



Arts & Minds Newsletter

Winter 2020

EXHIBITION

CHANGE IS GONNA COME

*Whether it is a tree or a statue that is toppled,
change is gonna come...*

See all 40 submissions for the 2020 Arts & Minds
exhibition as members respond to the theme
of change (page 16)

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A WORD FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the winter edition of the Arts & Minds newsletter! As 2020 draws to a close we look back at some of the amazing work members have done over the year through projects such as the Hope Quilt and the Arts & Minds exhibition that is on our website at the moment.

2020 has been a strange year to say the least but out of adversity, and a number of technical challenges that lockdown has provided, Arts & Minds has flourished and gone from strength to strength moving workshops online and finding new ways to engage with members.

Mental health can affect any of us at any time, but the holiday period over Christmas and New Year can feel particularly hard, especially after such a tough year.

The Arts & Minds office will be closed for two weeks over the Christmas period but if you're feeling lonely, anxious or depressed, or if you are not really sure how you feel, then talking to someone can help. The phone numbers opposite are there if you need someone to talk to.

As always I will be looking for new ways for us all to keep connected and for creative outlets that members can engage with in these times of social isolation. If you have an idea of how to do this, or you want to connect up, please email me at: toby@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk. Please also keep checking the Arts & Minds eBulletin and website for more information.

Finding support in a mental health crisis (Covid-19 update)

www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/help

If you're under the age of 18 go to www.mindmate.org.uk and search 'Urgent help'.

Information correct: July 2020



Fold on the lines



Helplines

West Yorkshire 24 hour mental health helpline offers confidential support, advice, information and guidance for anyone in Leeds concerned about their mental health. Tel: **0800 183 0558**.

Connect Helpline is a survivor-led local service which offers emotional support and information to people in Leeds every night 6pm-2am. Tel: **0808 800 1212** or go to www.lslcs.org.uk for online chat.

Help from the NHS



Ring **NHS 111** (open 24/7) if you, or someone you know, needs urgent care but it's not life threatening. Or talk online at www.111.nhs.uk.

Talk to a GP - ask for an emergency appointment with the first available GP. GP surgeries are open but most appointments will be by phone or video.



Leeds crisis support services

Well-Bean 'Hope in a Crisis' Cafe is open to people in crisis (16+), seven nights a week, 6pm-12am. The cafe is currently offering one-to-one support by phone or Zoom and social space by Zoom. You can download the Zoom app, free of charge, to your phone. Ring or text first on **07760 173 476** if you want to access the Cafe.

What is a mental health crisis?

Each person's experience of crisis is personal to them. It can feel like reaching a breaking point. Or, the world crashing down on you and no longer being able to cope.



If you're struggling, it's important to know that you're not alone. There's always someone to talk to: www.mindwell-leeds.org.uk/help

Connect BSL Helpline is on Mondays at 7-11pm, facetime/skype/glide with BSL trained staff. Tel: **07500 870 987**.



Samaritans is open 24/7 to talk about whatever you're going through. Tel: **116 123** (free phone).

Leeds and York Partnership NHS Foundation Trust's (LYPFT) Single Point of Access (SPA) - if you, or someone you're worried about, needs urgent care or treatment for a mental health crisis call the SPA on **0300 300 1485** (open 24/7, every day).

What if I'm already receiving care from LYPFT? You should have contact details for your Care Coordinator, or another health professional, in your crisis/safety plan who you can contact initially. However, if they're not available and you need help urgently call the SPA on **0300 300 1485**.

Dial House offers emotional and practical support to people (16+) in crisis. It's open Monday, Wednesday, Friday, Saturday & Sunday, 6pm-2am, providing support by Zoom or by phone. Ring **0113 260 9328** or text **07922 249 452**. Staff are answering the phone 6pm-2am.

Dial House@Touchstone is offering telephone support to people from Black & Minority Ethnic (BAME) groups (16+). Open Tuesdays & Thursdays, 6pm-12am. Tel: **0113 249 4675** or text **07763 581 853**.

If you're at risk of taking your life call 999 and ask for an ambulance or go to A&E.

HOPE QUILT

During lock down in spring of this year, I was contacted by Linda and the Arts & Minds team about a collaborative project. After a series of emails and phone calls, the Hope Quilt project was born. I've had lots of experience of working on projects of this kind, bringing together different communities to work on a large scale piece of work for exhibition. These projects with creative organisations like Manchester based 'arthur+martha' and Leeds based 'A Quiet Word' had all taken place when we could meet as a group, share tea and biscuits and work on our pieces together. A large part of any project is the coming together, meeting new people or finding out more about local and personal history. The Hope Quilt was a different kind of project in a world where face to face classes didn't exist.

My first challenge was to create a project pack to send out to participants, making sure that anyone who was interested could take part and have the materials. Designing a handout and helping to inspire people with the theme of hope. I had so much fun sitting in my studio, cutting fabric squares and embroidery thread.

Once I'd received the wonderful work, my next challenge was to create the quilt. There's lots of pressure when you need to cut and stitch pieces of cloth that people have worked hard to make! The quilt is made by adding lines of fabric between the blocks called sashing. They were hand stitched to make sure that the squares all lined up beautifully. My studio desk wasn't large enough to lay all the squares out so it was all done on my floor.





It was an honour to work on the project and I received so many wonderful notes and cards alongside the quilt squares. The theme of hope has meant different things to people. Artist Sandy Holden created a beautiful image of a boat on the water, reflecting on how she has missed the sea during lock down.

People reflected on how they have stayed connected with friends through a mutual love of gardening and craft, including fabric made by friends. The chance to stitch was something a few participants had not done for ages. As an artist who specialises in textiles, I know how much stitching means to me and how it has a really positive effect on my mental health. Something I love to share with others in my classes.

I'd like to say a huge thank you to everyone who took part in the project. I can wait until 2021 when we can exhibit the quilt and come together to celebrate.

Article by **Hayley Mills-Styles**

CLOTH CAT

Ruth De Lissandri spoke with Shelly Johnson, Project Co-ordinator at Cloth Cat to find out more about this grassroots music charity, based at Old Chapel Studios in Holbeck, Leeds.

Cloth Cat aims to support those around Leeds who are struggling with a range of issues in life, with music at the heart of all their activities. Their aim is to connect with individuals through a variety of routes, such as courses, events and other supportive projects, enabling them to find a sense of self-worth, and engage with others. Naturally, the Covid-19 situation brought up a host of challenges which Cloth Cat has had to adapt to quickly.

'Man About Town' feeds into the current societal problem which sees many men isolated and at risk of suicide, especially in West Yorkshire where the suicide rates for men are exceptionally high. Through a grant from Leeds Community Foundation, they aimed to run music sessions at the Old Chapel Studios in Holbeck where the male participants could write songs and 'jam' them through in the rehearsal rooms. Group outings had also been planned, including live music events around the city where they could bond with others and share their love of bands and other musical artists.

As more and more people access 'Man About Town', Shelly shares that they have had to be creative with the project and have been running a whole series of socially distanced vinyl picnics courtesy of a battery-operated record player! Many attendees also attended their open mic nights which

they had been able to safely run at The Pack Horse in Hyde Park until the second lockdown. This was also projected on the big screen and through Zoom also, so that people could play from home.

"I found these (activities) really helped my state of mind, and gave me something to get up for. I was introduced to other members who had experienced similar problems to me, and we could come together and produce something new which we could be proud of. I am immensely grateful for everything that the Man About Town project has given me." ('Man About Town' attendee).



Cloth Cat also provides a programme of courses, music mentoring and volunteering opportunities for young people with mental health issues, physical disabilities, family issues, or other health, social and cultural problems. This provides the opportunity to develop technical music making skills, forge new friendships, and grow in confidence. Cloth Cat has a history of running live music events too, organising gigs at many live music events around the city, including their weekly open mic night at The Pack Horse which has just surpassed the 25-year mark, and the Instrumental night at The Polish Centre in Chapel Allerton.



Photo courtesy of Kirsty Bowe

As lockdown began, it was recognised that it was more important than ever to connect and engage with those isolating over many months. This however, involved adapting the majority of their work to online delivery. Their 'Get Your Act Together' project with young people meant that sessions moved online, providing live sessions on YouTube and Zoom (entire courses can be accessed from the Cloth Cat YouTube channel). Similarly, the Music Production course was run online in partnership with the Workers Educational Association (WEA), and Cloth Cat are currently planning further courses, which are free to those on any means tested benefits, in the new year.

Cloth Cat were, however, pleased to be able to run the Fun Friday music performances at some of the mental health units in Leeds. These were socially distanced performances from some great artists from the city who played outside, and self-contained using their own busking amps and equipment. The sessions demonstrated Cloth Cat's passion for supporting mental health, and provided entertainment including much needed relief for the in-patients. Cloth Cat is now looking at how they can resume music-based workshops at some of these venues, as part of patients' rehabilitation through the Recovery College programme in the new year. New activities also include winter activities for 'Man About Town,' their fourth term on 'Get Your Act Together' and a spring term of music based adult courses with the WEA – so there's busy and exciting times ahead!

For more information on what projects Cloth Cat offers, please visit: www.clothcatleeds.org.uk

Article by **Ruth De Lissandri**

THE RIVER GANNEL

On a very hot September day (2020) I walked down the Gannel estuary which was dry because the tidal river was out. I walked about a mile of it right down to Crantock beach. It was whilst on the shore, all the words in the poem that follows came to me thick and fast. I sat on the sand enjoying a picnic and I quickly jotted all the words down and formed this quite haunting but atmospheric poem. When I got back to my cousin's house, I researched the history of the Gannel and was astounded by what I read, as it related to the words I'd written, spooky! Please enjoy my poem and illustration accompanying it.

The River Gannel

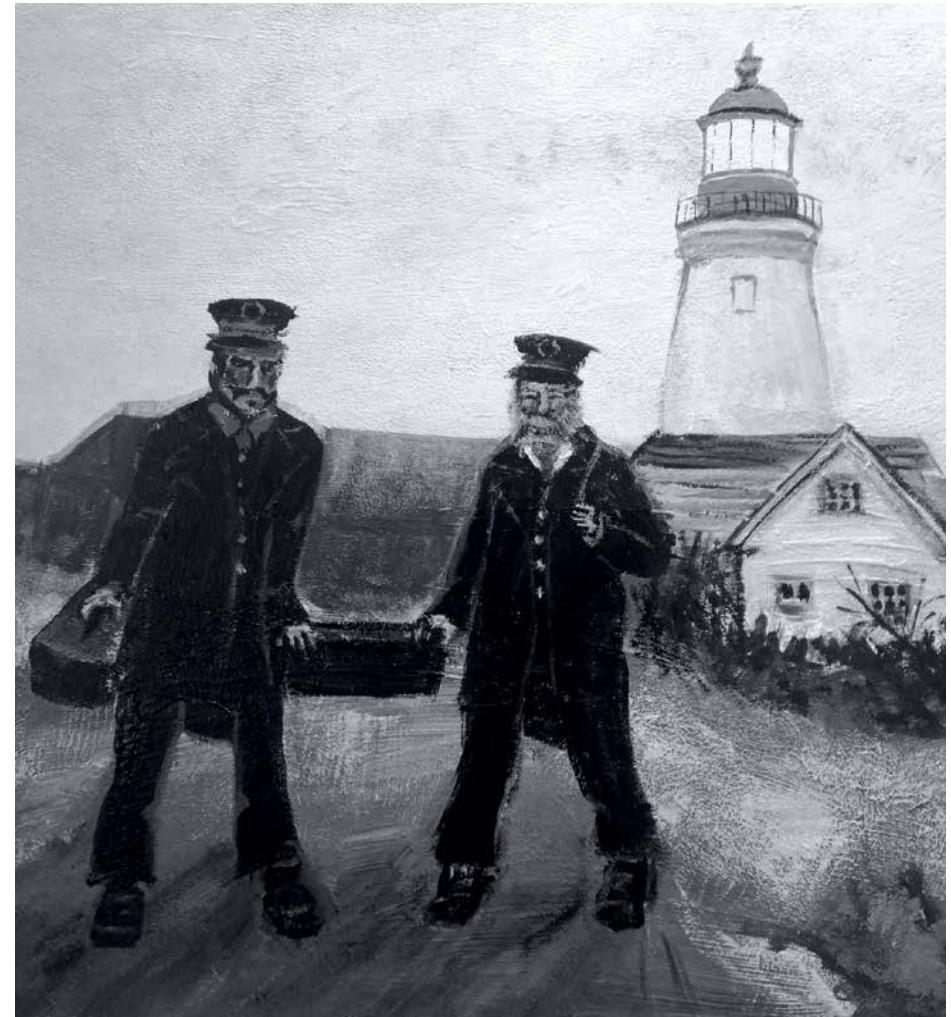
On the Gannel the sea frets came, whispery, toing and froing, without shame. The mist pockets riseth to capture the lost souls, but none could be found on this Gannel of boats.

Then they disappeared without a trace, leaving only tangled seaweed and the crushed shells of sea creatures from their moonlit reign.

A pale sound of a thousand voices, misery cryeth on the wind, could be heard and feared, like a lighthouse foghorn penetrating through a thick mist.

In the distance the silhouette of a lost weary mariner, all of which could be seen. He was white bearded and weak, arms flailing upwards and let out a scream whilst, bobbing and drifting in the shadows of the dark black sea.

Article by **Cassy Burton**



The 'Dowr Gwyles' (Cornish, meaning lovage river) rises in the village of Indian Queens in mid Cornwall. It flows north under Trevemper Bridge and becomes a tidal estuary called the 'Gannel' (Cornish, meaning Channel), that divides the town of Crantock and joins the Celtic Sea. The estuary contains a historic boat yard and is an important location for migratory birds. The river is known for a legend called the 'Gannel Crake', an unusual noise which might be heard "crying out". During the 19th century it was described like being like "a thousand voices pent up in misery, with one long wail dying away in the distance". It is traditionally referred to by the superstitious natives as the cry of a troubled spirit that ever haunts the scene.

ARTS & MINDS EXHIBITION

ARTS & MINDS ANNUAL EXHIBITION 2020: **CHANGE IS GONNA COME**

This years' Arts & Minds exhibition went online. Members were invited to submit artwork on the theme of Change.

Be it social, biological or simply the passing of time, the one thing that never changes is that there is always change. Change can be self-generated or imposed, change can affect things on a micro or macro scale and change can be positive or negative or sometimes both at the same time. Change can alter the physical world around us or can be internally focused and live in our thoughts and ideas.

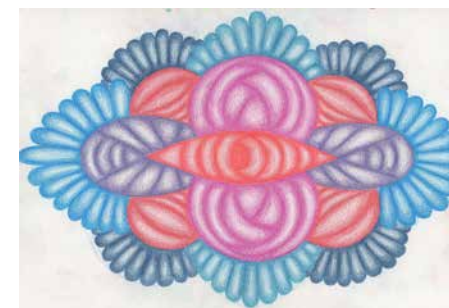
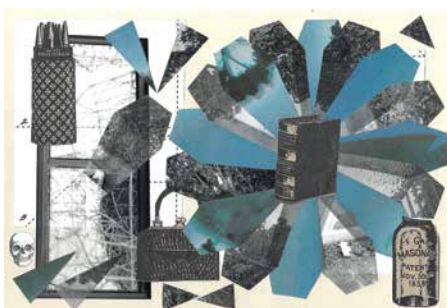
We exist in a time of change, both good and bad. Against a backdrop of a changing world due to the outbreak of coronavirus it is easy to forget that there are a multitude of other changes going on as well, ranging from the environmental changes happening to the planet that we all live on to the social changes being fought for and debated in countries around the globe. Whether it is a tree or a statue that is toppled, change is gonna come. Whether it is our own thoughts and feelings or our interactions with those around us that are altering, change is gonna come. Change is fundamental to our very existence and it is change that makes us human.

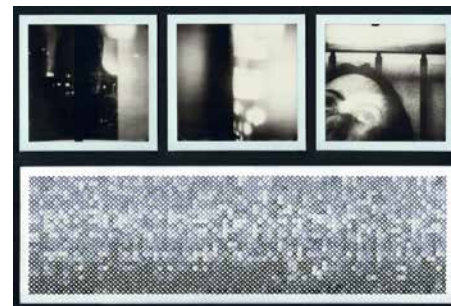
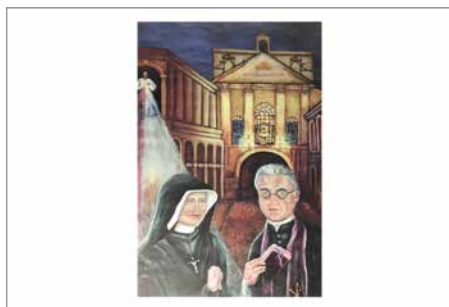


Change is both an opportunity and a challenge to examine ourselves and the world we live in. This year, Arts & Minds members have submitted a piece of artwork each responding to the idea of change, from personal shifts in perspective to changes on a global scale.

For more information about the artists featured in the exhibition and their work visit the exhibition online:

www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/exhibition







BUZZ GROUP

A huge thank you goes out to all the members who took part in both our members' survey and the Buzz Group event we held in November asking for ideas for projects and new ways to engage with members in 2021.

The ideas we received are brilliant and we are working through everything at the moment getting ready to launch new exciting projects. Due to popular demand we are continuing with the online Make Space group that we started in November and we will continue to develop new ways of connecting with members both online and through our mail out craft packs until we are able to meet up in person again. It is impossible to fit all the ideas in here but some of the themes and projects suggested by members are captured in the word cloud below.



COME-UNITY

As the song goes from the American children's TV show Sesame Street, I watched as a kid, *"Who are the people in your neighbourhood, they're the people that you meet each day!"*.

This was a song about teaching kids about the community they live in, who is in it and what they do. I remember thinking, as they went through all of the different characters in the community that there aren't that many people in my community, or are there? Do I even have a community?

Community feels like something we had in the 1950's or something that only small villages with church halls and summer fetes have. It doesn't feel like something we have in a big city in 2020. Like the prodigal son, community is finding its way back to us and it is as happy to see us as we are happy to see it. Recent times have called for community like our lives depend on it, because our lives actually kind of do depend on it.

A few of months back during the back end of summer, I came across a homeless couple on my main walking route into town. I kept seeing them for a few weeks and would always say hello, as I don't like to ignore homeless people. Seeing them each time I walked into town, made them feel a little bit like friends. They were *"the people that you meet each day"* just like in the Sesame Street song. They didn't have a roof over their heads, but they still felt like a part of my community.

I wanted to help them out with things, but couldn't give money every time I saw them. I decided to stop and ask if they needed anything. I explained I didn't have money to give each time, but

I have friends who may be able to donate items they needed and I myself have things I can give. They were a little surprised, but very grateful I bothered to stop and offered to help.

I contacted my friends and people I know to see if they could donate anything. Over several weeks, each time I saw them, I would ask what they needed. I bought the couple socks, wet-wipes, coffees, food and bits and bobs. My friends donated clothing, umbrellas, fleeces. One of my friends even bought them brand new waterproofs and some fleece blankets. My mum even gave them money and bought them coffees.

This was beginning to feel like, what do you call it again...? Ah yes, community! We weren't people living in nearby houses with a church hall down the road. We were people living all over the place, two of which didn't even have a house. This is real community.

Community is what we make it and WE make it. It doesn't just fall out of the sky in some ready to use form. We create it and we can do this anywhere, anyhow and with anyone.

The English word 'community' derives from the old French word *comuneté*, which comes from the Latin *communitas* 'community', 'public spirit'. Public spirit is the desire to do things for the good of the community. From the definitions, public spirit and community are two things that are clearly inseparable.

We, as people are inseparable. Yes, we are all different, with lots of different things going on in our lives. We are living in different places and have different needs, views, aspirations etc, but one thing that isn't different is that we all need each other, at least at some point in our lives. No man is an island and if we were, it would be a pretty boring and a desperate shipwreck of a life talking to coconuts for company.

We need each other, whether we live in a house or not. This is how we are built. We are meant to commune and when we don't commune, things start going wrong with us. We malfunction and in turn so does society.

Community is a blessing to us, because we get to practice what we are really made of. Having public spirit meant I stopped to see if I could help the couple. They were happy to receive the help, which made them feel better. I got my friends involved, which reminded me how great my friends are when asked for help. Through me and my friends, we managed to get them a lot of things they needed. The couple now have a little network of help from me, my friends, the local mini supermarket, the local independent deli and various people working in the offices nearby. It all genuinely feels like a real community now.

Community could start and end with yourself. You may not be able to get anybody else onboard when helping other people and that's okay. As long as you are practicing public spirit, it's all good, but if you get the opportunity to commune with more people in the process – all the better!

Go and create a community. It doesn't have to be a permanent one, it could be pop-up one, that lasts for just as long as it is needed. Reach out and connect. Mental and emotional wellbeing is enhanced and strengthened by coming together and helping each other out. So, share your 'music' with people.

Check out the **New Radicals – You Get What You Give** official video on YouTube: <https://youtu.be/DL7-CKirWZE>

Article by **Fe**

POETRY CORNER

National Listening Day

Leaning

In

Straining to understand you

Tentatively

Engaging

Nodding my head

Interjecting

Now hearing

Gesticulation's emphasis emphatically adding

Dramatized emotion

Amazed at what you say

You are heard on National Listening Day.

Poem by **Peter McDonagh**, November 2020, Leeds

WHAT'S ON...

RECOVERY COLLEGE

2021 Workshop Dates

Leeds Recovery College runs a variety of free health and wellbeing courses and launched a new time table for online sessions running from **January to April 2021**.

The courses are all co-designed and co-facilitated by people who have experienced their own mental health challenges, working alongside health professionals, education providers and local artists to share ideas and resources. Courses include:

- Wellness Recovery Action Planning®
- Mental health, stress and the 'new normal'
- Mindfulness
- Words that move me: Bibliotherapy and words for wellbeing

And Creativity, Recovery and You which has been developed by some of our Artists from the Arts & Minds Network working with the Recovery College.

Courses are free to attend and you do not need a referral to join a workshop. Courses are open to any adults who live, work or study in Leeds and would like to learn more about mental wellbeing (this includes staff and carers).

For more information please call **0113 855 5127** or email leedsrecoverycollege.lypft@nhs.net.

CULTURE CLUB

Due to 'you know what' Arts & Minds are currently unable to accept new members to Culture Club. Normally we meet monthly to discuss our projects and plan trips to theatres, exhibitions or outings. Due to the closure of public venues these activities have been suspended until further notice.

We may be separated physically but we regularly email messages and have expanded means of communications to a Twitter page ([twitter@CultureLeeds](https://twitter.com/CultureLeeds)) and also to a public Facebook page (www.facebook.com/CultureClubLeeds) and we hope to get a Culture Club Facebook members group up and running soon. Please do contribute to the tweets and comments or email queries and technical issues on the recycled flower project to maintain our mutual support and camaraderie with each other.

We make suggestions to undertake virtual outings and enjoy the rich picking of 'Free' theatre productions, operas or concerts within the comfort of your own home. We glean recommendations of virtual activities from Arts & Minds, Arts Together and from our own research.

If you come across an uplifting performance, preferably humorous or of good quality please share the online address. Arts & Minds will be updating their website regularly and posting items for your entertainment too. We intend to resume the Culture Club meetings and activities as soon as we are able to do so.

CONNECT & CREATE



'Normally' this group meets monthly at The Tetley so that Arts & Minds members can connect, share skills, and take part in creative workshops led by other members. We are sure you are missing this dip into the huge well of creativity in our membership so we will be bringing you a taste of these events in the form of online Zoom workshops.

Each month's offer will be led by a different member and you can take part for free from the comfort of your own home. The workshops are on the **first Monday of every month** from **1.00pm to 2.30pm** with the exception of the first session of 2021 which will be on **Monday 11th January**.

For more information, or to sign up for the workshops, email info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk. You will be sent a list of what you need for each workshop which will be cheap materials you are likely to have to hand at home.

SWARTHMORE CONNECTED

Covid 19 has led to increased social isolation and a widening of the digital divide. Swarthmore Connected aiming to connect people to Swarthmore, and to each other, with a new Chrome Book loan and support scheme, providing them with new opportunities for engagement and support through digital engagement opportunities.

Swarthmore are looking for people to participate in the project. The participants will be partnered with a volunteer who will support them via phone calls guiding them at their own rate of learning. When the participants feel they are ready, there will be opportunities for them to join informal online workshops. These will be arts and crafts, well-being, chatty cafes, Esol and possibly some with further computer skills such as using Google Drive.

For more information call Penny at Swarthmore on **07485327790** or email connected@swarthmore.org.uk.

MAKE SPACE

We would love you to join us at the new weekly Make Space Zoom session, where the focus is on connecting with other members, and taking time for yourself to continue with your creative project, poetry or artwork. Bring along a cuppa, and tune in for your time out session between **1.00pm and 2.00pm every Tuesday**.

For more information, or to sign up for the sessions, email info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk. You will be sent a Zoom link to join in with the sessions.

About Arts & Minds

Arts & Minds is a network of people in Leeds who are interested in creativity and mental health. We include carers, health workers, artists, performers, students, people who have used mental health services and OTs. We want to get people talking about how the arts can help mental wellbeing.

If you want to know more please contact us using the details below. You are welcome at any of our events or workshops, if you are a member or not. You can join Arts & Minds for free at: **www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk/join-us**

Arts & Minds, 31 Potternewton Lane, Leeds LS7 3LA

phone: **0113 262 3128**

email: **info@artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk**

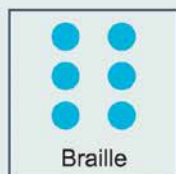
web: **www.artsandmindsnetwork.org.uk**

facebook: **facebook.com/artsminds**

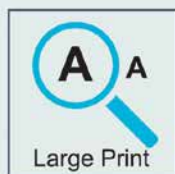
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