



The Wye Valley AONB mindSCAPE Project





Artspace Cinderford are an arts and education charity, based in the Forest of Dean. We provide, creative opportunities for people of any age or ability, our workshops aim to improve confidence, self-esteem and social connectedness. We are a community organisation, who specialise in working with people who have specific needs:

- 50% of Artspace Adult Participants have learning or physical difficulties
- Work with young people facing challenging circumstances
- Focus on reducing isolation, providing an inclusive environment
- and breaking down barriers to participation





mindSCAPE PROJECT LEAD: The Wye Valley AONB

PARTNERS: Artspace Cinderford, Forestry Commission, Dementia Adventure, Forest of Dean District Council





PROJECT AIM: TO IMPROVE THE WELL-BEING OF PEOPLE WITH DEMENTIA AND THEIR CARERS BY ENABLING OPPORTUNITIES TO ACCESS THE NATURAL ENVIRONMENT AND TO RECONNECT TO THE LANDSCAPE OF THE FOREST OF DEAN.

- Natural Beauty and Reminiscence
 - Nature and Creativity
 - Inclusion



The **mindSCAPE** project is:

- A series of fortnightly sessions led by professional artists, staff and volunteers.
- Workshops are interesting, enjoyable, creative and linked to the landscape.
- Activities range from a short walk in the woods, to creative projects like painting, drawing, and photography.
- The workshops and activities are embedded in and inspired by nature – a relaxing time in a beautiful environment.



Dementia: Current Situation (UK)

- By 2016 there will be 850,000 people with dementia in the UK.
- There are 40,000 younger people with dementia in the UK.
- There will be 1 million people with dementia in the UK by 2025.
- The proportion of people with dementia doubles for every five-year age group.
- One in six people aged 80 and over have dementia.
- 60,000 deaths a year are directly attributable to dementia.
- Delaying the onset of dementia by five years would reduce deaths directly attributable to dementia by 30,000 a year.
- The financial cost of dementia to the UK is £26 billion per annum.
- There are 670,000 carers of people with dementia in the UK.
- Family carers of people with dementia save the UK £11 billion a year.
- 80 per cent of people living in care homes have a form of dementia or severe memory problems.
- Two thirds of people with dementia live in the community while one third live in a care home.
- Only 44% of people with dementia in England and Northern Ireland receive a diagnosis

Source: www.alzheimers.org.uk/statistics

Natural Beauty & Reminiscence



- Reminiscence is: Recollecting past experiences and events to aid well-being
- Using nature as a reminiscence tool to aid communication

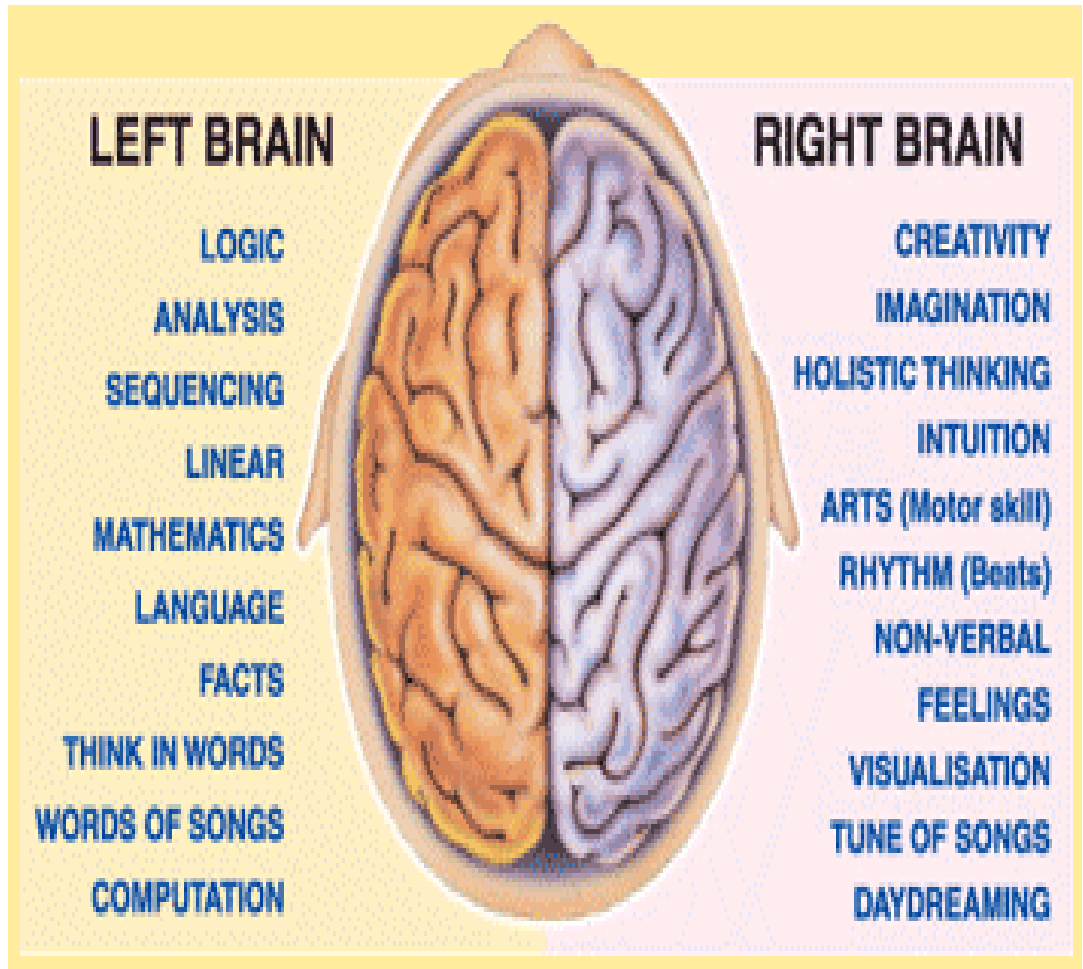
Working with Memories

- The natural world provides a variety of starting points for conversations
- Our favourite places to visit, favourite views, favourite holidays
- People may have grown up, lived and worked in landscape



Did you know?

The symptoms of a person's dementia will depend on which part of their brain is affected



Did you know?

- About 93% of what we communicate takes place through the use of our non-verbal communication skills. Only 7% is verbal communication.



Alzheimer's Society (2005)

Sensory Stimulation

TOUCH: Working with natural materials





THE ELEMENTS: The cool breeze or the warmth of the sun

SMELLS & SOUNDS evoke memories



NATURAL BEAUTY

- Provides a relaxing and absorbing environment
- **Can help to take someone to a 'happier place'**
- Being engaged in meaningful activity can provide a **momentary break for carers**



Natural Beauty and Creativity

- Natural Beauty & creativity go hand in hand, combining both can be very impactful
- Art is the vehicle used to discuss and express the thoughts and feelings that are evoked by nature, to make the experience even more meaningful or lasting
- Art gives opportunity for people who are less physically mobile to engage meaningfully with nature
- We can bring the outdoors in and continue to engage with nature – whatever the weather!



Alternative Methods of Expression

- Problems with articulation can cause frustration, the arts provide alternative ways for people to express themselves, exercise choice and control.





Key findings from research on spending time in nature for with people with dementia.

- **Improved emotional state:** reduced stress, agitation, anger, apathy and depression
- **Improved physical health:** skin health, fitness, sleeping patterns, eating patterns
- Improved verbal expression
- Improved memory and attention
- Improved awareness: multi-sensory engagement and joy
- **Improved sense of well-being, independence, self-esteem and control**
- Improved social interaction and a sense of belonging

Source: 'Greening Dementia Report' Natural England / Dementia Adventure 2013

Excercise

- List three activities that you **LOVE** to do



Inclusivity

Reducing Isolation: People with dementia and their carers feel more positive about being part of their community



Considering Barriers to Inclusion

Barriers for People with Dementia and Their Carers

- Access to Facilities
- Weather / Time of Year
- Changing Moods, Care Needs & Mobility



Willow Weaving



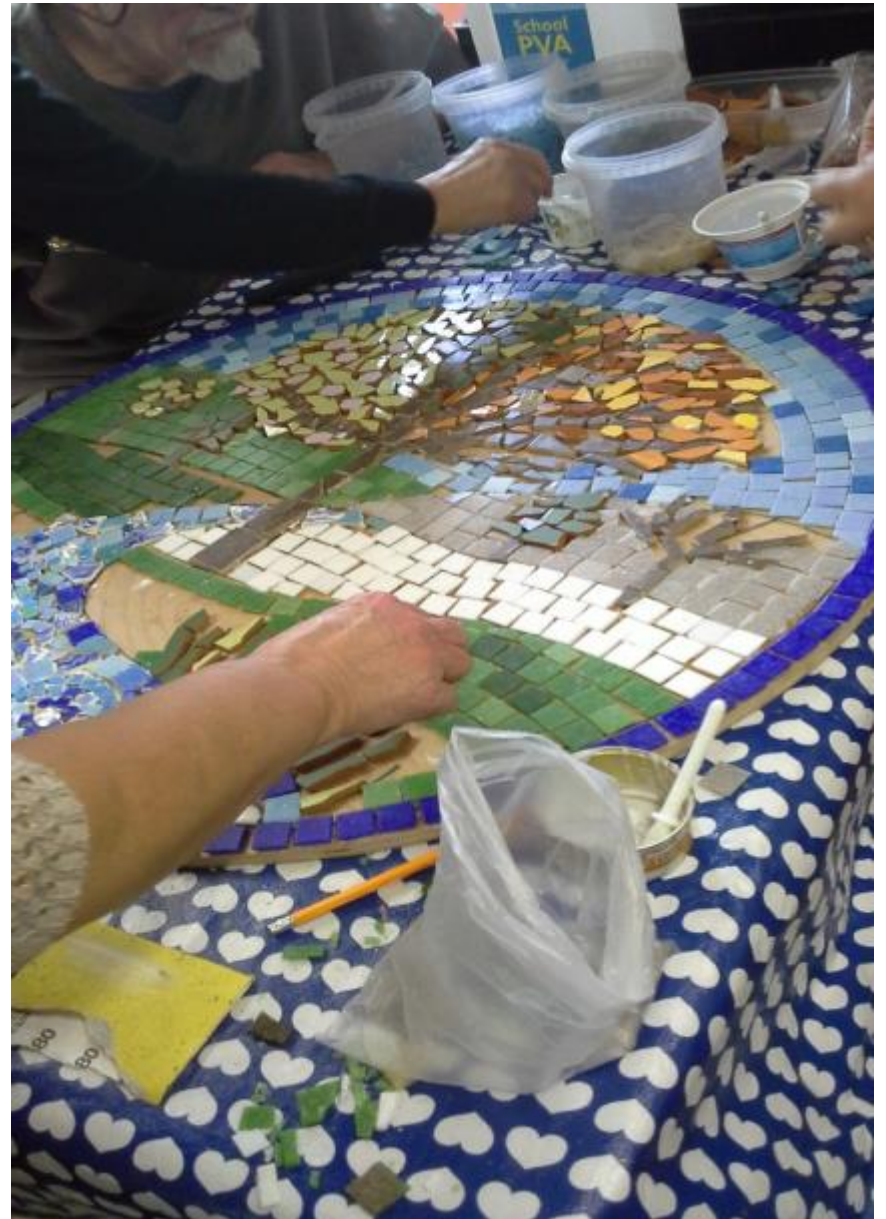
Willow Weaving



mindSCAPE Group



Mosaics



Natural Sculpture





Poetry Walk

Eco-Printing



Working with natural
Oak leaf dye and leaves











What Does Feedback Show?

After 6 months participation, participants were asked how 'mindSCAPE' makes them feel:

90% Felt less stressed

100% Felt more positive/happy

50% Felt more physically fit/healthy

70% Felt more confident about doing 'mindscape type' activities independently

70% Felt more creative

90% Felt more positive about being part of their community – (100% after 12 months participation)



The benefits to people of access to the natural environment are increasingly accepted and there is growing evidence of the impact of nature on our physical and mental health. These benefits can be derived in a number of ways: by **viewing nature; just being near to nature;** or through **actively taking part in and engaging with nature.**

Recent studies have shown that just **five minutes** of walking in a park, working in a garden, or time in other green spaces will benefit... Abundant scientific evidence shows that activity in natural areas improves the sense of well-being.

Jo Barton, Jules Pretty. **What is the Best Dose of Nature and Green Exercise for Improving Mental Health? A Multi-Study Analysis.** 2010.



**For more information about the
mindSCAPE project contact**

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