



CASE STUDY: Craig Tyler Trust



Cultural Organisation Group:

Craig Tyler Trust

Sector: Mental Health Arts Workshops

Key groups targeted by this project:

People with mental health illnesses and people with suicidal ideations

Author: Culture team, Essex County Council

Delivery period of project:

Spring 2022 – January 2023



INTRODUCTION

The Craig Tyler Trust runs two drop-in centres per week, it welcomes all and has an open-door policy, as well as a mobile unit at local shops, train stations and public spaces, in order to make mental health more visible and accessible.

The Trust also runs two gentle exercise classes for those deconditioned as a result of the pandemic.

Professor Rory O'Connor (2021, 'When It Is Darkest') says it best when he states: "Although we can never bring back those we have lost, we can better support those left behind and, if we work together, we can save more lives. My ultimate hope is that, as a society, if we are kinder and more compassionate, both to our ourselves and to those around us, then we will go some distance in protecting all of us from the devastation of suicide."

THE STORY OF THE CRAIG TYLER TRUST

The Craig Tyler Trust has been an established mental health and suicide prevention charity in the Basildon borough since November 2020, before which it provided mental health support through a drop-in centre since July 2018.

The organisation was created to help both those struggling with their mental health and suicidal ideations as well as provide a safe space to meet with compassionate volunteers and others in similar situations.

Too often people do not seek help when they are feeling suicidal and The Craig Tyler Trust works in the community and aims to reduce the stigma surrounding mental illness and suicide, with the view to engaging with more communities and to encourage them to seek help.

THE "CHALLENGE" OR "OPPORTUNITY"

The Craig Tyler Trust wanted to encourage service users to try new activities that they wouldn't usually and wanted to use ECC funding to build resilience and a future love of arts that would benefit people's lives.

HOW ECC SUPPORTED

The Craig Tyler Trust's application to the Arts and Cultural Fund clearly outlined the Essex residents it aimed to engage with, namely those living with mental health conditions

The ECC Culture team has supported the project via regular catch up's, offering assistance wherever needed and appropriate.

THE RESULTS

The Craig Tyler Trust had a 100% improvement rate with the project which benefitted all participants.

Scrapbooking for recovery and resilience was designed to help service users express their emotions - through the art of scrapbooking - and included finding magazine cut-outs that reflected daily moods, photographs to reflect upon memories, poems that captured emotions or simply drawing using colours to capture feelings.

The project also featured creative writing for recovery and resilience which encouraged expression through writing, while mindful coloring and knitting looked at mindfulness and the various ways it can incorporated it into people's lives.

During the sessions The Craig Tyler Trust covered how being mindful means slowing down and being aware of the moment.



TESTIMONIALS

The Craig Tyler Trust project participants revealed in their testimonials how it had benefitted them, especially 'A'.

'A' joined us after a long term physical and mental illness had impacted so much she was at crisis point. 'A' had been supported by various different agencies in our area.

On 'A's first visit she was very reluctant to join in and stated she couldn't do it. We sat and helped 'A' with gentle encouragement and gradually she joined in. 'A' was our star pupil and she would often take items home to continue them throughout her week.

The sense of achievement and lift in self-confidence was so apparent, it was amazing to experience. Such a change, from scared, hopeless and withdrawn, she became a lovely addition to the group and always with a smile.

'A' will always have hurdles to overcome but to be able to introduce some activities that bring her a tool to get through her day as easy as possible, has been extremely powerful.

One attendee said: "This club has been beneficial as I've had a chance to meet local people in the community, take part in crafts that I wouldn't normally do at home and meet friends which has helped with my mental health. To do something that does not cost a fortune with the cost-of-living crisis is really important to me and my son."

Another project participant stated: "As I suffer with mental health issues, this club has been really helpful to me and my daughter as it gets us out and about and meeting new people. It gives me a reason to get up and go out and it's a great group."

Referring to the Wednesday Club, one attendee added: "The Wednesday club has been brilliant; I've loved meeting new people and getting out of the house and keeping my children entertained. The crafts are really good and really helpful for mindfulness - we've loved spending our time here."

Finally, the one participant said: "The Wednesday group has been great for joining the community together, everyone has really appreciated having a place to go during the holidays that hasn't cost a fortune. It has been really enjoyable."



GETTING INVOLVED

Here at Essex County Council, we are passionate about arts and culture and keen to support projects across the county. If you have an idea you would like to share with us, take a look at the Arts and Cultural Fund page on the Explore Essex website: www.explore-essex.com/culture/arts-culture-fund and get in touch via email: culture@essex.gov.uk