



The Social Hub Community Arts Project



In January 2016, we embarked on a 5 week arts project funded by the Community Arts Fund based at The Shire Hall Art Gallery. With a wealth and knowledge in participatory arts, Helen Wilson lead the project engaging all members in both the design and execution of a community mural, which the Social Hub would transfer to a community banner funded by a bursary from VAST in order to promote both the art side of the service as well as the service as a whole at future networking events.

The aims of the project were: 1) To promote the new Create and Talk art group set up by The Social Hub; 2) To get people involved in the cultural activity of art with the aim of improving their socio-emotional health and wellbeing.

We had 15 members, 4 volunteers and 3 staff who attended the project, 5 residents from Cannock and 10 from Stafford. All members admitted they struggled in social situations prior to the project and this was due to a range of issues such as mental distress, learning difficulties and brain injury. The group bonded as the weeks progressed and the main feedback was that they enjoyed working as a group and that the project helped to open doors to friendships, a better social life and improved mental health and wellbeing.

Below are members' comments with photo's of the project as it progressed.

"I experience suicidal thoughts, the group gave me an avenue to express myself, to learn different things, broaden my mind about crafts and my social life, which really helped."

"I found mixing in a group helpful, because I can be quite a "loner"."

"I liked the fact that when things got tough with my social anxiety I was encouraged to challenge myself and stay in the group and this helped my confidence."

