsored by **Mossley Big Local** to deliver activities to a mixed group of adults and young people between **April 2019 and April 2020**.

Finance to provide educational, welfare and recreational activity is provided by the **National Lottery Community Fund** and is allocated by the Local Trust 'Big Local' project. The Mossley Big Local / RAW Community Arts project is people-centered and encompasses the shared values of **equality, fairness, authenticity and transparency**.

Arts, craft and music activities are delivered every **Tuesday evening, 4.30-6.30pm** at **Mattesley Court**. Activities are monitored consistently via a digital resource and a social impact research service. Participants have opportunity to feedback their experience of attending and express their ideas about future activities.

R.A.W tutors (Alex and Gary) have seen real improvement in the participants arts and crafts, music and sign language skills and abilities. It is a joy to see people working together creatively towards positive ends and to acknowledge this. They are an interesting group of people and a pleasure to work alongside.



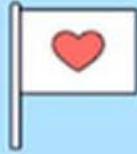
As weekly activities have progressed, people regularly express doubt in their ability to do something they have not done before. Then delight in realising that with support they can achieve anything they set out to achieve.

We have found participants gain a real sense of understanding about their own abilities. Alongside a sense of achievement amongst all age groups, when tasks are completed art is created, craft items are constructed, songs are sung and meaning is signed.

Participants who are aged 25yrs and under have had their participation recognized by the **Arts Award** Discovery certification (Trinity College, London). RAW activities are progressively delivered. Participants will gain opportunity to work towards the Ofqual (England) regulated Arts Award Explore qualification should the project be delivered for a subsequent year (2020-2021). Getting an Arts Award qualification says something unique about a young person and the skills they have gained in creativity, communication, leadership and art form development. Participants can include their Arts Award activities in their CV when going forward for opportunities for training and employment as one of their achievements, demonstrating their ability to work alongside others towards achieving shared aims.



RAW MOSSLEY COMMUNITY ARTS CLUB 'INFO GRAPHIC'



The Value of Creative Expression

The opportunity to participate in enjoyable and inspirational activities.

Some participants do not have opportunity for creative activity other than the RAW Community Arts Club they attend.



Promoting mutual understanding and respect

Group creative expression through music and song whilst learning British Sign Language. Fun to learn and use.

Knowing how to use sign language broadens personal horizons and our ability to understand, cooperate with and respect difference in others.



Inclusivity disuades from social isolation

Participants gain a sense of belonging to a community, make new friends and benefit from enhanced and meaningful relationships.



Accredited activity

RAW participants under 25 yrs receive the Arts Award 'Discover' certificate of achievement. This acknowledges their efforts and attainment in creativity.

In the long term, RAW will impact learning and skills in support of Arts Award Qualifications, as regulated by Ofqual.



Civic engagement

Real Arts Workshops delivered from Mattesley Court encourage civic engagement.

In collaboration with other organisations, participants engage with local community events and to the good of the wider community.

Overall we are pleased with participants' level of engagement. Attendance to weekly classes has progressively grown and retention is high.

The group encompasses a wide age range. We see children from age 5yrs to adults age 92yrs creating alongside each other.

We originally agreed Mossley Community Arts Club would be a community facility for people aged over 12 yrs. We found limiting the age range inappropriate to need and therefore welcome young children when accompanied by their primary adult.

There are times when the group is looked towards for providing respite care which, at this time, we do not have the resources for. This is something we will consider as we progress and meet with community need, with the engagement of volunteers being an option.

The benefits felt to participants as a consequence of attending weekly RAW classes are recognisably considerable.

As tutors we see people progress in their ability to support each other's creative endeavours. We acknowledge personal growth, improved creative skills and ability to cooperate and work as a team. Learning British Sign Language is also something some individuals have never touched upon before joining the group. It has enhanced people's understanding and equipped them with the means of communicating while accepting and respecting difference in others.



In recognizing the value RAW activities at Mossley creates: significantly three participants attend as a family in support of their little girl who communicates with sign language due to congenital hearing loss.

The child's mother fed back during conversation that the weekly group was the only one in the area which was inclusive and supported them as a family challenged by sensory deprivation.

Prior to Mossley Art and Crafts delivery on Tuesday evenings they struggled to find any worthwhile activity to support their needs.

We see the level of enjoyment in the activities and the ways they inspire participants creative expression and ideas. We see new relationships being formed and increased confidence in people's artistic abilities.

The regularity of the group has promoted a sense of community, belonging and a sense of pride in the group's achievements.



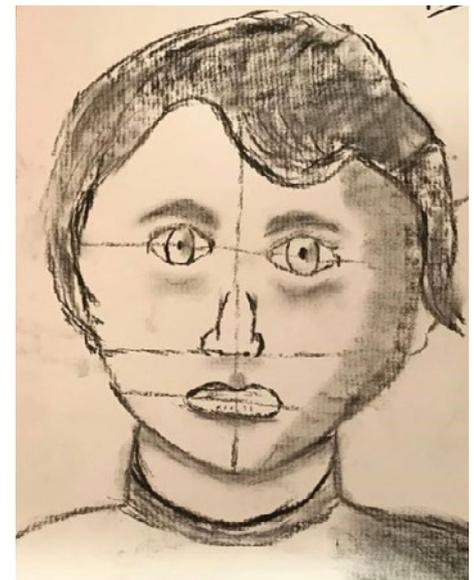
Gary O'Dowd delivering 'Regional Sign Language' training with Deaf visiting tutors from Newcastle Upon Tyne

Identifiable social outcomes are related to the value of people coming together in shared social experience such as **RAW Community Arts Club** are:

- Having fun;
- Making new friends;
- Learning new things;
- Sharing news and stories;
- Cooperating with people from differing age groups;
- Learning about other cultures;
- Being inclusive (and included) in social worthwhile activity;
- Form identity in relation to others.



Some of the young people receiving their Arts Award certificates from RAW's Gary O'Dowd



Feedback and Outcomes:

- Participants recognize RAW activities are 'Enjoyable';
- Participants recognize they are 'Inspired' to be creative;
- All participants would 'recommend RAW' to others;
- All participants say the workshops 'meet with expectations' and that there are 'positive outcomes felt'

Examples of Direct Feedback

APRIL AND JUNE 2019

"I really enjoyed this event. The people who put the event on were great and I would easily come again"

Male 43yrs

"Coming to R.A.W has given me the chance to learn new crafts that I would not normally do at home"

Female 46yrs

"Love it... Fantastic!"

Female 46yrs

"I like the fact all ages could attend instead of certain ages"

Female 11yrs

"Really enjoyed the mix of art, music and sign-language. It is a great way to bond with my 3 girls, thank you"

Female 32yrs

"I love learning new craft. I love learning how to paint and the techniques that are involved"

Female 46yrs

"Alex and Gary are fantastic at what they do. We could not have got through the 60th anniversary event without them and Gemma. Bring on the next one"

Female 48yrs

"I liked gluing the handprints on to the bus and learning the sign language"

Female 6yrs

"All are well explained and well led activities"

Female 47yrs

"British sign language is a big part of my life, so I enjoy anything to do with that. Everything else I enjoyed as it is nice to learn new things. The group is class! And is well presented by both Alex and Gary"

Male 35yrs

I would not change anything. Everything is great.

I'd love to do more art work for myself and not just for the community

"I would like to take part in more Big Local events. I would like to help with projects for local schools and old peoples homes ect. I would like to learn new arts and crafts skills"

I enjoyed the activities when the children could get involved and be occupied

I would like to do more BSL based activities. I would also like to redo some of the past activities. And try some new things. Definitely I would like to do more felting.

BSL is a big part of my life, so I enjoy anything to do with that. Everything else I enjoyed as it is nice to learn new things. The group is class is well presented to the group by both Alex and Gary.

I love learning new craft. I love learning how to paint and the techniques that are involved.

NOV 2019

Conclusion

Real Arts Workshops and **Mossley Big Local** are creating social value by delivering activities which build a resilient and confident community and make the surrounding area a good place to live.

We would like to continue delivering after April 2020 and will use the feedback already gathered from the participants and continue to consult on their desires and needs for the activities we offer.

We would like to attract more participants from the community and see more people benefiting from participating in creative worthwhile activity. We would liaise with One Walsall about capacity building to enable this. We would like to see our young people progressing with the Ofqual regulated Arts Award Explore, and support them in meeting with their individual potential.



Landscape painting by 14 y/o, after taking photographs on a field trip with Real Arts Workshops.



A group of residents from Mattesley Court aged 86 to 92, working alongside young members of RAW Community Arts Club



RAW Community Arts Club performing 'Song For Mossley' in sign language for residents of Mattesley Court



Beautiful painting by an 86 y/o resident of Mattesley Court. The artist has dementia and recalled studying art at Birmingham School of Art when they were very young.



One of the pieces made by the group, with visiting tutor and renowned sculptor Zbigniew Rucek (just about visible in the background)



Calendars made by hand by the group, for sale at Christmas Fayre 2019

Benefits of the Arts on Communities and Individuals

Children and Young People

The 'RAW 7'

1. Being excited, inspired and engaged
2. Trying something new
3. Having fun whilst learning
4. Enabling personal expression
5. Young people having ownership
6. Developing confidence
7. Creating positive energy and enthusiasm

Adult Groups

Improved mental and physical wellbeing

Inclusion of Marginalised People

- No longer left behind
- Feeling included
- Feeling proud of themselves
- Feeling listened to
- Rehabilitation
- Giving Hope
- Relaxation and wellbeing

When asked if they want RAW to continue delivering sessions after April 2020, 100% of respondents replied:

YES

Thank you for reading.

You can contact Alex Vann and Gary O'Dowd at Real Arts Workshops

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