

WELL-CITY SALISBURY

SALISBURY-BASED WELLBEING PROJECT LAUNCHED WITH SUPPORT FROM THE NATIONAL LOTTERY COMMUNITY FUND



Four Salisbury and Wiltshire-based arts and heritage organisations have announced the launch of a new project delivering wellbeing courses to local residents after being awarded £260,000 of financial support from The National Lottery Community Fund.

The project, entitled Well-City Salisbury, brings together the experience and skills of four Salisbury-based organisations; ArtCare, The Salisbury Museum, Wessex Archaeology and Wiltshire Creative. Over three years, the partner organisations will deliver a total of twenty-four courses to people who have a mental health need and vulnerable individuals and groups.

The project has several key aims; to make a positive change to the mental health of all participants, to utilise the combined strengths of the partner organisations, to create a legacy of trained artists, facilitators and volunteers and to strengthen the local community to make connections and partnerships to improve local mental health support services.

The launch of Well-City Salisbury coincides with the start of Mental Health Awareness Week (10th-16th May). A successful pilot programme for the Well-City Salisbury project carried out in 2020 evidenced the ability of cultural and creative organisations to support mental health and wellbeing, particularly through building a sense of community. Well-City Salisbury has been designed to meet the individual needs of participants and to help develop a supportive and sustainable culture around mental health and wellbeing in Salisbury.

Lesley Self, ArtCare Exhibitions Coordinator, says: "ArtCare, on behalf of Salisbury District Hospital, are thrilled to further develop our partnership with the city's cultural organisations on this ambitious wellbeing project. Using creative and heritage activities, we will engage and inspire our community in a city-wide commitment to support mental health and wellness."

Adrian Green, Director of The Salisbury Museum, says: "We are delighted to have been successful with a National Lottery Community Fund grant for the Well-City project. Supporting the mental health of local people has never been more important. It is very exciting to be able to use the museum's nationally significant collections in creative ways that support people's mental health and enable participants to explore their history and heritage. This is also an excellent opportunity to strengthen our partnership working with three of the other major arts and heritage venues in the city, to create a strong and resilient programme that reaches out to support more people in and around Salisbury."

Chris Brayne, Chief Executive of Wessex Archaeology, says: "Salisbury has had a very tough time in recent years. Novichok and the pandemic have each taken their toll - on businesses, on our communities and on individuals. At Wessex Archaeology we know that learning about the past and, in particular, establishing a personal connection with objects and places from the past, can enrich lives in a very powerful way. We are lucky enough to have access to this material every day, and we are always looking for ways to share the benefits. Well-City is a chance for individuals to experience the changes these connections can bring. As the world begins to open up, we want to use this partnership and other initiatives to bring people together again and begin to help heal our city."

Louise Dancy, Wiltshire Creative Take Part Director, says: "We recognise the significant impact our mental health has on all our lives, with this funding we can continue to make a real and positive impact on the wellbeing of our local community. This partnership will provide a range of opportunities to support mental health through creative activities and we can't wait to start making a difference."

Tim Crarer, Chair of Wiltshire Creative Board of Trustees, says: "We are delighted to be awarded funding for Well-City Salisbury. Particularly in the light of the effects of the pandemic and lockdown, this important partnership project supporting those in our community with their mental health is needed more than ever."