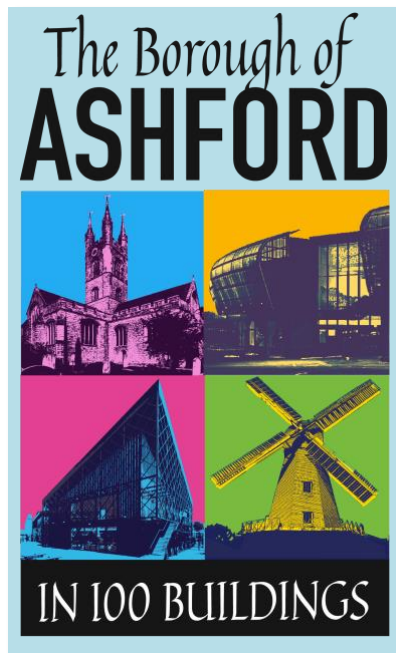


Case studies: How have culture and creativity been supporting people in health, care and other institutions during the Covid-19 pandemic?

Project: The History of Ashford in 100 Buildings

Organisation: Funder Films CIC

Region: South east



The funding was provided for the project to reach out into care homes ... However, the nature of film is that you can reach other audiences fairly easily so I have also sent the film to schools, the local hospice and a local art club. I've also put it on community groups in the borough where it has reached an audience of 15,000.

Image credit: Design by Rob Barker/Funder Films CIC

Introduction

Funder Films CIC makes film and runs projects to raise social and environmental awareness.

The project is called "The History of Ashford in 100 Buildings". The idea was to photograph buildings in the Ashford area and to organise them sequentially. I then designed a series of four hour-long activities based around the films and have relayed these plans to the activity leaders in five care homes. The activities are based around

1. watching the films themselves (three different versions – the first just with sound, the second with no captions and the final one including captions to identify the buildings)
2. poetry and writing associated with buildings
3. craft (assembling an abacus based on the photographs of the buildings)
4. drawing and painting (to come up with images for 'the forth side' of the abacus).

Funders

Grants from the Kent Community Foundation (£3000) and from Ashford Borough Council (£200).

Partners

Not exactly partnership but I have had support from WoodnWare, from Branch and Brush, and also from a poetry therapist called Victoria Field – who made recommendations about the poetry/writing activity. A local graphic designer also designed a logo for me (at a very good price) which has been a key consistent symbol for the project.

Who is it for?

The funding was provided for the project to reach out into care homes – and this has always been the primary goal.

However... the nature of film is that you can reach other audiences fairly easily so I have also sent the film to schools, the local hospice and a local art club (Branch and Brush CIC) thus far. I've also put it on community groups in the borough where it has reached an audience of 15,000.

I've also involved a local day care centre for adults with learning difficulties (WoodnWare CIC) in the making of the abacus.

Are these people you have worked with before, or new participants?

Both

How many people took/are taking part?

Very hard to say. In terms of the care home work, the activity leaders have told me that they expect about 10 people in each home to take part... so about 50?

I think though that it's likely that many more will come for the easy session (the film) and then will tail off when things become more difficult (the craft and the painting and drawing).

The beauty of this work is that the films and the activities can be used as many times as the activity leaders might like – so they can repeat the activities with a new set of residents next year.

Where is it happening?

The borough of Ashford in Kent.

For how long has it been happening?

The work began in the summer and is ongoing.

What were/are the main outputs?

The Ashford100buildings film is obviously one output. I've also distributed mobile phone tripods and microphones to all the care homes so that they can take their own footage. I'm hoping to make another film about their involvement in the project and distribute back to them when it's done. And... together we're building an abacus – which could go on display throughout the borough (with a bit of luck...).

What outcomes were/are you aiming for?

A sense that we are one big community with an amazing local history in common. Recognition of familiar places (photographs taken on lovely sunny days to make everyone feel that everything isn't so gloomy and wintery after all).

Have you adapted existing work to make this happen? If so, how?

I had a plan pre-COVID to look at historical objects kept in archives in the Ashford area (and at the British Museum/museums in London) and to document these on film. When COVID came along I realised I had to adapt so thought I'd do something on buildings. (But I still want to do objects!)

Does your work support people who identify with one or more of the protected characteristics¹?

The reason that I'm filling in this form is because I think there is huge potential for this project – both in providing work for creative professionals in other parts of the country and also in providing support to activity leaders in care homes / making their work as relevant as possible to the area that they live in.

Evaluation & Feedback

The film has been extremely well-received by the wider community. Lots of likes and loves on Facebook. Lots of 'amazings' and 'aren't we lucky to live in this part of the world'. I hope that people living in care homes will respond in a similar way. To date I've only had brief responses from the activity leaders saying that they are very happy with it and are looking forward to seeing how their residents respond. One activity leader said that she was going to use it as an ice-breaking activity for new residents.

"Thank you Jasper, I am very interested in how this will go, looks great. I will test it on both floors and maybe with our newer residents a bonding exercise, we shall see. I will schedule it into our programme for next week and see how it goes. Can't wait to get started." (Activity leader)

What is your own impression of how it has worked? What have been the challenges and successes for you?

I think the concept has great potential but I've been guilty of taking on too much. I have exhausted the funding pot already and it feels like we're only halfway through...

Are you reaching more people/fewer people/different people?

Definitely reaching many more people. I think providing local history films to care homes and then devising projects associated with the films is a very interesting new development in my work. And it has the added bonus of having secondary audiences (schools in particular but also the general public.)

What new skills have you or your colleagues had to develop to deliver this work?

I'm a bit nervous about building the abacus...

What would you say has made this project possible?

The funding (see above).

What would have made it easier?

I would really have liked more money – so that I could have taken someone on to learn/ do some of the work. As I said above, there is opportunity here to expand to other areas/ take on apprentices. (I applied for £5000 but was given £3000... I think on reflection that it needed £10,000!)

Further information

<https://ashford100buildings.co.uk/films/>

<https://ashford100buildings.co.uk/>

[Facebook post](#) (this is the second facebook post... initially I posted without any captions and asked the community how many buildings they could identify; I mention because we are adopting the same technique in care homes)

¹Protected characteristics are age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage and civil partnership, pregnancy and maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, sexual orientation (Equalities Act 2010).

