



ANNUAL REPORT 2023

Reflections

Writing this report gives us the opportunity to reflect, not only on the projects that Draw On have been working on over the past year but also to think about the larger socio-economic, environmental, and political context that have an impact on our practice and lives of the people we work alongside.

The art therapy groups we provide are about people, finding points of connection and creating personal meaning through art making in the here and now. We have been so privileged this year to welcome and make art alongside over 30 people who have sought sanctuary in the UK and who are living in temporary and Home Office accommodation in London.

Draw On Rebrand

At the beginning of 2023, with the artist and designer Sam Sure, Draw On changed its logo. Our original logo created in 2019 was based on the Enso. In Japanese and Chinese culture, Enso is a circle in Zen Buddhism to express a moment when the mind is free to let the body create, something that we relate our practice with, however over time we felt that the use of this symbol was not appropriate and spent some time reflecting on the cultural appropriation of symbols and how we made sense of that in our use of the Enso. Instead we began working with Sam to find a logo that represented the founding and history of Draw On. We are really pleased to have achieved this with Sam's design which drew inspiration from our first work together in Greece where we facilitated art therapy groups within a refugee camp. Upon our return and during the founding of Draw On we looked back at the

artwork we made within the groups and noticed our use of circles. The use of the colour green represents growth and was a colour we wanted to stick with, and so we continued to use the same black and green colour palette with the logo centring the name boldly within the design.

Migration Museum Visit

To bring in the new year Draw On organised a team visit to the Migration Museum, which is currently housed in Lewisham Shopping Centre, to see the exhibition 'Taking Care of Business'. The exhibition highlighted and celebrated the central role that migrant entrepreneurs have played in shaping our lives and Britain. This was an important exhibition for us to witness and acknowledge the sacrifice, resilience and ingenuity of people who have left their homes to start a different life in the UK. We were also able to see 'WALL' two different artworks by contemporary artists STIK and Thierry Noir where two separate surviving segments of the Berlin Wall have been directly painted.



Funding

At the end of 2022 we were thrilled to be granted £9820 by the national Lottery Community Fund to run Therapeutic Art Groups in Lewisham. In addition, we were granted £500 from Magic Little Grants enabling us to buy good quality art materials for the sessions.



Partnership

We are delighted to have continued our partnership with Lewisham Refugee Migrant Network (LRMN) who have continued to support our work and promote and facilitate referrals to our therapeutic art sessions. LRMN continues to act as the link between Draw On and the group attendees which includes holding service user data and safeguarding responsibilities creating a secure framework within which we can work. Our special thanks go to the Head of Operations Alan Robertson for supporting our work and enabling the partnership.

Projects

From January to August 2023 Draw On, in collaboration with LRMN, offered weekly therapeutic art groups to adults who have been displaced due to war, persecution or socioeconomic factors and now living in Lewisham, London. Draw On provided both a drop-in weekly therapeutic art group in temporary Home Office accommodation and a weekly Art Studio to adults accessing the LRMN service. The studio space offered a safe and communal place facilitated by trained art therapists, where group members could creatively explore their thoughts, feelings, and experiences alongside their artistic expression. The focus of the groups were to build a supportive and creative environment that fostered self-esteem and self-worth, whilst bolstering resilience and celebrating diversity.

Pentland House

From February - April 2023 as part of our Lottery funded project Draw On provided a weekly textile group to women living in a Home Office hotel in Lewisham. The hotel was providing temporary accommodation to families, with the occupants being mainly women and children. These sessions took place within the communal canteen area of the hotel which

meant that the group was visible and could be easily accessed by the women. The textile medium; using fabrics and stitching or crochet enabled the women to reconnect with traditional craft skills from their home countries bringing comfort and pride to the making. In addition, the repetitious action of sewing and crochet (just like walking or jogging) provided a state of flow and abortion. Over the six weeks we were joined by approximately 20 women.



Lewisham Art House

From April to July 2023 Draw On offered a weekly drop-in Therapeutic Art Studio for adults accessing LRMN's services. The group ran for three hours on a Thursday afternoon and held at Lewisham Art House. This studio space offered a more confidential setting with space to provide a much wider range of art materials including clay, printmaking, and cyanotype printing. Over the 12 weeks we were joined by 12 group participants.



Gallery Visit

During the project Draw On organised a trip to the Hayward Gallery in London to see the exhibition Dear Earth. The aim of the visit was to inspire group members, by providing an opportunity to view global artists in a professional setting. This particular group exhibition was chosen due to its themes of care, hope, and emotional and spiritual connection with our environment. The visit was a welcomed point of inspiration and connection with group members and acted as a good source of reference for group members taking part in the upcoming Draw On exhibition.



Deptford Lounge Exhibition

The project ended with an exhibition at Deptford Lounge, where group members' work could be celebrated by each other and the wider Lewisham community. Five artists from LAH Studio Group decided to take part in the exhibition choosing up to three artworks to display. All the group members were able to come to the library for the installation, spending time mounting and curating the layout of the exhibition. Thanks to Deptford Lounge the artworks had a platform to be shared with the local community including school groups and local families and to be seen by the group members outside the confines of the studio, giving new light and perspective to their images. The work was on show for one week and at the end of the exhibition the group members came together for one last meeting to uninstall and reflect on their experiences within the groups and of having work in the public realm.



Feedback

At the end of the art studio-based project we were able to gain anonymous written feedback from the group members. Some of the group members consented to their words being shared here.

'I enjoyed that I could be messy and silly and childlike in the 3 hours. There were no expectations, just pure joy. I could talk about what was going on for me, if any thoughts or feelings came up during the session and a gentle, kind conversation helped me to move on and into acceptance. The facilitators are an absolute joy to be around, they created a space where the group dynamic became calm and accepting. It was a very peaceful and healing experience.'

'Katie and Emily are really doing a fantastic job, very welcoming, accommodating and always creating a friendly environment which really helped.'

'I enjoyed the art class, it helped me to make friends and communicate better with others and I feel safe there.'

Along with positive feedback we received advice from group members on how the sessions could be more inclusive. One of the main things we discovered was that covering travel costs would have enabled more people to attend the sessions. We will be including this cost in our next funding application.

Volunteer bookkeeper

In 2022 we were extremely fortunate to welcome Sue Hollingsbee to Draw On as our Volunteer Bookkeeper. It is important to us that our finances are kept healthy and to share our annual accounts with our supporters. We are very grateful to Sue for her expertise and time given to our accounts!

Financials

We are committed to sharing our impact and outcomes with you including our financial information. 100% of our donations and grants go directly towards our projects.

Total Support Income for Tax Year 2022-23: £10,710.25

The National Lottery Community Fund: £9820

Magic Little Grants: £500

Donations: £390.25

Total Expenditure for Tax Year 2022-23: £4465.92

Looking forward

Draw On have decided to apply for charity status! This is something that we have been thinking about for some time and were waiting for the right time to do. With the end of our funding and projects in Lewisham and together with feedback we had collated we feel strongly that we want to create a more robust organisation and projects that have longevity. Through applying for charity status we have given focused time reviewing our policies and thinking about the structure and future of Draw On.

As part of this process we have thought more specifically about our purposes as an organisation which we outline here.

- Provide Therapeutic art groups, art psychotherapy and art therapy informed psychosocial groups for children and/or adults who have been displaced due to war, persecution and socio-economic factors.
- Providing educational and psycho-educational workshops.
- Research and publication.
- Exhibitions.

Our aim for 2024 is to secure funding for a two-year project offering art therapy groups in both Home Office accommodation and in an Art Studio setting. This will enable group members to have dedicated time to develop their creative practice and form stronger

connections within the sessions. As part of our vision we will be including specific funding for gallery visits and exhibitions.

We are excited to enter this process into becoming a Charitable Incorporated Organisation (CIO) and will keep you updated!

THANK YOU!

We would like to take this opportunity to say a huge THANK YOU to all that have supported our work so far, whether that be through donations, engagement and encouragement, thank you for your words and actions that have furthered and inspired our work!

Contact Us

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