

Creative Writing

A Positive Route to Good Mental Health and General Well-being

The brief

With funding secured by Erewash Writers working with Erewash Voluntary Action, Chrissie Hall was asked to write and deliver six creative writing sessions at Long Eaton Library based on the Five Ways to Well-being, and designed to support good mental health.

Challenges

- Liaising with Erewash Writers regarding the number of participants due to restricted room capacity.
- Creating six engaging, interesting and varied sessions for participants from various backgrounds and abilities.
- Enabling and encouraging contributions from all participants.

QUOTES

"Everyone's so friendly."

"I used to love English at school but I haven't done anything for years and years."

"It's been really good. Really different. I've loved it. Thank you."



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Solutions

- Creating a Policy regarding membership and participants, while also being sensitive to the needs and family circumstances of those wishing to join the sessions.
- Researching a suitable fun quiz, creating writing exercises, sourcing readings and poems, providing accessible academic resources, music, etc. and including time for social engagement, reading and discussions.
- Ensuring that everyone had opportunities to read their work, and offer comments in a safe supportive non-judgemental environment, with all participants respecting each other and the confidential nature of written work and conversation.

Outcomes

A happy and caring group quickly established, where participants enjoyed each others company and benefitted from mutual support and encouragement and began to expand their creative responses.

Participants came early and left late.

Everyone helped make and pass around drinks and biscuits, several brought treats to share, everyone exchanging experiences (good and less good) which had happened since we last met.

The group were enthusiastic and generous in baking and buying buffet food for our last session. Every member brought something to read, making it a celebration of achievements.

Erewash Writers plan to publish an Anthology of poems, prose and stories as a legacy outcome to the course. Participants exchanged contact details, cards and gifts and intend to maintain contact regarding the publication of the Anthology and future plans.



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