



## histories

### **Participant Feedback.**

This is a complete transcript of the feedback that we received on the event. There have been occasional contractions, but nothing has been left out. Participants are asked to rate the event in terms of whether it was; *relevant, helpful, and stimulating*, and asked *what was most liked or useful? What will they, take away and use?, What was most disliked or least useful? What could be better, along with any further comments.*

As can be seen, this is some of the most overwhelmingly positive feedback we have ever had! Such problems as there were are focused on practicalities (like bigger coffee cups: quite agree), and a few people who struggled with the very emotional nature of some of the presentations.

### **Relevant:**

Yes (often qualified with 'very', 'extremely' etc.: 17 responses)

Yes, very, the choice of speaker's stories resonated with the theme.

Found Neil Springham's talk relevant and helpful.

Very relevant to the arts areas I work in.

Yes. At this point particularly as an arts project working towards an exhibition of work produced by our client group, and we had thought of including our work with theirs.

Yes. Connecting with the art therapy scene again. Interesting to bring in artists and people with life experiences to share.

Boy, what a great day!

Of course! Mostly.

Yes: the concepts, themes, visual material

Definitely to me as a therapist and as a human being!

Yes. I found the speakers very good, relevant and related back to the theme of histories

Very helpful and interesting in today's climate in the NHS as well as society at large.

In a way I hadn't expected: to use film/ animation as part of an ongoing process/dialogue.

Probably Neil's talk was most relevant.

Some of it very, some of it less so, but valuable for being a view into a different area.

Yes very relevant: joining up

Really interesting. the last essay I wrote I discovered an article by Neil Springham wrote about the project at the Tate: it really brought it to life, and it was great to hear him talk.

Yes Neil's most relevant to my work: others very interesting.

Yes, found all the presentations very inspiring and thought provoking.

Much of it

Yes: very inspirational and moving.

Yes, because it validates art therapy, and it has sown lots of seeds and thoughts about taking art therapy out of the room. All of it!

Completely relevant

As I am in the field of 'hearing' stories, I found this conference gave me the opportunity to reflect on the power of story telling in the broad context.

Highly relevant for clinical thinking with our clients and in fact when trying to deal with extremely difficult people and situations.

Yes, in many ways..

Tate and carers.

### **Helpful?**

Yes. (Often qualified with 'definitely', 'extremely' etc.: 14 responses)

Lots of food for thought and connections with others

Very much: enjoyed the conversations with other delegates. And the mystery shopper summary. And Malcolm's summaries/articulations of themes etc. at the beginning middle and end of the day: Very containing-helped with overview of day.

Yes. Supportive, sharing ideas and energy.

Yes. Connected with people who might...

Yes: stimulating and varied.

For re-focussing and reflecting on art therapy practice in its broadest sense.

Really helpful to get feedback on the film work I shared: to know that I make work for the right reasons.

Idea of artefacts: the function and purpose/ role of product.

Yes: has sparked off a lot in my mind and resonated all over the place.

Made some connections: literally with people, and with myself.

Very helpful personally.

Yes, specially meeting other people.

Yes, got me thinking deeply about the artefact not as something dry and dusty but as powerful receptacle for living history.

Extremely. Well placed to allow for thinking about the presentations.

Karen's was very helpful in considering my own art practice. Group sing song prepared way for an intense afternoon after lunch.

Fabulously inspiring

Very helpful: I was really impressed with Karen's work and Camilla's talk. Incredibly moving and was very emotional listening to it.

Encouraging: Neil's talk: learnt a lot.

Yes: both personally and professionally.

Yes. Lots of different views of the same tree.

Certainly enlarged my vocabulary and 'frames' for sessions

Some of it.

Yes, very. Refreshing to meet like minded people.

Reassuring and inspiring. I feel I can go to local councillors now!

Reminder of the histories of all of us individually and collectively.

Understanding more.

Inspiring: also networking and circulating.

Neil Springham: want to do this with a museum near me. Having space between presentations really useful.

Information on other participants really helpful.

Singing was wonderful and uplifting: interesting to know more about Exeter's history.

**Stimulating.**

Yes. (qualified with 'very', 'incredibly' etc.: 11 responses)

Each speaker was stimulating in their own way: great variety!

All stimulating: particularly in an emotional sense.

Very, and inspiring too.

All very powerful presentations. Will definitely need more time to reflect.

Thinking about alternative approaches, ways of working. Enjoyed the Chair's 'pepperings' and metaphors.

Liked the connection of presenters by theme/ undercurrent.

Yes, very. Helped me remember the important bits about who I am, what I do.

Yes: thought the singing was great.

Very: exhausting too. Gripping, engaging. Finding my vocal cords was great as well.

I enjoyed meeting other people and used coffee breaks and lunch

Definitely. The singing helped after lunch.

Very inspiring, specially Camilla's talk.

Yes, very interesting. Karen inspired a lot!

Yes, specially singing after lunch. Other sessions were perhaps more thought provoking rather than stimulating.

Very moving and emotionally draining but very stimulating.

On many levels (though would have been great if seats could have stimulated numb bums!)

Yes, very varied presentations, specially Karen Brett and Camilla Carr. Thank you for a lovely lunch, and the breaks were helpful too.

Very *inspiring*, listening to the talks and talking to delegates. I feel stirred up again.

Very: gives one the strength to strive on.

Yes, often moving.

Emotionally, how! Found 'the therapeutic Kidnap' exceptionally moving and useful. The usefulness of witnessing, and being a witness here today.

Karen Brett and Camilla Carr: very moving and inspiring.

Yes in the way it has woken or refreshed the thinking beyond what is on the outside.

A fantastic range of experiences and backgrounds of speakers and talks.

Yes, a great mixture: loved the singing!

Very stimulating and thought provoking.

Singing, hostage taking, film- memory.

**Liked/ fund most useful.**

Enjoyed the theme, and the Library of Dust pictures.

Everything: it was a very rich and emotional day.

Neil's talk. The company. Really liked being in the centre of the city, and Malcolm's putting in context about the history of Exeter. A treat (be in a historic building also)

Most useful perhaps Neil's. I am completely satiated this point.

Neil's' agile mind and his contributions to art therapy and the art world.

Looking at paintings. A fascinating talk from Neil. Thoughts on looking and then doing.

Opportunity to participate in 'the hubbub'. Networking and sharing experiences with colleagues.

Brett's work: simplicity but complexity of material: opportunity to tell the story of our experience.

Ideas about stories and history and a slightly different way of thinking about this. Hopefully I can translate this into my teaching and clinical practice and my personal and professional narratives.

Kern Brett's films, Neil's experiment and Camilla story.

Neil's presentation particularly. Connections with some work we do with 'survivors' and service users (hate this term) feedback groups.

Hard to say what most useful, but Camilla presentation was the most thought provoking.

Loved and appreciated the singing surprise. Neil's talk was specially useful as I missed the Tate day.

Film making and photography session.

All seems part of a whole: can't pick it apart.

Hearing people's stories about the various ways we can use art and artefacts in our work and in our lives.

Camilla was a fantastically engaging speaker with a wonderful moving story. Karen Brett's work was really interesting: I was able to draw parallels in art work interests. Neil: very informative and relevant. Loved the group singsong too!

Very interested in Neil Springham, very stimulating, and very moved by Camilla.

Variety: singing!

It was good to hear other professionals talk: I was expecting all art therapists, so it was inspirational to hear thought provoking views and ideas from others from all walks of life.

The topic; history. Linking of presentations with snippets of information. Singing was great! Neil especially useful.

It was all powerful, each session had its own unique strength. The dementia films were extremely moving, specially Eric's story.

Karen's' work, but also the emotional impact of all the mediums talked about today.

Different ways to apply creative skills. Enjoyed Malcolm Learmonth's chairing of the day.

Neil's session as very helpful to define and capture whilst also expanding my art therapy practice. Malcolm's in between joiners and quirky observations reassure me that humour and that odd perspective is essential.

As I often work with parents using art for social and emotional learning together with their children, the expression 'you are giving them a voice' when talking about and sharing their work.

The presentations especially Karen Brett and Camilla Carr. Thank you for a lovely lunch, and the breaks were useful too.

Singing! Mingling and listening to stories. Coffee and good chat!

Do you really have to ask? *Of course* there is so much, but I can't put it into words.

Don't like hierarchies! Enjoyed it all for different reasons.

The film, the sad stories.

Don't know yet: processing lots of information. Liked that science, history, therapy and *spiritual* aspect, the empathic and the mind/ body/ spirit was brought into the conference.

All: a rich and satisfying feed: lots of digestion to be done.

*All* the presentations were extremely thought provoking, riveting and moving. Also the conversations I had with other participants were really helpful.

Camilla's story was very powerful and moving, and gave me insight into the human capacity to overcome trauma.

Finding out about peoples' work/ projects, listening to the stories, histories, experiences.

Life experience: totally spell binding. Photography and film very moving and helpful for the medical profession to become more aware of people's inner worlds.

Found *all* the talks inspiring and informative. Thank you for including an artist!

Camilla Carr and Karen Brett were both amazing.

Enjoyed the singing. Found Camilla's talk very moving: also Karen's film work.

Everything: great variety. The singing was a master (or mistress!) stroke.

Spoilt for choice!

### **What will you take away and use?**

'Going to the doctor' in galleries! Always good for me, but will feel enabled to encourage others more. Singing and Ghanaian rhythms.

Film making

Meaning making and dialogue: to be courageous in adding story in a wide collective context

Inspiration, ideas, confidence in my own creativity and in sharing/using this.

Everything!

Stuff from Neil's talk.

The power of the human creative spirit: so much is possible.

Potential participants in my practice. Its been a day of stories shared from the private into the wider community.

Inability to use cerebral cortex and the amygdala at the same time.

Ideas for developing local art therapy service in relation to social inclusion. renewed enthusiasm for the world of arts and therapies, having been out of the picture for almost a year.

The theme across different areas of work: the idea of a history: personal history/ history of clients/ objects relationships...

A slightly different way of thinking about stories and histories. Hopefully I can translate this into my teaching and clinical practice and my personal and professional narratives.

All of it: personally and in work processes.

Getting voices heard.

Bits form all the different aspects of the day.

Hard to specify; films to watch, books to read, work to do.

Info about information prescriptions and memory clinic movies.

Daring to go into art galleries with carers and service users.

I haven't stopped thinking about Camilla's incredible story: listening to all the talk of forgiveness has made me think so much more about my position in the world and the therapy world.

Increased confidence and inspiration to go and make art.

All the different approaches art and creativity can be used encourage and enhance the human spirit: made me positive about my profession and the scope for achievement and change.

Eric's story: ideas information memories and plans for the future.

The need to share.

Ideas and suggestions form networking sessions.

Karen Brett's reminding me of the importance of reminiscence and the camera. Affirmation of the place of visualisation in ending a session. Vanessa Newcombe prompted me to find out what our Scrutiny Committee in Salford is doing and whether I could contribute and get involved.

As I often work with parents using art for social and emotional learning together with their children, the expression 'you are giving them a voice' when talking about and sharing and exhibiting their work.

To keep creating myself. Visiting the Exhibitions.

The contacts and e mails. The ideas of Karen's video/photo documentaries.

A happy heart!

The human spirit is remarkably resilient.

Learn to use a camera.

How important it is to 'hear yourself' and to reflect, and tell your history, whether it is family/individual/ relationship/ or trauma: *witnessing* it all.

Thoughts on how to use photography more in my work and as artist practioners.

Ideas and suggestions for ways to proceed in my own job, both from the presentations and from talking to others who are members of the 'Secret Guild'...

Curiosity into working with narrative therapy.

Idea inspirations and probably some useful contacts.

Being more aware of and interested in enquiring about other people's narratives and histories. Information prescriptions.

It's good to feel inspired and encouraged by people's willingness to network and enjoy sharing ideas with people.

Renewed sense of the power of stories: reinforced in the work I'm doing.

How the arts and empathy are so important in people's lives.

Not sure: slow processor. Perhaps s a sense of optimism and joy and a shared day with other similar minded beings.

Reflection, inspiration, resources.

### **Disliked/ found least useful**

Nothing (22 responses).

Nothing: thanks for a great day.

Found the Camilla Carr session very difficult. Not sure why she was a speaker. Would have like to know what was coming before I was in the middle of it and unable to sit back/ leave if I needed to.

A patch of grass to sit on with a cup of tea would have been nice, but can survive without!

More loos, bigger cups.

To have had Camilla Carr's session on earlier when required longevity was easier to sustain?

I am really self conscious about music/ singing.

Difficult to hear participants at the front: needed a roving mike?

Only 2 loos!

I'm trying hard but can't think of anything: the eclectic mix of speakers/ singer felt part of a whole and the theme linked throughout.

Found the singing a bit hard, but admired Alise's dynamism.

Vanessa Newcombe

First talk: self promotion.

I don't think Vanessa Newcombe was well prepared.

Chechnya journey was by far the hardest listening for me.

Not sure about the venue compared to previous years: rather oppressive. More loos.

I should be able to think of something, but can't.

Don't know at this moment.

A different day to Friday? A bit tired!

Vanessa Newcombe: didn't find her contribution very stimulating. Shame she only stayed 30 minutes!

Mystery shopper. Felt pointless. Group conversation might have been more engaging.

Was the 'therapeutic Kidnap' too emotive?

**What could be better.**

Nothing (21 responses).

Perhaps more structure interaction- but less 'talking heads' based and static?

Small groups to talk with one another less randomly?

The NHS environment and working practice.

Would have like more on actual working with carers/ service users i.e. what how was the art work done in the debrief workshops.

Co-ordination with the exhibitions was almost impossible for those from outside Exeter; to far away and not time in a busy schedule to go.

Absolutely brilliant; the whole day was excellent, venue ornate and spectacular, the chairing very professional.

Paper plates for those wanting to eat outside

A presentation by service user/artists would be interesting.

It was an amazing day: exhausting, but great.

Mystery shopper.

What *could* be better!

Would like more EATc conferences!

Perhaps a small group activity?

A chance to talk in small groups?

I wish it had been raining rather than being inside on a sunny afternoon! Not complaining.

Camilla talk: would have liked more about the actual work with the children. Too much, for me, about the captivity, through she is a very engaging speaker.

Venue: more loos.

Venue: no outside. Interesting though.

Would have like to know more about Alise Ojay's work. Also would have like to thank Karen Huckvale and others behind the event more forcefully, so a BIG THANK YOU.

All very well organised and facilitated.

### **Comments and suggestions for the future:**

Liked the idea of exploring histories as we look ahead at the changing/ expanding face of the arts therapies.

Having more space to talk was great: I didn't feel rushed: enough time to think, talk, walk and stare into space!

It would be interesting and helpful have a presentation from service users to hear their stories and how arts has featured in these.

The venue was amazing and perfect for the theme. Somewhere bright and light could be a contrast for next year. Bit I loved it all and found it stimulating, inspirational and wonderfully uplifting Thank you all again!

Suggestion for future conference theme: Change.

Nice food, like the location, but also like country side retreats..

Keep it up!

Surprised by enjoying singing exercise. Very moved by Karen's films.

Enjoyable interesting varies presentation Future? Possibly something about not making a mark, leaving traces, mark making, scribing recording, territory making...

Good venue, good food, well paced day well organised. Thank you for all your hard work.

Very interesting, deeply moving and enlightening day.

My first EATc: no complaints! Thank you!

Felt the day organised very well. The talks ran well together and built in a logical order. Couldn't have had Camilla at the beginning: too intense, bit a fabulous ending. The more sciencey bit at the beginning worked well. Maybe don't change too much: don't mess with what works well.

Very stimulating and varied day: very impressed by the variety and breadth of items: lovely venue, excellent food.

Lost for words!

A bit front led.

Thought the food and facilities were great/ Felt Malcolm's chairing was excellent, and well done to Karen and the team for putting such a wonderful day together.

Catering excellent, time keeping good: had a really good day.

Very such, diverse and well balanced menu, and the conference was good too. Some hands on? Art making space in response to the presentations?

Sharing different experiences of working with a mixture of clients/ how art making can make a difference to those people (from 'experts')

As a service user I felt very refreshed by the respectful and relaxed atmosphere. Although I am not a professional I felt very at ease in this conference; I wish more service users could come next time!

Thank you!

Thanks: I'll be digesting it for some time I think!

Great interesting day.

More singing! I'm completely full: thank you.

More Alise Ojay encouraging us to sing! Thanks to everyone who organised such a thought provoking and enriching day.

This is the first of these events I have been to. I will definitely want to come again! Brilliant.

Informative excellent presentations.

A very moving day: thank you.

Very moving day: thank you: I'm proud to be part of the 'secret Guild'

The Guildhall looked after us beautifully: wonderful food etc and very welcoming.

Lovely food, building great but craving sun by 2.30.

Great combination of the light and the deep in all talks (both humour and seriousness). Future: experimental? Small group discussions?

Perhaps labels e.g. student/ organisation/area of work? Just a thought. My friend said this is the best one she has attended. I haven't been before.

Thank you. More... more...encore!