



THE BRIDGE COLLECTIVE C.I.C. ANNUAL REPORT
APRIL 2012 TO MARCH 2013

Activities and Events at the Bridge

- DSEN (Devon Spiritual Emergence Network) became the Sharing Circle and part of the Greenwood Project.
- Greenwood day March 2012.
- Beyond Belief day October 2012.
- Photovoice workshops with Clive
- Experiential drama therapy student placement with Benjamin Cogoi 4 weeks in March
- Citizens Advice Bureau worker available every Thursday until October 2012.

Bridge Collective support, social and activity groups and projects:

Discussion group

Social Anxiety Group

Open Day

Rainbow mind

Devon Spiritual Emergence Network

Underground Sound

Greenwood Project

Women's Art group

Experts by Experience

Wholefoods

Bridge Collective organisational groups:

Members

Directors meetings

Communications team

Health and Safety team

Complaints team

Company secretary team

Fundraising team

People at the Bridge

Members

Total members March 31st 2011: 28

Total members March 31st 2012: 24

Estimated number of people involved in the Bridge groups and activities

(Not including recipients of Experts by Experience training) between 100 and 200.

Directors

Directors on March 31st 2012: Andrew Barkla, Bridie Kelly, Bev Slade, Stuart Plant, Ji Vockings, Rick Wolkers, Mike Rabjohns

Director resignation 18.07.12 Ji Vockings

Directors on March 31st 2013: Andrew Barkla, Bridie Kelly, Bev Slade, Stuart Plant, Rick Wolkers, Mike Rabjohns

Keyholders: We have a very part time staff and people doing activities voluntarily: for the Bridge to open, there needs to be a keyholder at each event/activity.

Neil, Lena, Sarah, Bev, Andrew, Rich, Nicola, David, Fleur, Alex, Mike.

Paid Employees: Project facilitators

Community Development

Andrew Barkla: 4.5 hrs/pw

Bev Slade: 12.5 hrs/pw

Sarah Everson: 6 hrs/pw

Women's Art Group

Fleur Hardman: 2 hrs/pw

Underground Sound – Young Person's Music Project

David Lindsay: 6 hrs/pw

Alex Barton: 6 hrs/pw

Finance

Sarah Everson: 12 hrs/pw

The Greenwood Project

Andrew Barkla: 9 hrs/pw

Bev Slade: 9 hrs/pw

Experts by Experience – Project Development

Nicola: 5 hrs/pw

Worker

Experts by Experience – Facilitators and Trainers

Nicola, Anna, Ali, Sarah: 0 hours contracts

Cleaning

Nicola: 1 hr/pw

Safeguarding

Nicola: 1 hr/pw

Volunteers:

Wholefood
Rainbowmind
Social Anxiety Group
Discussion Group
Website maintenance - updating calendar
Cleaning
Experts by Experience

Mike
Lena
Neil
Nicola
Marcus
Mike and Collective
Volunteer trainers

Specific Designated Teams:

Health and Safety team:
Complaints team:

Safeguarding team - Safeguarding Officer:
Recruitment panel members
Recruitment team
Plus volunteers

Andrew Plus volunteers
Andrew and Sarah Plus volunteers
Nicola and Bridie
Nicola

Bev, Sarah, David, Rich, Nicola

Help we've received

- Members sharing allotment produce
- Potatoes from Mike - July 2012
- Tamasin Knight hosted a discussion at the Beyond Belief day.
- Michelle from the Zebra collective facilitating monthly solution focused supervision group
- Spacex gallery, workshop and display space for the Beyond Belief day - Oct 2012
- Exeter Spring - on the line local newsletter for matter of community interest – May 2012.
- Harry from the Citizens Advice Bureau
- Help from Judy Scott consultancy re: benefits employment and involvement work
- A boat appeared in the Spacex Gallery on the beyond belief day! Thank you Rob
- AME solutions IT support and training - Sept 2012
- Sue Linsley championing our Experts by Experience Lived Experience Module work - big thank you Sue.
- Adam's dad Bee talk.
- Ed and Charlotte support facilitating Job Centre Plus sessions May 2012
- Express and Echo - August 2012
- Caroline from PA Network support for Beyond Belief Day
- Rob playing guitar and leading campfire singing.
- Alex joined Underground Sound
- Lula from Spacex input into Women's Art Group sessions

Consultation and communication within the Bridge

- Supervision
- 365 thingy (virtual online safety)

- Developing friendships

Networking and communication outside the Bridge

- Express and Echo article August 2012
- From Tyme to Heal
- Bridge participating in DRRIG Day (Devon Recovery and Research Innovation Group) Friends along the way presentation Feb 2012
- Attended Open Dialogue Film June 2012
- Help from Charlotte Hubbard and Ed Coutts from be Involved Devon – with people being supported to do involvement work.
- Women's Art Group sessions in partnership with Spacex and Uneath Pottery
- Bridge Collective appearance in Spacex Gallery brochure
- Exeter Spring online local newsletter for matters of community interest – the Bridge collective activities advertised May 2012

Outcomes and achievements for the company

- Successful application to Hearing Voices Resource pack fund from Voices Cmyru ☺
- Successful fundraising bid! A new printer and years supply of ink!
- Business cards
- The Bridge Collective has worked in partnership with Spacex and Uneath Pottery Studio for the Women's Art Group and Women's Network. Thanks Fleur and Lula.
- May 2012 Donations for room use mindfulness group.
- Project posters and flyers
- Andrew and Nicola got basic Health and Safety qualification.

- Bridge Collective 6 years old on April 3rd 2013
- Help to other organisations with setting up voices group – visit by occupational therapist and assistant trainee sharing resources and discussion – making links.
- Membership pack and posters done
- We've started going to conferences
- Mindfulness group from university using Crows Nest.
- Aaron Goodwin Taiji at the Bridge - donations for room use.
- Taiji training in crows nest.

Outcomes and achievements in groups

- Discussion topics this year:
 - Greed
 - Death and Loss
 - Imagination
 - Money
 - Me and the Natural environment
 - The Art of Living
 - Hearing Voices
 - Annoyance
 - Happiness
 - Animals
- Hearing great jamming sessions keyboards, guitar, drums at Underground Sound
- Lockbar camp August 2012 -recorder playing, making paths, sunlight through the trees
- Women's Art Group Helped me to re-engage with my creativity!!!

- May 2012 Experts by Experience work with Job centre plus joint support to sessions with Ed and Charlotte Be Involved Devon.
- CD by Underground Sound
- **New Experts by Experience work in 2012:**
- Diverse Communities Session 4/11/12
- With 2nd year Clinical Psychology Trainees at Exeter University Requested by Lynn Mccelland Clinical Psychologist

Experts by Experience April 2012 – March 2013

People have spoken about: what's happened and what's helped, isolation, belonging, building community, self harm, Tourettes, WRAP plans (wellness recovery action plans), trust, meditation, faith, hearing voices, seeing visions, record keeping, mood swings, what's it like having a diagnosis of personality disorder

Team work

4 new people have joined Experts by Experience

1 new person facilitating for the first time this year

2 new people have joined the Bridge Collective as employees and are set up to receive payment for their Experts by Experience work

Approximately 602 voluntary Experts by Experience hours have been done this year

Members of Experts by Experience and the Bridge Collective have shared their music, film, sound and art for Experts by Experience training.

New ideas for teaching exercises have been introduced and shared by members.

November 2012 – Andrew stepped back from regular Experts by Experience involvement. Enormous thank you to Andrew for being part of Experts by Experience training for 12 years. Trainers have introduced new teaching exercises, which we are using regularly
We've delivered: 22 training sessions
We've spoken to approximately 320 trainee health professionals: trainee doctors, psychologists and student nurses.
Training invoices all up to date! Thank you Sarah.
Experts by Experience training has brought approximately £4,829 into the Bridge this year. Big thank you to all.

Organizations we've done training with:

Exeter Job Centre Plus
Plymouth University School of Nursing
Plymouth University School of Psychology
Exeter University School of Psychology
Peninsula College of Medicine and Dentistry
Exeter Psychiatric Liaison team

New work and workshops:

Job Centre plus sessions: speaking to job centre plus advisors about personal experience of mental health, work and using the job centre
New workshop: Isolation and Belonging as part of a series of sessions on 'Diverse Communities'
New work with psychology students agreed

Links with other groups and organizations:

Attended Open Dialogue film showing at Wonford House Hospital – June 2012

Links made with a member of Clarity –North Devon organization

Links made with Exeter Prison occupational therapy

Ed Coutts and Charlotte Hubbard from Be Involved Devon – support to facilitating sessions and letting us know about opportunities

Experts by Experience members have been involved with external training:

What's it like to have a diagnosis of personality disorder? Video training work.

Help from Judy Scott Consultancy - independent consultancy for benefits, employment and involvement work.

Some of the feedback from this year:

Lots of good debriefs and learning from each other

Helpful checklist for giving feedback to facilitators

Supporting each other as a team

Heart – showing things that are me.

The Experts by Experience boat keeps bobbing along.

The Experts by Experience project has been of great importance to me allowing me to gain a greater understanding of the shared experience of mental illness and treatment. By sharing my experiences I have increased awareness of patient's perspectives with future professionals. This has allowed me some closure on previous bad treatment at the hands of professionals and greatly reduced my fear of it happening in the future.

Practical Changes:

Change of monthly meeting to first Thursday of the month, 12-2pm

Ideas and hopes for the future:

Making videos, animation

One day a month at the Bridge Collective to having a looking out focus

More opportunities to take part in training

Citizens Advice Bureau Outreach Project at the Bridge Collective:

- taken from reports written by Harry Cypress and Steve Barriball from Exeter CAB

From May to July 2012

Background

As the project moved into its final quarter the numbers using the service continued to grow with an added interest in welfare benefits, especially Disability Living Allowance. However, the key interests focused more on those areas of advice relating to housing, personal and financial matters.

Project Progress

Since commencement of the project there have been 32 outreach sessions and a total of some 70 client contacts. In addition, there has been indirect contact by telephone and e-mail.

The level of confirmed financial gains from the project increased above £22,400 confirming the

upturn in clients pursuing welfare benefit entitlements.

It is apparent that clients are finding use of the service a more 'friendly' experience and this probably accounts for the level of return visits and an increasing tendency to make informal enquiries. Such queries are always addressed positively and the opportunity taken to explore the background in order to evaluate the possibilities for more positive, helpful advice.

From August to October 2012

The final quarter of the Outreach project continued to reflect an increase in client interest, although a turndown was obvious once the closure of the service was announced.

Project Progress

The project year has provided contact with some 22 clients, all sharing a range of advice needs which has included assistance with welfare benefits, taxation, debt and various personal issues. There has been a total of 43 sessions embracing a total of 96 client contacts. The level of confirmed financial gains from the project has now increased above £45,800 with a number of other outcomes still pending. As explained to our clients, all matters pending can of course, where necessary, be pursued with the aid of CAB advisers based at Wat Tyler House.

As always, it should be stressed that the outcome benefits of the service are not related merely to financial returns but that they embrace issues where clients have sought a reduction in worry, stress and possible confusion, thereby providing some improved 'peace of mind'.

Comments

It has been a pleasure and privilege to maintain the Bridge Outreach project. Harry has always found, despite their perhaps inevitable uncertainties, that clients welcome the service and recognise the value of the personal, one to one support and back-up that can be provided.

The Bridge Centre throughout has provided good facilities and the staff have done everything possible to smooth the workings of the service. Sincere thanks are offered and it is hoped that they too recognise the benefits that the project has provided.

Finally, it should be recorded that all data and information relating to our clients has been securely archived and will be retained at Wat Tyler House for any future possible needs.

Photovoice Workshops:

Feedback from the sessions has been almost uniformly positive. Participants have responded to the relaxed and friendly atmosphere with enthusiasm and openness, which enabled them to develop their confidence without being overwhelmed by the technical side of the workshop. A few participants reported initial apprehension and lack of confidence regarding their own technological literacy but even those who had difficulty with the computers enjoyed participating and learning and had nothing but praise for the workshop facilitator. Overall, participants reported that they found the workshop “stimulating”, “fun”, and “thought-provoking”, and were interested in how one photograph could produce completely different reactions from their own in other participants.

Comments:

"Really good fun to look at and explore photographs and ideas"

"Sessions are worthwhile and made you think."

"The workshops were instructive, stimulating and thought provoking"

"Learning how to put a photo-story together"

"I struggled a bit with some of the computer technical stuff but really enjoyed learning."

"Mutually supporting atmosphere helping our creativity."

"The tutor was approachable and very enthusiastic, which helped me to feel relaxed and inspired!"

"Sessions generated enthusiasm and it felt that everyone was respected and equal."

Outcomes and achievements for people at the Bridge Collective

Member completing:

Exeter CVS Finance and the budget Management course

Community and Events short course in Bristol

Photography exhibited on the internet

Lots of lovely photos from Greenwood day and Bridge Beyond Belief Day

Andrew reduced Com and Dev hours (community and development)

Challenges we have faced

Learning to embrace messiness.

Finding structures that can facilitate and value flexibility, room for not getting things right every time, for playing, and sometimes abandoning original ideas and finding something else has been created that we didn't expect while retaining accountability and good communication.

Challenges and hopes for the future

Developing strong accessible policies that are a true reflection of what is important for the community and how its affairs are managed.

More communication between groups.

Developing our website, researching and possibly applying a new platform that is easier to maintain.

Using social media and how that can work collectively.

Funding bids

Addressing supervision needs.

Fortifying links and developing relationships with other organisations.

Making community meetings fun.

Staying true to ourselves both as individuals and as a collective.

Learning to embrace messiness.

Finding structures that can facilitate and value flexibility, room for not getting things right every time, for playing, and sometimes abandoning original ideas and finding something else has been created that we didn't expect while retaining accountability and good communication.

Trevaluations and other Feedback

Things I will take with me

“Being by the wood fire with friends.”

“Friends.”

“Trying out things I wouldn't do else where like making things on the forge. ”

“Singing in a group by the fire.”

“Gradually getting a bit better at using tools. ”

How do you know there is a need for this project?

“Some people come to this project who don’t like indoor activities, and sometimes it isn’t easy to find places and groups that are so welcoming and let you do things in your own way, so this is very important to them and me.”

“It’s a time to remember, mark and celebrate being part of nature.”

What does being here now do for you?

“Brings peacefulness, companionship and being part of group, place time and doing.”

“Sometimes the pleasure of making something.”

“Sharing making tea and cooking on the fire.”

“Being part, having a part.”

Things I will leave behind

“Gritty bitty washing up water.”

“Used tea bags.”

“Wood shavings.”

“Gone wrong spatulas.”

How does being in this project impact your life?

“I come to Greenwood every two weeks when it’s Escot as part of my work for Mind. It’s a part of my work I enjoy, not too hard for me; I don’t have to plan it! It feels open, freeing and fun; I like

seeing the people who I see there again each time. It feels a good connection that has remained between the Bridge and Mind. I look forward to it.”

Taking part in Experts By Experience

“I have been involved in E by E for 2 years now. It has helped immensely in coming to terms with being bi-Polar.”

“It has forced me to confront the medical establishment that I once worked hard to avoid.”

“It has increased my range of work experience and re-ignited my love of public speaking.”

“In an era of re-evaluating mental illness and the treatment this entails, E by E puts me on the frontiers of breaking down the barriers between patients and professionals. I feel calmer and more in control about future medical treatment.”

“It has allowed me to work in an exceptional environment within the Bridge Collective, thoughtful, understanding and supportive. Qualities I hope are slowly rubbing off on me!”

Feedback to the Bridge Collective Email

“I just wanted to say how great it is to receive valuable and well researched info at the Bridge from Harry the C.A.B. advisor. It is lovely being at the Bridge, in a place I feel comfortable in and it takes away from the stress of the long wait etc at the C.A.B office. Harry is helpful, kind and approachable and fits well with the tone and setting of the Bridge. A big thank you to Harry and all at the Bridge Collective.”

Questions

When did you turn up?

Why?

Why did you keep turning up?

"I first came to the Bridge Collective Summer 2012. I saw the lit candle on the coffee table and thought Wow!! How peaceful. I felt safe, relaxed and totally at home."

"Escot camp September 2012 a real sanctuary, lantern making."

"Bridge Newsletter quotes lift my spirits and humour turn's hard thoughts round."

"Enjoyed looking at bamboo swaying in the breeze and blue skies at DSEN – June at allotment."

