

# PROJECTS

## A Day in Our Lives

[Newcastle upon Tyne / Gateshead] 2007 to present

Helix Arts, Tyneside Cyrenians and Trading Places are working in partnership to deliver a new twelve-month programme of arts-based activities for homeless people and those affected by homelessness in Newcastle upon Tyne and Gateshead. The programme, funded by NESTA (National Endowment for Science, Technology and the Arts), commenced in early 2008 and will serve as a mechanism for tackling mental health issues directly by engaging service users in activities which enable them to explore issues of status and self-esteem, and associated problems with drug and alcohol misuse, through a creative process.

**The Trading Places arts project** aimed to:

- Enable users of Ron Eager House, in particular Trading Places workers and rough sleepers, to participate in high-quality creative activity;
- Support project participants to boost their self-esteem and confidence and to develop their creative skills and ambitions;
- Empower project participants to ask for the support they need from multiple specialist agencies (e.g. Mental health services, drug and alcohol support);
- Improve confidence and self esteem;
- Improve the awareness and understanding of support services staff of the complex needs of homeless service users.

Following initial consultation with the service users, the project focussed on creating photographic and film based works interspersed with other creative forms such as writing (poetry, short stories and lyrics) and performance.

Photographer Magali Pettier was appointed lead artist for the project and sessions were held with project participants to draw up a programme of activity. The group decided to create a book based around social exclusion and worked with creative writer Bob Beagrie and graphic designer Joe White to incorporate their photographs and writing into a book that was published in April 2009.

At the end of the first phase, an exhibition of the photographs ran for two weeks at Crisis Skylight in Newcastle upon Tyne during May/June 2008.

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Further work has been undertaken with the participants and Magali to create and shoot a film which will form part of a pack of training materials for use by frontline staff. The group also worked with Alex Tustin from Worldbeaters Music to create a soundtrack for the film. The project ended with a book launch and exhibition at Dance City on 2 April 2009 showcasing the photography, text and film and an exhibition of the work remained at Dance City until 15 May 2009.

The group have also produced two newsletters and you can download a copy from the Helix Arts [Day in Our Lives](#) web page.

This project is now complete.

Funded by NESTA



Photograph by GailB



Photograph by IanO

PIONEERING COLLABORATIVE PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH THE ARTS