



What Will Survive of Us / Legacy 6

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 Legacy6

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What Will Survive of Us

What Will Survive of Us a unique cultural heritage project based around a very simple question. **What 6 pieces of art would you like to leave behind?** The project was originally designed by Kit Green in 2022 and underwent an initial Research and Development stage in collaboration with St Christopher's Hospice. In this new phase of this project, the workshop was taken to 4 different locations and was facilitated by 8 new facilitators. The project was also developed into an online digital framework: a democratic, non-commercialised website where anyone can leave their creative legacy.

The 'simple ask' of What Will Survive of Us is underpinned by some key philosophies:

A democratic approach to legacy

We all will leave a legacy. It is not only the rich or the famous. You don't need to have changed the world or have made a groundbreaking discovery to leave behind a legacy. We all affect the lives of the people who cross our paths and our actions have ripples that continue on after we are gone.

A questioning of the idea of 'Art'

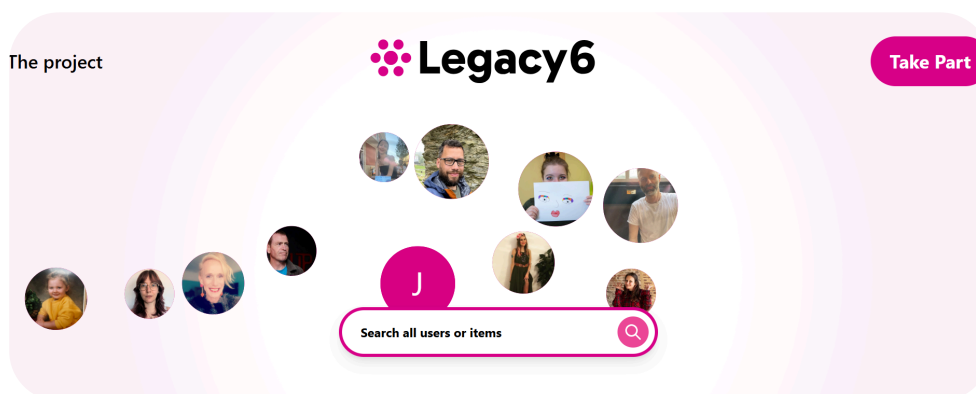
The project asks people to select 6 pieces of art but through this process the idea of what art 'is' is questioned. Art is not just the paintings you can find in galleries but it can be whatever objects/pieces of music/stories are meaningful to an individual. As long as the object can be represented through an image everything is welcomed with open arms.

The individual is in control

The project allows the individual taking part to take the project in whatever direction feels right for them. People can take the project to an incredibly deep, reflective, and existential level, or they can keep things quite light and surface level. The individual has agency in their engagement with the project and this ensures people never feel coerced into going to places that they aren't comfortable with.

The Legacy 6 Website

A core part of this project was the development of the Legacy 6 website. The team worked with consultants to create a simple, free, easy to access website where people can upload their selected artworks to their profile. The website will be shared with all participants who took part in the workshops. So far the people who have accessed the site have reported that it's "easy to navigate" and the project will continue to ask for feedback from users to ensure the website works in the best way possible for people engaging in the project.



What did the workshops look like?

The workshops looked different in each setting, however some key things remained the same. In each setting facilitators worked alongside staff from the organisation and in some cases also with volunteers. As all the workshops took place whilst the website was still in the design phase; participants created their 'profile' mostly using pen and paper. Workshops typically began with participants either drawing a self portrait, drawing someone else's portrait in the group, or selecting a photo to use as their profile picture. This served as a good ice breaker and a way to ease people into the project. Then over the next hour to 4 weeks (depending on the session), facilitators would encourage participants to select 6 pieces of art that they would like to leave behind as a creative legacy. WWSouJ encouraged participants to think about art beyond merely photos and paintings to include things such as recipes, playlists, jewellery, and day to day objects. How these items were selected and represented depended entirely on the individual. Some participants wanted to select their favourite things, for others they focused on what they were proud of, some participants selected what they felt represented them best.

94 participants took part
across 4 different settings

Process

In creating this report, author Millie attended 5 workshops and recorded her reflections. She then conducted in depth interviews with 3 participants, 2 staff members, and 1 facilitator, and received written feedback from 3 facilitators and 3 participants. These interviews were transcribed and alongside the written feedback were analysed by both Millie and Sorrel to draw out 4 main themes from the project as a whole. This process involved Sorrel and Millie familiarising themselves with the data through multiple listens or readings. Millie then coded the data and Sorrel engaged in visual notetaking. They then met to discuss the themes that emerged from their exploration of the data. Millie wrote up the findings and Sorrel illustrated them.

These themes are: 'Legacy is alive', 'Tender Conversations', 'Unlocking Connections', and 'Uncovering things about yourself'.

Legacy is Alive

This theme captures the way in which participants' understanding of legacy shifted over the course of the project. Legacy is traditionally associated with leaving behind money or property, so it may be something that people initially feel doesn't apply to them. This sentiment was echoed by one workshop leader who said: "I think I have a much broader understanding now of what a legacy might look like, not just linked to material things or money (like a will). It also made me think more about emotional legacies, of what is inherited and passed on generationally".

The other definition of legacy can feel too grand, based on great achievement or successes. In the Cambridge dictionary legacy is defined as: "something that is a part of your history or that remains from an earlier time: legacy of The Greeks have a rich legacy of literature." However, through taking part in What Will Survive of Us this notion of legacy was unpicked, and legacy instead became to be about love and passion, something alive and shifting. This meant that everyone could see themselves as having a legacy. One participant stated: "My perspective on legacy is no longer solely focussed on what I have created or done in my life but also on what I have enjoyed and appreciated." A workshop facilitator shared: "Today I perceive legacy as something that everybody has and deserves to share, regardless of their journey on this planet." Another facilitator shared "I definitely had more time to draw new conclusions on legacy, and how we achieve such, realising it's not how big they are, but the intention and attitude we hold with every moment to create them big, small or silly!"

One participant shared their changing understanding of legacy: "legacy, you tend to think of, you know, what kind of success have you had in life or you know what have you done? Well, so that was kind of in my mind when I thought legacy, but then of course that all changed. You see, it wasn't about your successes... The whole thing about loving.. it's kind of, it's moving, isn't it? Art moves as we go along. It doesn't remain static. It's now it's present. It shifts." This idea of legacy as something moving was spoken about by multiple participants. Another shared "I think of it (legacy) as more personal and fluid, something I can have some level of control over." Legacy in the context of What Will Survive of Us is therefore not just something that happens after we die. It is something that happens whilst we are still here. One staff member commented:

"Ultimately we will be remembered in certain ways and this is an opportunity for us to choose that or to give an indication of how people might remember us. But I think it's a bit more than that. I think it's a bit more than saying 'Here's how I would like to be remembered', it's getting us to think about something almost like beyond legacy is getting us to think about, like how we're living, as well as how we'd like to be remembered. And I think, you know, felt quite live."



'I think I have a much broader understanding of what legacy might look like'



'What I have enjoyed and appreciated'

'legacy is something that everybody has and deserves to share regardless of their journey'



'It wasn't about your success'



'We will be remembered in certain ways'



'this is an opportunity for us to'



'Choose how people might remember Us...'

Tender Conversations

Another theme that emerged from interviewing participants and workshop leaders was the emotional impact of engaging in the project, and the 'tender conversations' that took place in the workshops.

One participant spoke about how she had been drawn to attend the sessions after she had lost her mother. She had been trying to capture memories and thoughts from her mother before she had passed but had found this very difficult, so she had consequently begun to think about how she could preserve her own legacy and stories. She therefore felt the project was "really appropriate for what I wanted to do," but also that "it was quite an emotional thing to do". She shared:

"It's an awful lot of self reflection. I didn't know what to expect, but I was thinking now I want to do this for myself and it might give me some clues about things that were going on. And I never really anticipated that I was going to turn it in on myself and actually do it while I was there. So that was one thing I wasn't sort of. It's not that I wasn't comfortable with that, I wasn't prepared for it"

The idea of legacy is tied in many ways to ageing and getting older. However, participants also reflected how being older can make these topics more challenging to speak about. One participant shared how he had spoken to friends about the project but because they were "going through health issues" and "much older" that they "don't want to talk about those kinds of things... it could maybe be too much". However, they noted the ways in which the facilitators handled these topics made it much easier to talk about. "I think it was gentle the way that they just prompted people to come up with the hard pieces". Another participant shared that a moment that really stood out for them in the Stockton workshop was "When I realised I was going to cry and I felt safe enough to cry", this was an experience echoed in the care home when staff highlighted the significance of participants crying in the group and sharing their vulnerable side.

The project had the potential to be much more confronting for those participants who took part at the hospice. A staff member commented: "Those kind of conversations are potentially quite tender for a group of people that know that they're dying." One thing that stood out at the workshops here was that multiple people wanted to include objects that reflected their experience of illness. One participant included forget-me-nots to represent her experience with ME, another participant included something to represent walking and dancing reflecting how important they are to her but that she can't do them anymore. Another of the participants had even brought in their radiotherapy mask. The staff member expressed how this project highlighted a level of acceptance within the group of participants:

"I'm still a person and I own my illness. You know, like my illness doesn't kind of define me, and that might mean going well. It's really important to say that. This is me with my illness. I want the chair to be in it and I want it to be in the Hospice and I want it to be here because I'm really happy here right now."

The What Will Survive of us workshops offered a safe and supportive environment to tend to these tender and emotional aspects of thinking about legacy.

'I want to do
this for
myself.'



conversations are quite tender for a group of people who know that they're dying.

'I'm still a person and I own my illness' an emotional thing to do.

Uncovering Things About Yourself

The majority of those who took part reflected on how they had learned things about themselves. For some people these learnings centred more around perception: “I learnt more about how I view myself and how I think others perceive me”. When one participant was asked if they felt they had learned anything about themselves they responded “Oh, God, yes. Definitely. Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely!” For example through selecting a profile photo for the project they “noticed that I’m either hiding with a hat or sunglasses or half a face or whatever” in all of their photos.

Others felt the sessions had helped them learn about what was important to them:

“I think I realised what is actually important to me, I struggle with knowing who I am so I found the sessions important.”

“I think it did make you start to look at your life and you know what is more important”.

These questions led some participants to reflect on whether they were ‘satisfied’ with their life; whether they were leading or had led a ‘good life’. Participants reflected “that’s what one muses on or or thinks about, you know afterwards”. This demonstrates the impact of the project beyond the workshop and the lasting effects that participants felt from taking part. These are not simple outcomes like an improved wellbeing but rather a deeper more philosophical insight into their life.

The facilitators also found that taking part in the workshop helped them learn about themselves. It was an essential part of the process that facilitators also engaged in thinking about their own legacy. One facilitator shared - “I found the idea of addressing my own legacy extremely challenging, and this in turn enabled me to truly empathise with the process the participants were going through”. Another facilitator shared that they felt the workshops “reassured within me the power of listening, being open and present”.



'I think I realised what was actually important to me'

'It did make you start to look at your life'

'I struggle with knowing what I am, so I found the sessions important'

'Satisfied with life'

'Led a good life'

'I learnt a lot about how I view myself'

'I view myself'

Unlocking Connection

A unique part of the What Will Survive of Us workshops was the connections that emerged between participants, facilitators, and staff. This was especially clear in the interviews and reflections from facilitators. One facilitator shared:

"I've got to know these people. Like, literally one of them turned up in my dream. He just turned up in my dream. So this is how close we've got because, I feel like I know some of them more than I know like my own aunts and uncles and stuff because we don't sit at home and go, oh, what's your creative legacy? And like, we don't do it. And yet these people I've got so close with, I know a lot about them. And I think there's something that makes you connect really deep when you're talking about art. Yeah. And I think that's just so beautiful. And I just have loved it."

Another facilitator shared that:

"The service users at St Christopher who I know from my volunteering showed a very different side to what they had shown in our usual group. I think this was due to a deeper connection through the process of delving into joyful memories from their lives which they were proud about. Connecting them with parts of themselves they had placed or left on a shelf, that they could share with the group was a joy to witness. I learned so much about their uniqueness, and what they got excited about but also the way they approached different things."

Both of these quotes show that there was something very special about these workshops that unlocked connection in a different way. The medium of the workshop allowed people to share parts of themselves that they hadn't shared before, and the conversations based around art facilitated this. One facilitator shared that this deeper connection was also fostered due to the freedom of the workshop format, sharing: "I think we've got to know them deeper than we would have if we'd had, like, an aim or a real strong outcome."

These connections were very meaningful for the facilitators, another shared: "I felt like I really learnt a lot about the participants which was humbling and moving." The staff at the care home also noted the connection between the facilitators and participants:

"For everybody they connect, they connect and I think they feel because the girls are not in uniform. They open up to people. You know, so therefore you can. You've got wonderful people who work here, who will try and get that, but because everybody here is in a uniform to see people coming in in different colours and brightness, it makes them feel brighter and I think they open up more to people like that. You know, there's not a barrier of say them and us it's, 'oh, you're part of us because you're, you know, you're not in a uniform'. So therefore they feel more, I think, free to try and express themselves"

The workshops also helped to facilitate more connection between the staff and care home residents. One facilitator commented: "I think that this work has allowed the staff to unlock different things about the people they're caring for that they wouldn't normally have these conversations with." The staff agreed saying during the workshops they noticed:

"when they tell you different parts of their life, you think 'what a wonderful life you've had. I didn't realise that you did that'. So there's lots of little wow moments... You think 'I didn't know you could draw like that' You know? It's like small things, but it gives us a better picture of the real person. That's what it is. Finding the real person"



Tower Bridge Care Home

Tower Bridge Care Home is a purpose-built care home with 122 beds. The care home has just recently changed hands and is now managed by Agincare as of October 2024 (Previously HC-One). The care home specialises in dementia care and as such all participants in the WWSOU workshops were living with dementia.

The project ran twice for 4 weeks, once in June/July and once in September/October. Unlike in other settings, these groups ran with the majority of the same participants. However, due to the nature of working in this setting the groups varied in size as participants' attendance fluctuated depending on mood or illness. Some weeks the groups were made up of only 5 attendees whereas in other weeks it could be as many as 15.

What was unique about the workshops here?

To make the workshop as accessible as possible the facilitators took a flexible approach. They employed methods such as picking themes out of a hat and making a group playlist. This facilitated more engagement from the residents. The organisation lead complimented their skills stating:

"They've taken it on board, things that they thought would work and haven't they've gone all right then and they've changed within that session and it's not been, oh, we're going to plod on with this. Yeah. They've looked at each other and you can see they've gone 'This isn't working' So therefore we'll go back to something we know and we'll come back and fresh again next week."

One facilitator reflected on this process stating:

"These workshops reminded me of the importance of being attuned to each individual's needs throughout the sessions. And therefore to place these needs before the need to deliver the workshop as planned. To be open to improvise, to take different directions and explore the unknown with joy."

The facilitators discovered that the medium of music really engaged and excited the residents. For example, one week a facilitator reflected that a resident was "a bit grumpy with us, but as soon as we put the music on, she's holding our hands, she's dancing and I think that that's just a beautiful thing to be able to see" and another week "One lady wanted to go home, go back to her room and then we started to play a song that she liked and then she stayed for two hours". A resident shared that "Singing always makes me happy". The facilitators would spend time discussing favourite artists, songs, genres, and memories associated with the songs. This resulted in a far deeper connection with the music that was then played.

One facilitator shared:

"Those moments are inspired by thinking about creative legacy. Who's your favourite singer? And then narrowing it down to one song, playing that song and you see the emotion behind it. It's not like they've just picked a song out of thin air... There's tears, there's smiles, there's being unable to speak, there's dancing, and that doesn't come from just going oh, I like this artist. It comes from weeks of us talking about them and then finding the one song that they really like and it encapsulates everything they love about that artist or that style."



The workshops that took place at Tower Bridge care homes necessitated a different approach to the idea of legacy. Facilitators reflected “ours is definitely more about memories than legacy”. But these discussions led their way back to ideas of legacy in a more indirect way. One facilitator commented “I think they like going back into the past rather than thinking about what they will leave, but through that you realise what they are going to leave”. This reflects a core philosophy of the project in which complex issues are approached in new and unexpected ways. Kit described this as “coming at it from a different angle and surprising it”.



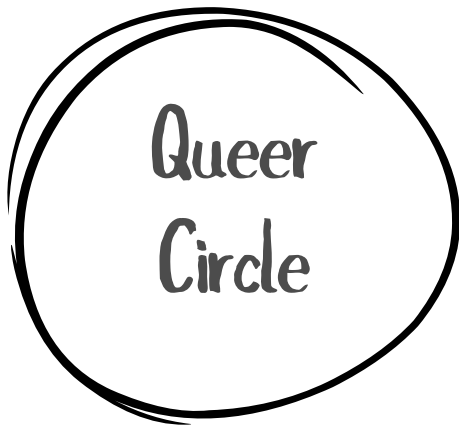
Care homes can be difficult spaces to work in, for the residents you are in their home, and for the care staff you are in their workplace. The group was affected by illness and bereavement that meant the group of residents that continued on the project decreased over the weeks. There was also the added complication of the care home changing management during the period that the workshops took place which can result in a general unsettled atmosphere within the care home. However the benefits of the sessions were clear. The activities coordinator commented:

“The residents 100% benefited. The group that we've had really, really gained a lot. They've all looked forward to it...They've all participated fully and it's made a massive difference to their week. So that means a massive difference to their life.”

The residents shared that they thought it was “Brilliant”, that they liked that “Everybody joins in”, and that “It cheers me up”.

The benefits were not solely for the care home residents. One facilitator commented that “this work has allowed the staff to unlock different things about the people they're caring for that they wouldn't normally have these conversations with.” And one staff member reflected: “You're never too old to learn, never, because if you've been in the job for a long time as I have, there's still new things and a new way of looking at something. So, I feel that, you know, I've learnt something out of it as well”.





Queer Circle is an LGBTQ+ led charity based in Greenwich. The charity began in 2016 in response to the closure of many of the queer spaces in London over the last decade. The organisation works at the intersection of arts, health and social action. Their building in Greenwich opened in 2022 and is based in the Design District in North Greenwich, their modern space is used by a number of community groups free of charge. WWSOU held 2, 4 week, programmes of sessions; the first took place in June/July 2024, and the second run took place September/October 2024,

Attendees

The number of participants at sessions ranged between 1 and 7. The group of participants represented a diverse age range and experience of disability. As expected from this venue there was also a broad spectrum of sexualities represented in the workshops. Notably in this group there was very limited ethnic diversity.

| Age | Gender | Sexuality | Ethnicity | Disability |
|-----|---------|------------------|----------------------|------------|
| 26 | Female | Bisexual | White/Italian | Yes |
| 36 | Female | Queer | White British | No |
| 36 | Female | Bi | White | No |
| 43 | Agender | Bisexual | White | Yes |
| 63 | Male | Queer/Homosexual | White-Scottish/Irish | Yes |
| 66 | Male | Straight | British/White | No |
| 68 | Male | Gay | White | No |

What was unique about the workshops here?

The workshops at Queer Circle tended towards much smaller groups leading to deeper and more intricate explorations of the project. They were facilitated by two younger queer facilitators. It was important to this project that the facilitators and participants had a mutual experience of queerness and as a result the facilitators said they had a “shorthand of shared experiences”. Due to the smaller numbers attending these groups the lines between the facilitators and participants were blurred, making these groups feel more collaborative. This could also have resulted from being in a queer space and people’s barriers being down. The project here had a unique intergenerational aspect. Facilitators reflected that they felt they were “young queer people standing on the shoulders of elders”, and that this work presented something that felt “quite healing”. A participant stated: “I hope in future iterations of the course a mixed age range can still be achieved because it would be less effective if it was just an oldies, remember the good old days memory regression.”

However, the project here also opened up discussions around ageism within the queer community. One participant reflected:

“I don't think LGBT people want to deal with ageing. I think that's really what it's all about...It's obvious that there are challenges when it comes to talking about ageing because it's such a sort of youth oriented sort of community. Once you get older, there's a lot of stigma. There's a lot of, you know, rejection of older LGBT people. So I think I think that could be part of it. A bit of denial as well of getting older.”

There was also a benefit of having people in the same age group attending, one participant recalled “the discussion between myself, Kit and one other participant of our age regarding “buddying” people with AIDS in the early days of the pandemic was quite healing”. This notion of healing was poignantly echoed by both facilitators and participants.

The smaller groups meant that more difficult conversations were given a lot of space for discussion. One participant spoke about some of the more painful and difficult moments that came up in the sessions.

“There was some painful, painful memories, I think for both of us. Talking about, you know, legacy and ageing and I think it's also the kind of: ‘Have you done what you would like to have done in your life?’ Coming to that realization that you are reaching the kind of part of your life where we don't know the end game. But have you actually achieved what you would have liked to achieve?”

One participant shared “I think it did make you start to look at your life and you know what's what is more important”, consequently he felt like he should take more “opportunities” and “risks”, whether this was booking holidays or going out to see performances of music he'd never listened to. The ripples and effects of these workshops are far reaching and difficult to capture. Participants spoke about how the project “sticks with you for quite a long time”. Both participants and facilitators also spoke about how they had many subsequent conversations with friends and family. The impact and effect of these conversations will carry on far beyond the workshops.





St Christopher's Hospice opened in 1967 in Sydenham and provides care and support for people across 5 London boroughs: Bromley, Croydon, Lambeth, Lewisham and Southwark. The What Will Survive of Us workshops took place in June & July 2024 in the St Christopher's CARE (Centre for Awareness and Response to End of life) building. The CARE building was built in 2021 and offers a beautiful light space where St Christopher's runs a number of different learning and outreach programmes as well as groups for patients.

Attendees

The facilitators ran a number of workshops whilst at St Christopher's hospice:

- **Create & Chat**

This is a group for patients. People attend this group for a variety of reasons, for some it's a distraction or a reason to get out of the house, whereas others attend the group to explore their artistic/creative side. There were 4 sessions attended by between 12 and 14 participants. These participants were mostly older and mostly white. The ethnicity of the group was: 10 White British, 2 Asian/British Asian, 2 Black/Caribbean.

- **Volunteers and Community Members**

There were two sessions run with volunteers and other members of the St Christopher's community. In session 1 there were 8 participants (7 White British, 1 Asian) and in session 2 there were 6 participants (all White British).

- **Young Changemakers**

Young Changemakers is a summer school and leadership development programme for 16-18-year olds who are interested in helping in their community to support others and create change. The participants in the WWSOU session were taking part in a 5 day summer school learning about topics such as self-care and resilience, communication skills, and health, social and palliative care systems and the people who make them work. In total 22 young changemakers took part in one afternoon workshop.

- **Brit School**

The facilitators also ran a workshop with 8 participants from the Brit school.

What was unique about the workshops here?

Create and Chat

Unlike other workshop groups, the Create and Chat group are a pre-established group that already meet on a weekly basis. As such facilitators were considerate about their role within the group. The facilitators did reflect on the difficulties of entering into this group and that there was sometimes a feeling of being on 'their territory'. One facilitator reflected "I think the main challenge was stepping into an already formed dynamic, and knowing how best to support all the people taking part. We were also operating within a system where we were working with volunteers who may have had other reasons to be coming along to the group. This at times created a bit of tension. We were the newcomers, almost the guests in this instance and I was very concerned to not step on anyone's toes". But nonetheless the facilitators handled this with patience and took the time to build trusting relationships with the participants.



As this group was for patients of the hospice the topics of legacy and death were handled especially gently by the facilitators. These topics were also far more at the forefront of the participant's minds than in other groups. A staff member echoed this saying "Those kind of conversations are potentially quite tender for a group of people that know that they're dying." He also shared that although there is a precedent that people coming to the Create and Chat group will be sharing something of themselves, a lot of the time the group can also serve as a diversion and a distraction. One participant commented "I would be lying in bed but I'm here writing".

Participants engaged in different ways with the project. Midway through the 6 sessions participants were at very different stages with the project. Some had images they'd brought from home already cut into circles, whereas others were still working with almost blank sheets. A staff member noted that there is often some resistance when taking part in such creative projects. One participant resisted in a particularly interesting way: "there was one gentleman in the group who came back the first week and just he just done it all. He printed everything off. Here it is. It's done. And knowing him, I think that's because he doesn't want to talk about it." In this way the participant was able to take control entirely of the process, avoiding any further more challenging conversations around legacy. The staff member commented "he doesn't really like to sit with that uncertainty, sit with the questions you know which I think is the heart of what this workshop is." One of the real benefits of WWSOJ is that participants can take agency of the project in this way, however it is also clear that you get out of this work what you put in, and a refusal to engage in the more existential aspects of this work may mean participants don't gain as much. These different ways of engaging were noticed by facilitators but they commented "I was surprised by how ready all the workshop participants were to give the WWSOJ process a try. Some participants didn't take part, but this was only really a few".



The project opened up a lot of reflection and conversation. A staff member reflected that the project presents a "simple ask" but a "confident model" in being able "to sit with a really simple question and not not feel that we need to move things along. It's trusting that there is magic in every answer and asking that question and then sitting with people and letting it percolate for them a bit." The responses to this simple ask were expansive and thoughtful. They reflected:

"One of the real benefits of the whole project was that it kind of sparked some of that stuff and it didn't necessarily resolve all of the all of those things, but they didn't need to be resolved. It kind of got people thinking about their context and their circumstances and their illness and their lives and everything kind of holistically"

One of the other benefits noted by the staff member was the expanding of the groups' understanding of art in "a really positive generative way." The project's broad understanding of what art is led to some really meaningful personal developments for attendees in the group but also led to changes in the group as a whole. In terms of individual developments a staff member noted how a couple of participants had been more free with their drawing, "confident in not needing to achieve formal detail", or more "experimental".

"It gently expanded that kind of boundary of like what we might think art is and I think by doing that, that all broadens their aesthetic lens about thinking about how they could represent themselves. So, you know, it's OK to be represented by beans on toast in the same way that it might be represented by a symphony or whatever. So it's like the things that matter to me hold value. And I think broadening that boundary I think was like, yeah, was really great for the create and chat group because I know that's something that we've kind of tried to work with a bit and maybe not always got there."

Young Changemakers

Young Changemakers were a group of teenagers who were attending the hospice over the course of 5 days. Some of them knew each other well but there were also new friendships and fresh relationships beginning to build within the group. The large group of 22 were split into two smaller groups to take part in the session. Some students dove straight in, for others there was a bit more awkwardness and a lot of “I can’t draw” “I’m so bad at art”. Nonetheless, everyone managed to fill a side of A3 and the final products were wonderfully diverse.

Across all of the legacies created by the Young Changemakers culture, heritage, and religion were really strong themes. Items included lots of flags and Psalms. There were fascinating juxtapositions – beautiful Psalms next to the golden arches of McDonalds, Grandmothers cooking and a giraffe, GOD and MONEY. One participant included a poem they wrote and shared the beautifully touching story of how they wrote it during detention and the teacher displayed it in the library. This teacher later passed away and this was partly the reason they had become interested in palliative and hospice care.

The contrast between the items chosen in the afternoon groups and the morning create and chat group are striking. This is perhaps unsurprising as the groups were of very different ages and experiencing very different parts of life. The Young changemakers were there to learn about new prospects for their future careers, whereas the create and chat group are facing the closing of prospects. There was perhaps a lean towards including “favourite” things in the changemakers group rather than things to leave behind. The unifying theme of both these groups (surprisingly) was cats. Kit has shared that this is the only item they can almost guarantee comes up in every session of WWSou!





ARC Stockton Arts Centre is a charity working in Stockton-on-Tees and the Tees Valley using arts and cultural activity to support their local communities. They bring artists from around the UK to spend time at ARC and work with local people. Their work aims to enhance the wellbeing of their community through the arts as well as supporting people to raise their aspirations and enhance their experience of the world. WWSOU ran a series of workshops in September 2024.

Attendees

| Age | Gender | Sexuality | Ethnicity | Disability |
|-----|------------|--------------|---------------------|------------|
| 21 | male | heterosexual | mixed british asian | no |
| 23 | female | queer | white british | yes |
| 23 | female | heterosexual | british | no |
| 24 | female | heterosexual | white british | no |
| 27 | agender | asexual | white british | yes |
| 29 | woman | pansexual | mixed white & asian | no |
| 30 | female | bisexual | white british | yes |
| 32 | male | straight | white british | yes |
| 44 | male | gay/queer | white british | yes |
| 49 | non binary | gay | white british | no |
| 63 | female | straight | white british | no |
| 69 | female | n/a | welsh/british | no |

What was unique about the workshops here?

The sessions at ARC worked differently to the other workshops. Rather than a series of 4 workshops over 4 weeks, People either attended for 2 full days of workshops, or came to drop in sessions. Participants reflected that the workshops were a:

“Very cathartic experience of self reflection. The space was very calming and the facilitators were really helpful.”

One participant spoke about how being in the group helped inspire her with ideas for her 6 items:

“So whilst I was there, I thought I can't actually think of anything. I can't think of anything that would be that important to record in that way. And then it was quite good because somebody else said, oh, I was going to do this, but that doesn't fit. And I thought, oh, actually, I could see how that would fit with what I'm doing and things about achievements, he said: well, what did you achieve? It's like when I used to go to work every day and I did this and did that. But on reflection, there's a lot of things I did achieve.”



A different participant shared this sentiment reflecting:

"I'd had a few weeks to think about my 6 things but it wasn't until the session when I really settled on my things."

Some participants thought that it could have been beneficial to have the sessions spread over a longer period of time to leave space for ideas and reflections:

"When we started the beginning of the session, I thought, oh, I could do this or I could do that. And then as it went on, I thought about different things. And I was coming away. I thought, oh, I could have done this, or I could have done that. So sometimes you need time to reflect, I think on your understanding... but also reflecting on your own experiences. Of what you actually want to do. Because I come away and I'm talking to myself, thinking, oh, you should have done this, you should have done that. So I think that would have been beneficial to have like a series of them over a couple of weeks."



However, despite the shorter, more casual format of drop-in sessions, participants still reported that they gained a lot from the workshops and took away inspiration to continue the project in their own way. One participant explained how she had been moved to share this process with her family in her own way. She said that "I've spoken to my sister about it and I've said she needs to do it". But also spoke about how her broader understanding of legacy had led her to involve her grandchildren in the project.

"Rather than just be photographs we printed off some... We have a book that we put them in and then they write stories around it and they'll draw pictures around it. So that I think is them sort of participating in that legacy"

This again demonstrates the far reaching effects of this work, opening up conversations between family members and enabling important conversations and sharing between generations.



Workshop Facilitators

This iteration of What Will Survive of Us was led by 8 new facilitators alongside the creator Kit Green. The facilitators came from a variety of backgrounds but all came with experience of facilitating creative workshops. The 6 facilitators for the projects based in London met for an induction day, the 2 facilitators for Stockton met over zoom. In these meetings facilitators were introduced to the project and then Kit accompanied the facilitators at the start of each of the projects in the different settings. One facilitator reflected on how helpful this guidance was:

“Working as a facilitator on What will Survive of Us, was a wonderfully rewarding opportunity. From meeting the Artist, their exuberance and inspirational passion towards the project, to the training with the other open hearted facilitators, which really made me feel like I was a part of a meaningful project, one I believed in, and that was the culmination of an evolving experienced journey by Kit.”

Facilitators spoke about what they had learned to take into their own practice:

“I think that I’ll then take that with me: facilitating with other people, just allow yourself to just be more in the moment and present”

“I think the most significant thing I will be taking away into my own practice will be trusting artistic process more. Participants took the questions and the theme in so many different creative directions that were totally impossible to imagine at the beginning of working together. Creating a trusting and welcoming environment was instrumental in enabling participants to trust the process too.”

Facilitators shared that the lessons they learned were not only in relation to their professional work but also their lives more generally:

“Something invaluable I’m taking away with me into my personal life is to use the approaches I learned during the workshops into the way I relate to elderly in my life”

Facilitators also commented on the challenges of leading these workshops. For some it was the nature of the difficult conversations that can arise from the workshops:

“for certain participants the material and process was quite triggering. I think that this is the essence of what the project is, however as someone new to working in this setting I think I could have benefitted from some more support”

This is something to consider for the project in the future. Support for the facilitators could look like more chances for facilitators to meet with one another to share experiences, or perhaps structured debriefs with a staff member.

For some facilitators it was a learning experience working with the loose format of the workshops:

“I did at times find it difficult to bring attention to those that were sharing when some people weren’t engaging, or had separate conversations that they wanted to continue with, which is something I can learn from.”



For the facilitators at the care home where they had the same participants for the second round of workshops they found it challenging to keep the workshops engaging:

“I think for us we've struggled a second time. We haven't struggled because (obviously it's been lovely) but this second round because we're doing it with the same group of people and they've already done the work we would have liked some more prompt and potentially like more tangible activities to do with them”

However, facilitators also noted that “I felt there was freedom to tailor our approach into individual and group needs, so we listen to our intuition quite a lot throughout this process”.

The broad and open nature of the workshops therefore came with positives and challenges for the facilitators. There could be space for more prompts or activities for those working in different settings. Equally the design of these activities may be best left to the expertise of the facilitators in each of these various settings.



Successes and Recommendations for the Future:

Successes

There were so many successful aspects of the workshops and the project. Some of these that emerged most clearly from the interviews and surveys were:

- **Intergenerational workshops** - participants loved being able to share their experiences across the generations and learn from one another.
- **A wide demographic reach** - because the workshops took part in a variety of settings the work was able to reach people from many different backgrounds and circumstances. As a result the project demonstrated a way to embrace the diversity and equality of legacy.
- **Openness** - the broad and non-prescriptive design of the project enabled the facilitators to be flexible and the participants to exercise their agency in the way they engaged with the project.
- **Learning** - participants, facilitators, and staff all reported learning something through taking part in the project. For some it was learning about themselves whereas others were more struck by what they had learned about others who were taking part (participants that they had only just met, or people they had been working with for much longer).
- **Far reaching impact** - perhaps the most striking success from this project has been the hardest to capture. Many people who took part reported the subsequent conversations they have had with friends or family members and how the project had opened up conversations about legacy and what we leave behind. If each of the 94 participants, 6 participants, and numerous staff and volunteers who took part were also speaking to others about the project and their changed understanding of legacy then the impact of the workshop will ripple out to hundreds of other people.

Recommendations

This phase of the project involved many opportunities for learning and developing the workshops. Some of the key findings from the evaluation of where the project could be developed were:

- **Access to the website** - One of the challenges faced by the project was delays in the website development phase. This meant that the original plan to have participants upload their items to the website in the second phases of workshops wasn't feasible. Some participants reflected that they would have benefited from having access to the website sooner and this was echoed by some staff at the partner organisations.
 - **Website evaluation** - the project should continue to seek feedback about the website and make sure that any concerns about accessibility are addressed.
- **More support for facilitators** - there were a few reflections from facilitators that indicated there could have been more support for those who were new to facilitating workshops in what could be more confronting environments.
- **Clearer invite offer** - in some settings the project struggled to recruit higher numbers of participants. Some people who took part reflected that this may have been because people were not sure what to expect from the workshops. This could be something to consider in future iterations of the project to encourage more people to take part.

About the Author



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Millie has a BA in philosophy, and MA in Health Humanities and is a PhD student at UAL (London College of Fashion) and UCL (Dementia Research Centre). Her research focuses on the idea of agency for people living with dementia. Millie has been working with people living with dementia for over 10 years and runs creative workshops for people with dementia. She has previously worked as a Research Assistant at Wellcome and UCL, and has worked on a number of research and evaluation projects for organisations such as Creative Arts East and Music for Life.

About the Illustrator



Sorrel Milne

Sorrel is an illustrator and 2D animation director celebrated for her vibrant visuals, bold style, and heartfelt storytelling. With a focus on socially engaged illustration, Sorrel uses a unique blend of hand-drawn textures and digital techniques to craft meaningful, accessible artwork that connects with audiences. Her illustrative approach extends seamlessly into animation, where she brings these visuals to life with dynamic, narrative-driven motion. Collaborating with organisations such as UN Women UK, the NHS, and prestigious universities, Sorrel transforms complex topics into visually compelling and emotionally resonant stories.