

## **'Gweld'**

### **Evaluation of digital quilt and textile quilt project, part of the Cardiff Royal Infirmary: people , place , future project**

#### **A partnership project between Haf Weighon, Dewi Tannat Lloyd, Oasis and the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team Cardiff and Vale UHB**

#### **Funded by the Arts Council of Wales through the Arts for Health and Wellbeing Lottery Fund**

### **Rationale**

Refugee's and Asylum Seekers have little choice on the city or location where they end up in the UK. They have limited funds to pay for public transport. So when they arrive in Cardiff, they become familiar only with the Cardiff and Vale Health Inclusion Service at the Cardiff Royal Infirmary, which provides all their health checks and treatment, their allocated home or hostel, and with Oasis.

Oasis is a not-for-profit organisation in Splott, Cardiff, that provides support for roughly 100-150 visitors each day from around the globe, this includes people from Iran, Iraq, Afghanistan, Sudan, El Salvador, and Ivory Coast among many other countries. Some have just arrived in Cardiff whereas others have been in Cardiff for a few years and visit Oasis to socialise with the many friends they have made there.

This project used art and photography to widen the experience of Cardiff to a group of clients that attend Oasis using imagination and real experience of the service users at Oasis.

*I came here on many trains and boats. Then I slept rough for many nights. Then someone told me about here after about seven nights in Cardiff on the streets. I can't believe the food. The first thing someone said to me when I walked in here was 'do you want to paint?' I am not sure anyone has ever asked me to paint something. It made me feel like I had a purpose.*

This is the story of a Syrian refugee translated by an 8 year old refugee who was painting alongside him that day.

Workshops run by Haf Weighon explored imaginary maps of Cardiff and the Vale and familiarised the clients with well known buildings in the area. Towards the end of the project a trip was arranged to Castell Coch and Garth Mountain in association with CADW so that the group could witness Cardiff from up above.

*In my country we never get tests, especially on your blood. As soon as I came here they tested me the first day in Cardiff. I found out I had something that effects my blood. Now I have to go in all the time and they are making me better.*

*The GP here is so kind. She was the first person I met in Cardiff. I have to go back to her very often. Every week now. She tells me so many things. I never had support like this in my home. Such a good doctor.*

*I am there every week almost as a HIV patient. They are trying a new medication on me. I feel lucky.*

## **Artists**

Textile artist, Haf Weighton has been working on art projects with Oasis for the past year and has developed links with the volunteers and clients who visit the centre. The artwork is textiles on separate pieces of material that convey different areas of Cardiff. This was created by workshops facilitated by Haf Weighton with clients at Oasis.

Haf also used the iconic CAVUHB hospital curtain to help familiarise the clients with different buildings in and around Cardiff and the Vale. A well-used and worn hospital curtain was deconstructed by the group and stitched and glued back together in the same style as basic suturing techniques which might be used by hospital staff.

*'When I think about the very real health care crisis in the UK , and the extraordinary pressures placed upon nursing staff in particular, this image of held together brokenness seems utterly prescient and, frankly- as a metaphor for our times -unforgivable'*

*'Thank you for making me feel safe and welcoming me here all day'*

*'You speak Welsh? I have a local language and I talk the English language like you'*

Haf Weighton bought the artworks together to create final stitched pieces which will go on display at Oasis.

*'I was a teacher of Geography in my country. We don't use screens or books. I just talked and the pupils listened. The classes were small – maybe 15 children. Now I spend my time looking after my baby. I will study English when he is old enough, then go back and study again. I miss my work. I hope I can do it again.'*

*"I studied maths at University at home. I really want to get a job here . Maybe as a teaching assistant. Why do so many people leave education here?"*

*I want to be a social worker. I need to study for many years to do that here. But I am young and I hope one day I will get there.*

*When I was a child I really liked art. But I never thought I could study something like that. Doing these projects has made me realise how important art is to me. I have talked to my college and I will try and study art one day once my English is good enough.*

*'I have no running water in my new home'*

The Arts for Health and Wellbeing Team of Cardiff and Vale Hospital also commissioned Fine Art Photographer, Dewi Tannat Lloyd to create an online version of this community piece of artwork – a digital quilt.

The artwork was photographed and placed together online within the arts for Health and Wellbeing site of CAVUHB. The digital quilt reflects a rough map of the city. When certain locations on the map are clicked by the user, a poem, quote or piece of artwork reflective of the area created by the project's participants will display.

Dewi Tannat Lloyd has also mentored Syrian Film-maker N during this project. N is a asylum seeker who comes from a journalistic background in Syria. Dewi shared with N a variety of equipment and trained N how to use it. N has been able to make contact with the BBC building in Cardiff and has created a 360 degree image of the city from there. Dewi has also created a number of drone images of Cardiff and the Vale. He has also captured images of the changing seasons – which is also something many of the refugees and asylum seekers discuss as it's something they don't see in their countries.

*'Have you seen the leaves change.. Which parks have the best orange coloured trees in Cardiff?*

*I love Roath park. We don't have such a place in my country. When I first came here you told me about there and whenever I feel homesick I go there'*

*" It's bank holiday. So where do I go? What bus do I catch? Can I walk'*

*"Where is Barry?'*

*"Penarth, the rich people live there'*

*'I have been waiting 14 months for a bike'*

*'The rest of Wales looks very much like this. One day you will get to see it.'*

Dewi also offered space for N to develop his ideas within Dewi's studio's.

*'Many ideas might be developed during the creative process and our job as creative people is to filter out and resolve those ideas until we agree on final imagery that is strong.'*

*'For 8 months I couldn't find here. I am so glad I am here now'*

*On every Friday during the project Dewi Tannat Lloyd met with Haf and Noah and many other clients at Oasis during lunch. They discussed the project and agreed ways forward.*

### **Legacy of the project**

Two volunteers were involved in the project.

Branwen Hollingsworth – a Textile conservator who has background in textiles conservation from Hampton Court. Branwen enjoyed the project so much that she has applied to do a IELTS English as an additional language course at Cardiff and Vale college.

Helen Moseley, a volunteer at Oasis with a degree in Fashion; was also involved in encouraging clients to attend the trip to Castell Coch. Since working on projects with Haf at Oasis and after having a reference from Haf, Helen applied and is now studying for a Masters in Arts Management at The Royal College of Music and Drama.

N is still an asylum seeker, therefore cannot earn any money at the moment. He is studying English and is building up his experience as a film maker. Continued use of a drone would mean he can continue developing his skill as a film maker after the project ends. In addition, by being introduced to Dewi he now has access to Dewi's equipment in his studio and the mentorship of a professional photographer. He has also been introduced to the BBC in Cardiff as part of this opportunity.

Film – Cultural Cwtsch



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## Breakdown of workshops by Haf

Dates	Number of participants actively creating artworks in each workshops	Number of clients who sit at the table and talk during each workshop	Number of clients who have not engaged with art club at Oasis before
6 September	4	3	3
7 September	4	1	1
15 September	10	4	8
16 September	9	3	2
22 September	8	6	6
23 September	10	6	8
29 September	8	7	2
30 September	8	2	2
6 October	10	4	1
7 October	10	3	3
13 October	8	4	2
14 October	6	4	2
20 October	8	8	1
21 October	5	2	1
27 October			
28 October			
Total 16			

## Total estimated clients who have contributed to the stitched version of the quilt:

84 (including N and I a Ukrainian Painter in N's film).

Number of volunteers involved:

4

Countries that clients have come from:

Syria, Morocco, Kurdish, Iran, Uganda, Kuwait, Ukraine, Uruguay, Nepal,

