

Well Newcastle Gateshead



Issue 2: April 2019

Welcome to the second edition of the Well Newcastle Gateshead newsletter!

We will be giving you regular updates on Well Newcastle Gateshead, developments in each of our target communities within Newcastle and Gateshead and projects supported by the Arts Fund.

We hope that you find content informative, do let us know your comments and suggestions by emailing vanessa@bluestoneconsortium.org.uk

About Well Newcastle Gateshead

Well Newcastle Gateshead is one of the pathfinders of Well North, a Public Health England funded initiative across ten areas in the North of England to improve the health of the poorest people fastest.

The Well Newcastle Gateshead pathfinder is managed by Blue Stone Consortium, a grouping of over forty voluntary, community and social enterprise organisations in Gateshead and Newcastle.

The Well Newcastle Gateshead Arts Fund was established in late 2017 to support projects and initiatives that improve the health and wellbeing of our communities by using engagement in arts and cultural activities as a catalyst for positive change.

We want to explore how we can use local assets and encourage sustainable relationships between artists, community, voluntary and health organisations to deliver positive health and wellbeing outcomes.

We are focused on four areas within Newcastle and Gateshead. In Felling and Inner West Newcastle, we are focusing on working with children aged 2-7 and their families with the aim of improving school readiness.

In Byker and Chopwell, we are working to tackle social isolation, mental health and low self-esteem in adults.

More information can be found at:

<https://bluestoneconsortium.org.uk/our-work/well-newcastle-gateshead/>

The Well Newcastle Gateshead Arts Fund

The Well Newcastle Gateshead Arts Fund has supported **15 projects** since its establishment, pledging a total of **£127,129** - £46,937 in the inner west of Newcastle, £47,307 in Byker and £22,885 in Chopwell and £10,000 in Felling. An amazing result so far!

Funded projects have secured a total of **£189,472** in partnership funding and in-kind contributions, further enabling their work and unlocking more investment in our target areas.

Overall, our projects are benefitting **3,105** people and are helping to make our communities vibrant, connected and healthy places to live.

Newly Funded Projects

The Arts Fund has supported 4 more projects in all of our target communities since February 2019.

We'd like to introduce you to them below.

Byker



Byker Community Association/Byker Community Centre

Byker Community Association are a charity who run Byker Community Centre, which provides a space for the local community to attend and run activities and events. The association implement community projects including art sessions, food projects and educational and social events.

They are providing relaxed and inclusive arts sessions to Byker residents, targeting unemployed men with varying physical and emotional health problems and refugees and adults who have little education and no financial means of attending arts and cultural activities.

A freshly cooked lunch is provided after each session, with in-kind support from ASDA Byker and local partners. The sessions will run for 1 year and benefit around **40 residents**.

Inner West Newcastle



Scotswood Natural Community Garden

Scotswood Natural Community Garden is a community organisation based in the heart of Scotswood. They offer a range of activities and services to improve the health and wellbeing of people in the area, providing safe green spaces for families to use.

They will deliver an environmental arts project for under 5s and their families outdoors in their beautiful garden, working in partnership with a Community Artist and Surestart.

Children will work on exciting, termly creative projects using materials from the garden as inspiration and will interpret the garden through their eyes. They will produce a book and postcards and these will be displayed at a large celebration event.

Although the project is open to all, the organisation is targeting under represented BME families in Scotswood, Benwell and Elswick through their existing partnership with the West End Refugee Service. **70 people** will take part in this project.

Chopwell



Digital Voice for Communities are a community interest company who offer opportunities for people of all ages and abilities to use digital activities and skills to improve their lives.

They are working with a group of older people, local parents and a combined inter-generational group to create a digital resource to celebrate the history of Chopwell based on old photos they have collected about the village.

The project will culminate in an exhibition of the groups' work during the summer. The videos created will be permanently available on a YouTube channel and will be disseminated in local Facebook groups.

Participants will be signposted to courses run by Gateshead Council if they want to further enhance the skills learned. At least **30 people** will take part in the project.



Jam Jar Group

Jam Jar Group is running introduction to art class led by Will Carter, a Chopwell resident, to teach art and design skills and develop creativity. The classes aim to improve confidence, communication and guide participants on new and existing skills.

The teaching will culminate in the creation of a "flash" exhibition within the community where participants will sell their work.

Proceeds from sales will enable the development of future creative activities. **15 local people** will benefit from the classes.

Felling



Creativity Works

Creativity Works are facilitating creative activities and storytelling sessions for children aged 2 to 4 and their siblings with the help of local artists.

Activities are taking place at Edberts House, Pattinsons House, Bede Community Primary School and St. Wilfrids Primary School. They include the creation of story sacks for nursery groups, using interactive objects to stimulate narratives and encourage motor skills.

The children will also co-create ceramic murals at the local schools featuring images of plants and natural life and celebrating their diverse cultural backgrounds (many of the children come from Saudi Arabia, Africa and Syria).

It is estimated that **370 people** will take part in activities.

This is our first funded project in Felling, and we hope to support more projects for children in the area in the future.

Project Updates

Byker

Company of Others

Company of Others

Rehearsals are underway for Company of Others' Crackle.Dust production at Byker Community Centre. We had the opportunity to visit the project during March to see participants prepare performance pieces based on their personal experiences of endings.

The production will tour venues throughout the North East, culminating with a performance at Byker Community Centre on 4 May 2019. To book tickets, please visit:

<https://www.companyofothers.org.uk/crackle-dust-2019/>



Skimstone Arts St Michael's Church/Skimstone Arts

Skimstone Arts have been working with Byker residents at St Michael's Café offering a series of creative tasters and sessions, including singing and songwriting.

During the first week of the project, Marie (pictured below), worked with Skimstone Arts to create a reggae song with the chorus:

*I'm happy to live next to anyone
Doesn't matter what race, religion,
Everybody's just the same
'Cos everyone's just human.'*

The lyrics came from Marie's experience of living with other residents who displayed prejudiced behaviour and how this made her feel sad. Marie will take part in more sessions to create more verses for her song.

Skimstone Arts have made key contacts with people and organisations in the local community. They aim to recruit more people to take part in activities and future community events showcasing the skills learned.



Northern Stage are planning to cast 7 people in performance roles at equity rates, creating local jobs.

The "I Have Met the Enemy" performance will take place in October 2019 at Byker Community Centre.

Chopwell

Quick Crafters

The Quick Crafters have started production of the wall hanging celebrating the landmarks and history of Chopwell. They been dyeing fabrics and needle felting, creating the sections that will form part of the piece.

They have also been talking to Donna Cheshire, the artist assisting them with the work, about Chopwell's streets and places that will be featured in the artwork.

The group produced a poster to advertise the project and their work at local community venues and have gained 2 new members. The wall hanging will be displayed at Chopwell Community Centre in September 2019.



Inner West Newcastle

Curious Beasts

The Curious Beasts project have delivered puppetry sessions to 327 children from years 2, 3 and 4 in 8 schools. 141 of these children have been identified as requiring further intervention and practitioners are working with 5 families to provide support linked to the intervention work.

The data collected to date shows that the social and emotional wellbeing of children undergoing intervention has improved significantly as a result of the programme.

One parent said she had noticed how her son was more able to share his emotions. His normal behaviour would be to go into a "huff" and instead he said: *"it's ok mum I just needed time to feel disappointed."*

North East Wellbeing, who are running the project, expect to deliver puppetry workshops to 1,020 children per year and will continue to expand the project to other schools in the west of Newcastle.

Exploring feelings and emotions through puppetry

The need – We are all facing a profound challenge to meet the emotional health needs of children. This not only affects children's wellbeing but their ability to learn and their attainment at school. Many schools find that it is the quieter and less expressive children who are at greatest risk of being overlooked.

Our response – our aims

In response to this challenge here at North East Wellbeing we have initiated a partnership to use the creative and expressive potential of puppets to open-up this world of feelings and emotions. We have called our programme Curious Beasts.

Our aim is to help children to become more self-aware and more confident in themselves and as a result to become more successful learners.

The benefits and impact

The programme is proving to be effective and our approach allows us to measure the impact of Curious Beasts and to provide specific outcomes data to schools.



Curious Beasts – the four stages of our programme



Well North Celebration Event

A celebration event was held for all 10 Well North Pathfinders at Norton Priory in March to showcase the impact of programme over the last 4 years and to introduce Well North's legacy vehicle, Well North Enterprises.

Well North Enterprises will offer expertise in enterprise, innovation, arts, creativity and leadership development to organisations across the UK and internationally.

Lord Andrew Mawson, Executive Chairman of Well North and Duncan Selbie, Chief Executive of Public Health England (pictured below), spoke about the achievements of each Pathfinder and the difference they have made to the health and wellbeing of people in their local communities.

The event featured a short film which illustrated each Pathfinder's successes. We were very proud to appear in the film, a copy of which can be found at: <http://www.wellnorth.co.uk/>

Matt Worden, Well North's resident artist, was commissioned to create sketches for each Pathfinder highlighting their stories and projects. A picture of our sketch can also be seen below, and a copy of it is in proud display in our office!

Well North have published a report detailing the work and legacy of the Pathfinders. You can read it here:

<https://bluestoneconsortium.org.uk/2019/04/05/well-north-celebration-event-and-legacy-report/>

The Well Newcastle Gateshead project and Arts Fund will continue until 2020/2021, with a view to extending the programme beyond this date dependent on funding.



Digital Storytelling

Our Digital Storytelling online resource is underway, and our videographer has recorded the first part of the instructional video.

We will share the resource with our projects once it has been completed, so they can create and share their digital stories. We will also be creating a Well Newcastle Gateshead Facebook page and a Facebook group for projects to share their digital stories and accomplishments with us and each other.

Community Conversations

Byker Community Conversation Sketch

In our Community Conversation at Byker Fire Station last November, artist Michael Robert Duckett drew a series of sketches of the event. One of them is pictured below, and we think it really captures the collaborative spirit of the day!



University of Manchester Evaluation Team

We are working with the University of Manchester's Evaluation Team, who are evaluating our activities and helping some of our projects with their evaluation plans. They attended our last Community Conversation at Chopwell Methodist Church in March and produced a report capturing people's experience of the day. One of the attendees said:

"I was most inspired by the different ideas that people had. It's great to hear people talking about big art and community projects and taking over spaces to deliver arts activities."

We are thrilled that our Community Conversations are generating great ideas for projects to benefit local communities. The Evaluation Team will be present at our next Community Conversation and will be interviewing attendees to gain feedback and to help us improve our events in the future.

Next Community Conversation

Our next Community Conversation will be in Felling on **Friday 26 April 2019, from 1:00pm to 2:30pm**, in the Community Room at Edberts House, 17-19 St Edmunds Drive, Gateshead, NE10 9AE. If you would like to attend, please email vanessa@bluestoneconsortium.org.uk. We hope to see you there!