

Norway Comes To SHINDIG

5 September 2019

September's SHINDIG hosted seven people from the Norwegian Health Association, a voluntary organisation for people with dementia and their carers. They approached organisers earlier this summer requesting to bring a study tour to visit SHINDIG. They are working on a project to pilot local working groups for people with dementia, groups which will work in partnership with councils and be involved in service development at a local level, for example shaping post diagnostic support services. They had heard of SHINDIG and wanted to visit and learn from good examples of service user involvement.

Our Norwegian guests stayed for three days and were offered a varied timetable organised by Jo Wallace from the Alzheimer's Society, the highlight of which was SHINDIG itself, but also a mini SHINDIG where a group of SHINDIGERS met our visitors for more in depth discussion and lunch, as well as the facilitators and volunteers who support SHINDIG. They were also able to meet a variety of Stakeholders of SHINDIG, including the Council's Commissioning Officer, Chair of Sheffield Dementia Action Alliance, external services previously involved with SHINDIG such as Places for People Leisure and Research Leads from Sheffield University. The group also met with staff from the Alzheimer's Society representing our local services and the Regional Dementia Lead for The Voice. As well as a representative from the 3 Nations Dementia Working Group and the co organisers of SHINDIG, Claire Jepson and myself and past organiser Jane McKeown.

September's SHINDIG was our annual 'Have a go' interactive event and the theme selected was music. The rationale being Jane McKeown being approached Penny Blackman from the University of Sheffield. Penny is a cultural engagement officer and has a key role in 'Sheffield Makes Music' an annual event brought to the city by the University of Sheffield in partnership with BBC Music Day. Penny is keen to educate music venues and promoters about Dementia and how to create Dementia friendly environments. Four sessions ran simultaneously on the day attendees having opportunity to have 'have ago' in each room. Singing for the brain who are old friends of SHINDIG invited people to sing and dance. Activity workers from SHSC encouraged people to make music using percussion and boom wackers. A Music Therapy student played piano and asked people what the music evoked for them. Our fourth session was the discussion. Observing people moving between rooms there was real sense of joy and shared humour. "That's taken years off me that has" said one man as he swaggered out of the percussion session. His wife shared that she had fulfilled a lifetime ambition to play a tambourine.

Feedback from facilitators was unanimous, the event was a success and very enjoyable to all who took part.

Claire Jepson Shindig facilitator Occupational Therapist SHSC

Jo Wallace Shindig Facilitator Alzheimer's Society Support Worker

Quotes from 'Shindiggers' and themes which emerged from the sessions

Percussion Boomwackers

A few trepidatious faces initially but after a few minutes everyone had joined in.

"I really enjoyed that"

"It was fun"

I loved it"

"It's like being a kid again"

"They wouldn't believe it at home if I told them what I'd been doing"

"Brilliant"

"I felt five again"

"Not something I would do in real life"

"It's like going to heaven coming here"

"Every sound was different"

"Refreshing"

"I didn't want it to finish"

"I'm Henry the 8th I am I am"

"Oh when the saints come marching in"

"I like having fun and making fun of myself"

The sounds being created reminded some people of trains going through a tunnel. There was a lot of fun and laughter in a room full of smiles. Two people used the instruments to have a sword fight.

Music Therapy

A number of themes emerged from listening to the piano music:

Memories of childhood

Images of nature

Many references to water, rain, tides, streams, flowing movements.

There was a diverse mix of responses, pleasure, sadness, relaxation.

Discussion Group

What does music mean to you?

Happy, Relaxed, Brings people together, lifts you when you're down, Helps when travelling, Admiration, Memories, early days, Enjoyment, all manner of things in your head, Don't like modern stuff, When lonely I start to sing, I can remember words, Dancing, Joy, like to listen to other people, important part of life, Praising god, Want to dance, Familiarity, Musicals, I don't worry if not accurate or in tune, Lots of things come together, Memories of childhood, Part of my life, Always been there, duets a happy experience, difficult to get back into, Hymn tunes, Enjoying more with hearing aids, Happy, Music associated with sailing, Cry, brass bands, Ballet years, Benjamin Britain, Classical, soothing and nice, March and move, Good sing song, Beethoven, Laugh

How do you currently access music? What is happening in your area?

Allexa, Brass bands, Radio, Singing for the brain, live music, cassettes, cd's, Theatre, Tea dances, Frequency depends on area, Church at Parsons cross, Chairobics, Woodhouse Forum, Jabadao sessions, Church choir, Love the social aspect aswell, singing in care homes, Keyboard, gramophone records, Musical evenings, Crucible, Last night of the proms, Classic FM, Radio Sheffield, Local band

Thoughts on the 'have a go' sessions

Tried to jump in with both feet, Liked singing for the brain, laughter is necessary and achieved, fantastic, time factors, Interaction, uplifting, Sharing, relaxing, enjoy meeting

people, I've never been as happy in my whole life.







