**Embargoed until 09.00 on Friday 02 July 2021**

**South West Arts & Health Charity secures National Lottery Heritage Fund support for 40th Birthday Archive Project**

Creativity Works, an Arts and Health Charity based in Radstock, near Bath, is delighted to announce that it has received a National Lottery Heritage Fund grant of £7,000 for an exciting heritage project to mark its 40th Birthday.

Made possible by money raised by National Lottery players, the project focuses on the preservation and sharing of the oral histories and memories from previous project participants, partners, artists, and volunteers from the past 40 years.

Creativity Works is a specialist arts and wellbeing organisation and Arts Council England funded National Portfolio Organisation, that runs high quality arts projects, increasing health and wellbeing for those living with mental health challenges, and from disadvantaged sectors of society. Regularly working in partnership, they have become known as experts within the field of creativity for wellbeing, especially with regards to their progression model and peer-led groups.

To help bring the archive project to life, Creativity Works would like to hear from anyone who has been involved in any previous projects – either under its current name – or when it was known as Wansdyke Arts Council [WAC], North East Somerset Arts or nesa, and get in touch, as through this project funding Creativity Work’s aims to:

* Collate oral histories & memories from previous project participants, partners, artists & volunteers whose health and wellbeing have been transformed through arts and creativity.
* Use the archive material and the oral histories discovered & collected as the inspiration for a series of creative wellbeing invitations to the public and local community groups to get involved with.
* Curate a free public exhibition of our archive material demonstrating personal stories of positive change through creativity.
* Create a new online archive of the history of the organisation including free resources for other charities and artists working in the field of arts and wellbeing and socially engaged practice.

Creativity Works hopes that in sharing its diverse and colourful history, wealth of experience of working with a wide range of communities and, also, by acting as a social resource highlighting how society has shifted in terms of the awareness of the benefits of creativity in supporting mental health and wellbeing, it will encourage even more people to get creative.

**Quotes**

Commenting on the award, Sarah James, Creativity Works Director said: “We are thrilled to have received this support thanks to National Lottery players. The 40th year feels like the right moment in time especially coming out of a world pandemic to share how our local community came together 40 years ago to improve conditions for local people (as they did in the pandemic) and the power of creativity to increase positive mental health - this is as important now as it was 40 years ago.”

Quote from National Heritage Fund:

Stuart McLeod, Director England - London & South at The National Lottery Heritage Fund, says:

“We are delighted to support Creativity Works for their 40th Birthday Archive Project and help them preserve and share the oral histories from projects spanning the last 40 years.

Thanks to money raised by National Lottery players, Creativity Works will use the power of the creative process to make a real difference to people’s lives, draw communities together and enable more people to access the arts, ultimately improving their mental health and wellbeing.”

**Notes to editors**

**About Creativity Works**

* Creativity Works is an award-winning charity and socially engaged arts organisation based in Radstock, Bath and North East Somerset, delivering creative projects that make a real difference to people’s lives.
* Creativity Works is funded by Arts Council England as a National Portfolio Organisation (NPO).
* The focus of our work is on Mental Health and Wellbeing with specific communities, including adults living with mental health challenges, vulnerable young people, elders and those living with dementia, adults with complex lifestyles and carers.
* We work with people of all ages and backgrounds who need support and inspiration. Our central aim is to use the power of the creative process to make a real difference to people’s lives, to draw communities together and enable more people to access the arts.
* Working with professional artists & wellbeing specialists, we run creative projects and programmes & facilitate community events that inspire people to explore, develop & grow.
* Creativity Works has been working in Bath and North East Somerset for 40 years, developing a core of artists in a variety of disciplines.
* This year, 2021- Creativity Works celebrate 40 years [1981 – 2021]
* For more information on Creativity Works visit: [www.creativityworks.org.uk](http://www.creativityworks.org.uk)
* Follow Creativity Works on Twitter: @CW4everyone Instagram: @CreativityWorks UK

**About The National Lottery Heritage Fund**

Using money raised by the National Lottery, we **Inspire, lead** and **resource** the UK’s heritage to create **positive and lasting change** for people and communities, now and in the future. [www.heritagefund.org.uk](http://www.heritagefund.org.uk).

Follow @HeritageFundUK on [Twitter](https://twitter.com/HeritageFundUK), [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/HeritageFundUK) and [Instagram](https://www.instagram.com/heritagefunduk/) and use #NationalLotteryHeritageFund

**Further Information**

For further information, images and interviews please contact Sarah James, Director on 01761 438 852 [sarah@creativityworks.org.uk](mailto:sarah@creativityworks.org.uk) or Morwhenna Woolcock, Marketing & Comms Coordinator at Creativity Works on [morwhenna@creativityworks.org.uk](mailto:morwhenna@creativityworks.org.uk)

**Image Caption:**

Pictured here holding various memorabilia from the Creativity Works archive are:

﻿L-R Philippa Forsey, Creative Wellbeing Manager who joined in 2001, is the longest serving team member, Sarah James our new Director and newest member of the team joined in 2021 and Pete Crooke, who joined in the 1990s, is our longest serving trustee!