



## **Salford Creative Health Network Meeting: Monday 4 November 2024**

**Ensuring the Network is led by local communities – at Arts Let Loose, Swinton**

### **Notes from listening to artists and community champions**

**Lisa – from Luso Connection (LC): [Lusoconnectionuk home page](https://lusoconnectionuk.com)**

- LC work with local Portuguese-speaking people – who often want to feel more connected.
- Salford has so many creative communities. LC want to work with more organisations in Salford. To share learning/swap stories/celebrate success.
- LC focus on children & families. Family engagement key to taking creative health forward.
- LC would like more support from the Town Hall, and links to other groups to share learning.
- Communication/signposting an issue: how will people get involved if they don't know about what's happening.
- LC recognise the crossover between creativity/sport – LC do music/dancing etc.
- Need to promote a wider view of creativity. Creativity is not just painting, it's wider than that.
- Space is a major issue for groups (having to pay for hiring spaces when don't have physical venue). But so much is standing empty – look at devolving to communities/orgs as an ongoing commitment not just stop-gap. Guarantee for a decent length of time.
- Potential to bring cultures together and bring Portuguese culture into Salford. All to support mental health, wellbeing, happiness.

**Nic and George from – Ordsall Community Arts (OCA)**

**<https://www.facebook.com/groups/921451049002260/>**

- OCA have an 'All welcome & always free' ethos.
- Referrals come via social prescribing. E.g. a recent member as referred to OCA after a stroke & this person is now creatively active & helps runs the centre.
- OCA struggle with funding – one of the key values is offering members something to eat for free.
- OCA worry about different creative/community groups stepping on each other's toes without knowing. With a network it would be useful to know who is applying

for what and who's running what sessions so can diversify offer/fill gaps rather than compete.

- OCA have a strong family feel – welcoming people from all over Salford.
- Suicide prevention offer, supported by Gaddum. Therapy room – helpful for neurodivergent people.
- Wood carving has helped with brain injury symptoms – some amazing success stories it would be great to share.
- 'Making Memories' with Salford Uni – real impacts.
- OCA have looked into offering qualifications but admin fees to be accredited as a centre prohibitive.

**Mike – Talk About It Mate:** <https://www.talkaboutitmate.co.uk/>

- Peer support for men with lived experience around issues such as loneliness.
- Started using creative approaches. Now three sessions running in Salford.
- Originally group might have thought creativity not for them – but they give it a go and it's had a big/positive impact. People need to give it a go.
- Jess – shown the way in using creativity as outlet for expression/giving shape to feelings. Members have had a huge development in confidence.
- Paul – opportunities through Wild in Art in Eccles. Frustration re lack of sharing opportunity for a Salford commission to Salford artists.
- Important to work on grass roots level where people are comfortable. Allow communities to share their own voice.
- Destigmatise men's mental health. Expression is opposite of depression.
- Recommendations: don't commission new activities/offer – develop what's already up and running.
- Groups need to find credible creative people to work with and find funding.
- Small groups want to be included in conversations.
- Need to share knowledge – knowledge of artists/approaches/opportunities.

**Cody – Angel Centre:** <https://theangelcentre.org.uk/>

- Inspiring to hear these stories and think about how it can impact work at AC.
- Benefit individually of expression & how it supports connection.
- Interesting counterpoint to the over-medicalisation of mental health.
- CH allows a space where there isn't a 'get better' 'get fit for work' narrative – it just lets people be in the spaces and no pressure.
- Loneliness a big issue – the need for connection and feeling like you're part of something.

**Hannah – Humbug Arts:** <https://www.humbugart.com/>

- Access to space and affordability is really challenging.
- HA launched CIC spring 2023 – high-quality arts lessons, lots of new faces and return visitors.

- Freelancing can be isolating & it's hard to get CPD opportunities. Funding rounds mean sessions can be stop/start. Need for longer-term funding that means sessions and offers are reliable and consistent.

**Sarah – Art with Heart:** <https://artwithheart.org.uk/>

- As funding is cut and it's getting more specific, esp. re mental health – often becomes more tick box, used to be more creative/wellbeing funds that were looser and enabled more beautiful work. Wellbeing vs health.

**Jenni – Salford Loaves & Fishes:** <https://www.salfordloavesandfishes.org.uk/>

- Very engaged with arts through partnership working – amazing opportunities. We can see the difference creativity makes, funding via Whose Art Whose Culture – pressure on team in addition to basic running costs.
- Partnerships crucial as Jenni's team not arts experts and lack capacity.

**Suzanne – Hamilton Davies Trust:** <https://hamiltondavies.org.uk/>

- Cadishead – funding for Community Leaders group – community/CVS funding. Sharing resources as a community. Impact of external events on attendances – high risk for those hiring spaces.

**Amy – Energise Centre:** <https://www.thebiglifegroup.com/service/energise-centre/>

- Wants to collaborate with other similar orgs for projects across the city. Sense of purpose and achievement.

**Notes sent by email by those not able to attend:**

**Fiona – Photos with Fiona** [www.photoswithfiona.co.uk](http://www.photoswithfiona.co.uk)

- Notice increasing confidence (both artistically and more generally), and providing a positive group activity (with the associated social benefits) that helps people make better choices (e.g. reduced alcohol use etc)
- As a freelance artist, the biggest challenge is ensuring that there is a regular flow of activity - the ever present challenge of finding funding for projects and applying for commissions. At present I have to travel for a large proportion of my work, and it would be great to support communities where I live rather than elsewhere.
- I'm looking for a strong local network of contacts to help with challenges, and to offer support for practitioners