

**LEARNING VISIT REPORT**  
**Arts Depot Trust Ltd 12412**

<b>1.1 Date of visit:</b>  31.10.2016	<b>1.2 Name of visiting Grants Officer:</b> Tanzeem Ahmed	<b>1.2 People met with:</b> Tim Burley (Development Director), Estelle Buckridge (Community Champion) and Lara Woodward- Programming & Participation Manager
<b>1.4 Programme Area &amp; Outcomes:</b> Older Londoners aged 75 years and over living more active and healthier lives		
<b>1.5 Purpose of the award:</b> £81,300 over three years for a part-time Community Champion and a part-time Marketing Assistant, plus project costs, for the development and delivery of a series of arts events and creative activities for socially isolated elderly people aged 75+.		
<b>MONITORING INFORMATION</b>		
<b>2.1 Project Outcome 1:</b> Older people will feel less socially isolated resulting in improved well-being and good health. <b>Progress made:</b> Staff gave several examples of older people improving their mobility through their participating in the dance sessions. One specific case study was given of a lady who was not able to raise her arms. After participating in the dance sessions, she managed to find greater ease in moving, in turn increasing her independence.		
<b>2.2 Project Outcome 2:</b> The project will develop a more positive impression of old age encouraging greater arts attendance as a method of staying socially active. <b>Progress made:</b> The project uses positive imagery of older people on its marketing material, helping stimulate interest from people over 75. The organisation has introduced a range of activities suitable for people of all abilities, and varies its offer with each new season, some of which are designed to bring different age groups together to increase confidence and interaction. There is a growing attendance at matinee shows which are targeted at the over 75s. As older people attending other arts activities they develop friendships and are more likely to attend a wider number of events.		
<b>2.3 Project Outcome 3:</b> The project will engage older people in creative learning & participation opportunities benefitting the participants but also informing our creative programme and directly contributing to new arts projects. <b>Progress made:</b> The organisation prides itself on the quality of the work it delivers for older people and seeks ongoing feedback from users to help develop services. An example was given when one of the arts activities received negative feedback from participants. The group listened to the feedback and issues were brought to those involved in		

appointing the artists and programming. Older people have indirectly informed the choice of artists as their feedback and concerns have been considered when selecting the artists. Arts depot has several residency projects which culminate in a performance. Older people have been involved in these residencies, although not yet involved in the final performance which they hope will be the case in the future.

#### **2.4 Project Outcome 4:**

The project will develop a positive community of older audiences and participants that will encourage other venues to place greater emphasis on older audiences.

##### **Progress made:**

Estelle, who leads on the community outreach has been involved in attending events and giving talks about best practice in this field. She has also promoted the project to staff and clients at various care homes and older people's organisations.

#### **2.5 Project Outcome 5:**

Engaging community partners and social services in supported arts attendance (including free & subsidised transport) and advocating for other arts venues to better engage 75+ audiences.

##### **Progress made:**

Outreach to community and residential homes has successfully attracted new participants and the project was invited to give a presentation by the Mayor of London on how older people can be more active using arts. Work in care homes has often resulted in staff accompanying residents to the venue and to the matinee events. The project is starting to connect with more GPs and other health professionals, encouraging them to refer their patients to the Arts Depot. Relationship with local organisations (Age UK, Jewish Care and Barnet Council) is good and continues to grow.

### **GRANT OFFICER COMMENTS**

Arts Depot has successfully delivered outreach and a range of arts projects. Most of their projects are for those over 60, although their target is to reach the over 75's. They find that restricting the programmes for older people over 75 can be challenging as this age group is more likely to prioritise health related appointments over attending the arts depot, or may not attend at all due to ill health. Mobility issues also make it hard for people to participate. However, the project found that once the older people are at the venue, they all enjoy the sessions and find it a memorable experience. The organisation has learnt that in-order to engage isolated and vulnerable members they need to work through several gatekeepers, which include workers in residential homes, relatives or friends. It takes time to develop the trust and confidence in people to come to unfamiliar environments. The project has made good inroads into getting older people engaging/re-engaging in arts. The project officer is very passionate and positive. I attended one of the sessions on poetry and this was led by a very good facilitator and participants were very supportive towards each other. Other arts venues do not necessarily have a specific role dedicated to community outreach and the organisation feels that this is crucial to their success.